

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PETITIONING IN BOOTS:
MOTIVATION & MOBILIZATION IN
THE RHETORIC OF COXEY'S ARMY,
1894

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In light of rising unemployment in 1894, a wealthy quarry owner named Jacob Coxey led a band of unemployed marchers from Massillon, Ohio, to Washington, DC, to urge Congress to pass two job-creation bills. Coxey spent eight weeks recruiting downtrodden laborers for his "Army," which marched for thirty-eight days to the nation's capital to lay their grievances at their representatives' doorstep. When they arrived, the Army's protest was silenced, and although their bills never passed, those marchers left their mark on history by engaging in an unprecedented protest.

This study examines the rhetoric of Coxey's Army to understand how it motivated participation in a seemingly impossible feat, especially when it became apparent that the Army's legislative cause would fail. The Army's motivational appeals comprised what the current study refers to as the rhetoric of Coxeyism. Distinct from but related to discourses of populism, Coxeyist rhetoric developed the appeal of arguments that emphasize society's obligation to meet the needs of the middle class, as well as arguments that denigrate other classes to situate them in opposition to the middle class. In turn, Coxeyist rhetoric revealed the motivations behind the so-called

“industrial army movement” of 1894, but also behind populism as it reached its apex in the 1890s.

Beyond its significance at the time, this dissertation finds that the rhetoric of Coxeyism developed the rhetorical viability of two political traditions that we see still today. First, Coxey’s Army crafted the justifications we accept today that constitute unemployment as a problem of political economy. Coxey’s Army portended the belief that the government should proactively create jobs to alleviate workers’ economic woes. Second, Coxey’s Army heralded marching to Washington to seek redress for grievances as a rhetorically viable form of petitioning, another in a long series of evolutions in that mode of political engagement. That both of these precedents have endured over the decades suggests that scholars of populism, of social protest, and of the rhetoric of the Gilded Age would do well to take the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army seriously.

PETITIONING IN BOOTS: MOTIVATION & MOBILIZATION IN THE
RHETORIC OF COXEY'S ARMY, 1894

by

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DEDICATION

To Nicole

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Solitary as the scholarly process may seem at times, completing a project of this scope requires the help of others. As I learned, completing a project of this scope as a “side hustle” (a choice I do not recommend) required much more than that. I can honestly say it took a village—some might even say a *small army*—of people who were kind, patient and persistent.

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CHAPTER ONE

Coxey's Army: A Transformative Rhetorical Moment in American History

Let the voices multiply; the more voices we have, the more truth will finally emerge.

—Wayne C. Booth, *Critical Understanding*, 1979¹

The tradition of petitioning is deeply rooted in the American political system. As rhetorical scholar Paul Stewart notes, the petition is a “distinct but common rhetorical form” dating back more than a millennium.² As our political system has evolved, so too has our style of petitioning; whereas petitioning has taken on a variety of forms throughout history, one form that Americans now accept is the act of going directly to the seat of government to seek social reforms. This tradition, enacted today in a diverse range of marches on Washington, is so rich that in contemporary politics, it is difficult to imagine a time when American citizens *did not* see marching on Washington as a viable way to petition lawmakers. But it has only been for about 120 years—roughly half of our nation’s lifetime—that this style of political engagement has been common.

¹ Wayne C. Booth, *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 25.

² Paul Bradley Stewart, “Early American Petitioning (1789-1892), Public Life and the Public Sphere” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2002).

This dissertation is concerned with one critical pivot point in the rich history of petitioning in America—a moment historians commonly refer to as “Coxey’s Army.”³ In some ways, Coxey’s Army was unremarkable; in all, it was comprised of a few hundred unemployed workers who marched from Ohio to Washington in 1894, attempting quite unsuccessfully to get Congress to pass legislation designed to create jobs. Not only did Congress not pass their legislation, but Coxey’s Army failed to even present it to Congress publicly before local authorities put an abrupt end to their protest by arresting the Army’s leaders. As such, it would make sense to consider Coxey’s Army an unimportant moment in our nation’s history. But within the unique historical context of the last decade of the nineteenth century, I contend that Coxey’s Army represents a moment in our national narrative that is significant for how it contributed to evolutions in our styles of petitioning, and to the rationales we accept to justify economic policymaking. Thus, while the intent of those who marched in Coxey’s Army may have been to ameliorate their immediate economic hardships, their actual accomplishment was much more than a parade through the mountains and down Pennsylvania Avenue that ultimately resulted in legislative failure. This dissertation tells the story of that accomplishment.

³ The historical moment to which I am referring has been called “Coxey’s Army,” the “Commonweal of Christ,” the “Commonweal Army” and other names. I use these terms interchangeably, but in later chapters unpack the rhetorical significance of each.

Coxey's Army derives its name from its chief organizer, Jacob Sechler Coxey, the wealthy owner of a sand-crushing mill in Massillon, Ohio.⁴ Coxey's master plan was premised on getting Congress to pass two pieces of public works legislation: the "Good Roads" bill, which would have invested in infrastructure development and therefore would have created jobs, and the "Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds" bill, which would have given companies interest-free loans to incentivize investments in these projects.⁵ These bills came together as the backbone for the Army's agenda and would become fodder for the now-famous march on Washington. The march was thus designed to illustrate the popularity of Coxey's policies; although he had the financial resources to lobby Congress on his own, the logic of his protest maintained that Congress would surely pass Coxey's policies if shown that doing so was the will of the people. Perhaps, Coxey thought, Congress would take action if its members saw, quite

⁴ Some disagree regarding whether the Army was Coxey's idea. For example, rhetorical scholar Malcolm Sillars stated that Carl Browne, Coxey's deputy, "convinced Coxey that an army of unemployed men be formed for a march to Washington." See Malcolm O. Sillars, "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," *Speech Monographs* 39, no. 2 (1972): 93.

⁵ McMurry argued that Coxey was at least partly responsible for legitimizing the eight-hour workday, a struggle that had been ongoing in the labor movement of the 1880s and 1890s. See Donald McMurry, *Coxey's Army: A Study of the Industrial Army Movement of 1894* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1929).

literally, the vast number of Americans who demanded relief from their economic distress in the form of the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills.

And so they marched. On Easter Sunday of 1894, about eighty out-of-work laborers gathered in a field on the outskirts of Massillon to make their way toward the nation's capital. While many failed to make the entire journey, others carried on, remaining committed to the cause while attracting new followers along the way. As they progressed, they faced extreme weather, harsh criticism from outsiders and their own internal conflicts. Although these factors could have easily undermined the marchers' motivation, by and large, they pressed on, reaching the northwest border of the District of Columbia by the end of April. For those who went the distance, their feeling of triumph must have been tremendous, but that triumph quickly faded to anguish as their leaders were arrested by D.C. police who were fearful that the Army would riot.⁶ Far from the grand demonstration he imagined, Coxe never even made it to the steps of the Capitol where he intended to deliver a riveting speech about the

⁶ Jacob S. Coxe, Carl Browne and Christopher Columbus Jones were arrested by the District of Columbia Police Court because they did "unlawfully enter upon the grounds of the United States Capitol." See "Arrest Record," *Police Court of the District of Columbia*, Washington, DC, 1894. From the Jacob S. Coxe Papers, Massillon Museum, Massillon, Ohio.

nation's economic woes. Eventually, he and two other protest leaders would serve a three-week prison sentence and the protest ultimately faded into dissolution.⁷

Given its failure to get Congress to pass its two bills, it would be easy to consider Coxey's Army an insignificant blip in the history of the late nineteenth century. But to a student of public address, this moment presents a great deal of rhetorical complexity—complexity which piques my intellectual curiosity. How were potential marchers motivated to participate in the Army, both by Coxey and by others who had pledged their support for Coxey's policies? How were those who joined Coxey's Army motivated to sustain their commitment to the cause and attract new followers, especially in light of the myriad challenges that threatened to erode their commitment? And, how did the success of their *march*—as opposed to the failure of their *cause*—play into events that would transpire in the future? The answers to these questions can be found by relating the discourse of, about and around the Army to the economic situation of the 1890s, to populism, to the government's role in creating economic policy, and to evolving perceptions of the people's power to petition their elected representatives. The analysis I conduct in the pages of this dissertation tells a story of motivation—a story which relates to the rhetorical acumen of Jacob Coxey, but

⁷ I end my analysis of Coxey's Army in mid-June 1894. Although many of the Commonwealers remained in Washington through the summer, Coxey himself returned to Massillon after serving his jail sentence, at which point media coverage of the protest declined dramatically.

also to economically downtrodden people immersed in a rhetorical environment committing themselves to petitioning their government to address their financial woes.

As the introduction to this story of motivation, this chapter proceeds in five main sections. I start by answering the question of why a study of Coxey's Army is warranted. Next, I give my readers a sense of the historical context in which the Army came to life. To enrich this understanding, I proceed by reviewing what we already know about Coxey's Army thanks to other scholars. Then, I lay out my approach to the current study, showing my readers the various perspectives on which I draw for the analyses highlighted in this dissertation. Finally, I give my readers a sense of the texture of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, noting the sources from which this rhetoric has been drawn. Although this chapter asks more questions than it answers, my readers should walk away from it with an understanding of which questions I seek to answer and how I go about doing so in the five chapters that follow.

The Rhetorical and Historical Significance of Coxey's Army

Despite the fact that Coxey's Army failed in its legislative cause, I believe that the success of its march makes it worthy of a study of this scope. Most scholars of the history and rhetoric of the 1890s have either neglected to mention Coxey's Army at all, or just barely scratch the surface in their treatments. Broad scholarship on the tumult of the Gilded Age, for example, has not considered Coxey's Army to be an important

factor in shaping the unrest that characterized the time period.⁸ Even scholarship about narrower but still closely related topics has not afforded much discussion about the protest. For example, book-length works on the history of radical movements in the US, the populist sentiment that defined the 1890s and the currency disputes that captured national attention in 1894 together devote no more than a few paragraphs to the march, much less proffer an argument about its significance.⁹ Especially notable to me as a student of public address is that only one rhetorical scholar has offered any in-depth treatment of Coxey's Army whatsoever.¹⁰ To me, these scant treatments suggest that most scholars have been dismissive of Coxey's Army, likely because it failed in its quest to pass its signature legislation. To the contrary, I argue that Coxey's Army was a meaningful moment in our nation's history because of the ways that it played into evolving notions about petitioning and the rationales Americans have used in advocating for government's involvement in economic policymaking. Therefore, in this

⁸ Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), 72.

⁹ Errol Wayne Stevens, *Radical L.A.: From Coxey's Army to the Watts Riots, 1894-1965* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 13; Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 47-51; Robert C. McMath, *American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993), 186; and Gretchen Ritter, *Goldbugs and Greenbacks* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 290.

¹⁰ That scholarship is Malcolm Sillars' "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots."

section, I lay out both of these arguments. Because I'm not the only scholar to treat Coxey's Army as significant, I also attend in this section to the few scholarly insights that support my proposition: that Coxey's Army represents an historical moment deserving of deeper intellectual exploration.

Marching on Washington to "Petition in Boots"

The first reason I believe Coxey's Army was significant is because by marching on Washington, it contributed to an evolution in the ways people petition their government. In both style and substance, the petition has continually evolved throughout history. As rhetorical scholar Paul Stewart noted, in its very earliest forms, petitioning was intimately related to prayer. So indistinguishable were these terms, in fact, that prayer and petition were actually synonymous in the King James Version of the Bible. "Moses appears before Pharaoh requesting freedom from the Israelites," Stewart notes, while "Solomon hears perhaps one of the most well-known 'petitions' when two prostitutes ask him to resolve the dispute over the surviving infant."¹¹ Terming the prostitutes' prayer as a "petition" thus reveals that, in its most rudimentary form, petitioning was simply an expression of one's need for help.

Over time, petitioning would evolve from an expression by the petitioner of the need for help into a right guaranteed to citizens of a nation-state. As early as the tenth century in the English monarchy, Stewart argued, petitioning was starting to be seen as a form of political power held by the people. This view would be codified in the early

¹¹ Stewart, "Early American Petitioning," 13.

thirteenth century with the establishment of the Magna Carta, which made a number of guarantees to the citizenry, one of which was the right to petition.¹² By extending this power to the people, the Magna Carta limited the power of the monarchy and bestowed that power upon the people, marking petitioning as a protected right for the first time. Thus, the rhetorical force of the petition at this stage of its history derived from the fact that the government explicitly empowered its citizens to seek redress for their grievances.

Formally established as a right, the petition would continue to evolve over time. One key evolution took place vis-à-vis the public sphere. As Stewart elaborated in his retelling of the history of petitioning, those who sought particular social reforms would come together in the public sphere to determine the reasons why change was needed, and those reasons would be affixed to the petition.¹³ Rather than each expressing their own grievances individually, these petitioners would craft a single petition, filed by a designated clerk, to be considered by the government. Thus, the rhetorical force of these

¹² Ibid., 13-14.

¹³ The specific sense of the public sphere to which Stewart referred comes to us from Jürgen Habermas, who argued that until the eighteenth century, people engaged in rational-critical debate over issues of the day in gathering places like coffeehouses and salons. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated into English by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); and Craig Calhoun, ed., “Introduction,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 1-48.

petitions derived from the fact that they articulated the rationale for the change being sought, and presumably, the government's response to the petitioners was determined by the persuasiveness of that rationale.

In addition to people coming together to co-create petitions, another way in which petitioning evolved became evident in the dawn of colonial America. As a founding principle in early colonial law, the right to petition was extended to individuals who sought redress of their own personal grievances. For example, as historian Stephen Higginson noted, the very first act of business in the colony of Connecticut was a petition filed in 1650 that "concerned a grievance that one Henry Stiles had 'traded a peece [firearm] with the Indians for Corne [sic].'"¹⁴ This individualized form of petitioning would extend into the infancy of the United States as a sovereign nation. For example, Andrew Jackson, while serving as a justice on Tennessee's Supreme Court, petitioned Congress to remit a tax he paid on stills he had once operated on his plantation but which had become inoperable due to a fire.¹⁵ These examples illustrate that the rhetorical force of the petition in early colonial law derived from individuals' reasons for redress, rather than from the reasons of a collectivity, meaning that citizens could now justify reforms based on their personal situations.

¹⁴ Stephen A. Higginson, "A Short History of the Right to Petition Government for the Redress of Grievances," *The Yale Law Journal* 96, no. 1 (1986): 144.

¹⁵ "Petition of Andrew Jackson," Nashville, TN, 1803. From "Early Petitions to Congress," *Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies*, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

The fact that individuals were empowered to seek redress for their personal grievances gave rise to the establishment of the right to petition in the U.S. Constitution. But by the birth of our nation, petitioning would once again transform, thanks in part to early colonial petitions. Notable about Stiles' petition that I mentioned above was that Connecticut's response noted "a governmental *duty to consider* petitioners' grievances."¹⁶ In other words, as a constitutionally protected right, the rhetorical force of the petition in the years of our nation's infancy derived from the fact that, for the first time, there were formally established expectations for how those petitioned should respond. To be sure, these expectations would necessarily evolve; after all, Congress obviously lacked the capacity to respond to each and every grievance with which it might be presented. But nevertheless, since the early years of the republic, people have gone to their elected officials to seek reform with the expectation of a response. In 1799, Absalom Jones filed a petition on behalf of seventy free African-American men from Philadelphia, seeking revisions to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 on the grounds that its infringements on the rights of African-Americans were unconstitutional.¹⁷ Similarly, in 1803, the Trustees of Jefferson College in Mississippi petitioned the House of Representatives for a land grant, arguing that such a grant would support the growth

¹⁶ Ibid., 143-143, emphasis mine.

¹⁷ "Petition of Absalom Jones and Others," Philadelphia, PA, 1799. From "Early Petitions to Congress," Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

of public education in the territory.¹⁸ We know about both of these instances because the House of Representatives issued formal responses, illustrating how petitioning had evolved yet again by the first few decades of our nation's lifetime.

This evolutionary trajectory continued into the nineteenth century. One particularly notable change was in the substance of the petitions. Whereas the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century petitions that stemmed from debates in the public sphere justified reform by affixing reasons for action, the nineteenth century gave rise to petitions that justified reform by affixing the signatures of those who supported the policy reform identified. As rhetorical scholar Susan Zaeske has noted, in the early 1830s, hundreds of petitions were signed—mostly by women—showing support for the abolition of slavery. In addition to these petitions being significant because they represented important enactments of political subjectivity for women who lacked access to the ballot, they were also significant for how they justified abolition.¹⁹ The rationale for abolition presented by these petitions had nothing to do with the *reasons* why slavery was problematic; instead, they had to do with the *number of people* who

¹⁸ “A Memorial to Congress, from the Trustees of Jefferson College,” Washington, Mississippi Territory, 1803. From “Early Petitions to Congress,” *Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies*, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

¹⁹ Susan Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery and Women's Political Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

demanded reform.²⁰ In other words, the rhetorical power of these petitions derived from the fact that they aggregated popular opinion; the government should act, they reasoned, because doing so was the will of the people.

As I see it, Coxey's Army marks another important evolution in the style and substance of petitioning because it took the rhetorical power inherent in women's antislavery petitions (i.e., evidence of popular demand) and expressed it not by putting pen to paper, but rather by putting boots on the ground. Had Coxey's Army followed existing precedent, their protest would have taken on a substantially different form. Following the public sphere approach, Coxey might have met with concerned sympathizers to determine the reasons for reform that would most likely compel Congress to action. Or, following the individual grievances model employed by Stiles and Jackson, Coxey might have filed his own petition, arguing that his bills would benefit his sand-crushing business and the local economy. But rather than relying on these conventional methods, Coxey instead chose a novel approach: show Congress the popularity of his policies by assembling the masses. Thus, Coxey's "petition with boots on" was significant because it was an articulation of participatory democracy in which people engaged *directly* with their elected officials, rather than negotiating social

²⁰ Susan Zaeske, "Signatures of Citizenship: The Rhetoric of Women's Antislavery Petitions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002): 147.

challenges with the government indirectly by signing petitions or designating representatives to speak on their behalf.²¹

Beyond its novelty, the Army's style of petitioning was also significant because it contributed to an important precedent for marching on Washington. A number of agitators who led subsequent marches on Washington explicitly attributed their approach to Coxey's Army, suggesting that without the petition in boots, these other protests may not have come to fruition. For example, in 1903, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones led a children's march on Washington to argue for regulations on the use of child labor, openly describing her march as being modeled after Coxey's Army.²² Likewise, women's rights activist Alice Paul led a suffrage procession to Washington in 1913, in which she explicitly praised Coxey's Army for breaking down negative views about people lobbying their government and for establishing Washington as a space for public demonstration.²³ Despite their similarities, Coxey's Army was described as radical

²¹ "Petition in boots" was not only a phrase used by observers to describe Coxey's Army; Coxey himself used the phrase on at least a few occasions. See "Reformer Coxey's Confidence," *Frederick News* (Frederick, MD), Mar. 12, 1894.

²² Mari Boor Tonn, "Radical Labor in a Feminine Voice: The Rhetoric of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn," in *The Rhetoric of Nineteenth-Century Reform*, edited by Martha S. Watson and Thomas R. Burkholder, vol. 5 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008), 223-253.

²³ Lucy G. Barber, *Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 40-43.

while Paul's suffrage march was described as peaceful, suggesting that Paul's protest was made palatable because of the precedent set by Coxey's Army. Other protest leaders who did not name Coxey or his Army explicitly still adopted Coxey's model for petitioning. In 1932, for example, a group of World War I veterans and their families—known as the “Bonus Army”—marched to Washington to demand back payment of wages earned for their service in the military, calling themselves a “petition in boots.”²⁴ Eventually, marching on Washington and using the space in front of the U.S. Capitol for public demonstration would become so commonplace that organizers of these marches did not need to invoke Coxey to justify their protest.²⁵ But in 1894, what Coxey set out to do was unheard of, suggesting one reason why his Army was significant.

While protest leaders like Jones, Paul and others explicitly noted that Coxey's Army paved the way for their respective marches on Washington, I argue that Coxey's Army also played into the other “industrial army” marches that formed around the same time. Although I study Coxey's Army because it was the most notable and most widely

²⁴ Paul Dickson and Thomas B. Allen, *The Bonus Army: An American Epic* (New York: Walker & Company, 2004).

²⁵ Whereas Coxey's Army staged their protest in front of the East side of the U.S. Capitol, most contemporary marches and demonstrations in Washington take place on the National Mall, which was commissioned by the McMillan Plan in 1902. See Charles Moore, *The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia* (Washington, DC: United States Senate, 1902).

known of the industrial armies, the broader movement was comprised of at least forty other “armies” that attempted to reach Washington by marching from various parts of the country.²⁶ To be sure, Coxey’s Army did not cause these other armies to form. Charles Kelly, a printer from San Francisco who led what was considered to be the largest of these armies, actually set out for Washington a month earlier than Coxey’s Army.²⁷ Similarly, a smaller contingency set out from Los Angeles under the leadership of former U.S. Army general and union organizer Lewis Fry, and Fry’s Army departed from California nine days before Coxey’s Army left Massillon.²⁸ Nevertheless, Coxey’s organizing efforts seem to have played into the broader industrial army movement, both because it was so highly publicized, and because Coxey often liaised with the leaders of

²⁶ I maintain that Coxey’s Army was the most successful because it was the only one to reach Washington while still operating as one unit, unlike some of the others that fractured and arrived in Washington as oppositional forces. As a result, Coxey’s Army was the most noted of the industrial armies, featured in newspapers much more prominently than its contemporaries.

²⁷ Jill Jozwiak, “Cross-Class Unity in the Gilded Age” (Master’s Thesis, University of Nebraska, 2011); and Lawrence H. Larsen, Barbara J. Cottrell, Harl A. Dalstrom and Kay Calamé Dalstrom, *Upstream Metropolis: An Urban Biography of Omaha & Council Bluffs* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 124-125.

²⁸ Grace Heilman Stimson, *Rise of the Labor Movement in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), 156-157; and Stevens, *Radical L.A.*, 13-15.

other groups, such as Philadelphia's Christopher Columbus Jones. In other words, although other industrial army leaders did not explicitly credit Coxey as the impetus for their protests, Coxey's Army appears to have contributed to the precedent set by the broader movement.

My perspective that Coxey's Army was significant for its contributions to the precedent of marching on Washington, though uncommon, is not without support. Earlier in this section, I noted how some *but not all* scholars have been dismissive of the importance of Coxey's Army. Malcolm Sillars is an exemplary outlier. In 1972, he argued that the Army's style marked an evolution from earlier protests, seeing the Commonweal as "an attempt to get results by more effective means of persuasion."²⁹ Sillars, as the lone scholar of rhetoric to have examined Coxey's Army in any depth, noted that although the Army failed in its cause, it was wildly successful in calling attention to its issues. Similarly, historian Lucy Barber, whose views of the Army's legacy are most closely aligned with my own, attributed its significance to the creation of a new style of mass demonstration. As the first march on Washington, Barber maintained, Coxey's Army paved the way for the hundreds of subsequent protests in front of the Capitol and, later, on the National Mall.³⁰ As any resident of the District of Columbia can attest, this tradition lives on; so frequent are demonstrations at and near the Capitol nowadays that we often take this form of political engagement for granted.

²⁹ Sillars, "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," 93.

³⁰ Barber, *Marching on Washington*, 40-43.

Scholars like Sillars and Barber provide further evidence for my claim that Coxey's Army marked another important evolution in the ways we petition our national government. Yet Coxey's Army was not significant for this reason alone; it also contributed to a precedent regarding the rationales Americans have used to advocate for federal intervention into economic policymaking. Therefore, in the next section, I explain this argument, showing how Coxey's Army paved the way for economic policy to be justified on the basis that creating jobs for idle individuals is as worthy a reason as any.

Job Creation as a Reason for Economic Intervention

The second reason I believe Coxey's Army deserves to be treated as significant is because it justified economic intervention based on the need to create jobs, despite how conventional economic arguments at the time justified policy interventions in terms of potential industrial growth. As I discuss later in this chapter, one byproduct of the rapid industrialization that followed the Civil War was the division of labor and capital. Whereas in the agrarian community, farmers and craftspeople controlled the wealth created by their labor, the emergence of mass production meant that workers drew a wage that was only a small percentage of the wealth generated by the factory. Thus, whereas the rationale used by advocates seeking economic policy reform had always been based in the need for economic development, the separation of labor and capital demanded rhetoric that justified economic policymaking on the grounds that it

helped individual producers within the economy.³¹ Important to note about this shift is that even though the Army's legislation would have spurred economic development—it was, after all, an effort to expand industry by improving infrastructure—that was not the rationale used to garner support for the bills. Rather, Coxe's Army justified the good roads measures by arguing that it would create jobs for downtrodden individuals, not that it would help expand industrial output, marking an important pivot point in the evolution of rationales for economic intervention. Therefore, in the following pages, I outline the contours of that evolution to show the important rhetorical role Coxe's Army played.

In contemporary times, Americans expect their government to be proactive in ensuring low levels of unemployment, but this expectation was not codified into law until relatively recently, thanks in large part to advocates who took existing argumentative frames and updated them to meet their economic situations. For example, the Employment Act of 1946, which grew out of the post-Depression economic boom, was the first time that the government was officially tasked with ensuring “full employment.” As a fundamental concept in economics, “full employment” refers to an “ideal” level of unemployment, which is higher than zero because some unemployment

³¹ Although the term “producers” in contemporary contexts most often refers to corporate entities, the argument posited by those disaffected by the separation between labor and capital in the Gilded Age was that the laborers were the producers of wealth, not those who owned and controlled the corporate entities. Therefore, in this dissertation, my use of “producers” refers to laborers.

is inevitable. It was not until 1946 that federal law mandated the government take proactive and intentional steps to ensure full employment, meaning that until that point, the government was not formally obligated to do anything if significant portions of eligible workers were without a job. The Employment Act, like any major policy initiative, became law because advocates took an already-circulating theme (in this case, full employment) and updated it to meet the needs of the current situation (in this case, the economic growth and lingering uncertainty that followed the Great Depression).

Just as advocates for the Employment Act took old themes and updated them to meet the needs of the economic situation they faced, so too did Coxey's Army take a widely circulated theme—the need for government intervention into economic policymaking—and transform it to address the rising unemployment rates that followed the Panic of 1893. By 1894, the economically downtrodden had expressed the need for economic interventions, but most calls for federal action until that point had been based on the need to spur economic growth and development. A series of previous economic proposals serve as examples to demonstrate this point. The first major economic policy proposal in America was the plan Alexander Hamilton proposed in his role as the first Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. When Hamilton assumed office in 1789, the United States was feeling the effects of lingering economic recession, largely a function of the slowdown in spending that happened after the Revolution. To help the country emerge from recession, Hamilton justified economic policy in terms of growth by emphasizing measures that would provide direct subsidies to emerging businesses, impose tariffs on imports to make it more cost competitive to produce goods domestically, and establish

the first-of-its-kind national bank.³² In many ways, these measures—especially the national tariff and debt systems—would remain at the core of our national fiscal policy for centuries to follow.

A quarter of a century later, Henry Clay, then a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, proposed his American System, which adopted many of the same economic tenets as the Hamilton Plan. The American System was built on three principles: high tariffs to encourage the production and sale of goods domestically, a national bank to carry out the objectives of the First National Bank chartered by the Hamilton Plan, and a system of federal subsidies to stimulate economic growth.³³ Where the American System differed, however, was that rather than subsidizing emerging industries, it subsidized infrastructure development as a way of making the agricultural industry more profitable. This is one way in which the legislation of Coxey's Army was similar to plans that came before it; rather than providing direct subsidies, it aimed to stimulate the economy indirectly by investing in infrastructure development.

Notable about Clay's American System was that it contributed to an economic precedent that would be called upon in subsequent decades. The First Transcontinental Railroad, for example, was financed through grants to investors which were backed by

³² See, for example, Michael P. Federici, *The Political Philosophy of Alexander Hamilton* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 192-193.

³³ See, for example, Kimberly C. Shankman, *Compromise and the Constitution: The Political Thought of Henry Clay* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999), 49-50.

the government. As with the subsidies in Hamilton and Clay's economic plans, the logic of government subsidy maintained that spending on industry and infrastructure would yield overall economic growth, meaning that the government would see a high return on its investment.³⁴ In many ways, this approach to economic policymaking proved successful. The Transcontinental Railroad, for example, could move agricultural outputs from one coast to the other in a matter of days instead of months, creating a much more competitive agricultural market than the nation had previously seen.

Common among these instances of the government intervening in economic policy was that they all aimed to grow particular businesses or industries as a method of economic development. The creation of a national bank, for example, was premised on the belief that a stable and standardized national currency was essential to the government's ability to compete in the global economy. Protectionist tariffs were imposed to make sure that domestic industries could compete with their foreign counterparts. And investments in infrastructure were premised on the idea that they would make American industries more efficient (and, again, more competitive). Thus, our national vocabulary about economic policy included an arsenal of arguments for how best to grow the economy based on themes like investment, development and competition.

³⁴ National Research Council, *Government-Industry Partnerships for the Development of New Technologies* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2003), 47-49.

To be sure, Coxey's Army drew on these themes to an extent, but the protest adapted these themes to justify economic policies on the need to create jobs. Infrastructure improvement projects, for example, were sold on their ability to help individual laborers, rather than their effect on industry. That argument would not have been viable absent the division of labor and capital wrought by industrialization; because mass production did not translate into more wealth for laborers, those without work were left frustrated.³⁵ Coxey's Army, seeing the potential to transform that frustration into action, created rhetoric that articulated for the first time the need to intervene on behalf of distraught and idle workers. This example is just one among many that illustrates how Army rhetoric transformed material challenges into justifications for their protest.

While I explain throughout this dissertation how the Army's rhetoric did this, a concrete example can help illustrate the point. In Chapter Two, I argue that Coxey used rhetoric to constitute the problem of unemployment as a way of motivating potential marchers to join the Army. Prior to industrialization, "unemployment" was hardly a familiar concept, and those who lacked work were more often referred to as "bums" and "vagrants" than as "jobless workers" or "unemployed laborers." These labels presumed that people who were without work found themselves in their situations because of

³⁵ In the period between 1880 and 1895 alone, for example, the volume of exports from the US increased 30% due to rapid increases in domestic production. See Robert E. Lipsey, *Price and Quantity Trends in the Foreign Trade of the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 144.

personal choices they made. Coxey, seeing would-be laborers out of work and under attack, argued that the unemployed were hard-working, noble citizens who would work if given the chance but prevented from doing so because of economic conditions beyond their control. In crafting this argument, Coxey gave voice to the argument that the condition of being out of work is just as often the result of a broken system as it is the result of a lazy individual. As such, more proactive measures were needed to help people in these precarious situations.

By crafting rhetoric focused on the plight of the individual, Coxey's Army developed a rationale for economic policies that helped the people prosper, even if those policies did not spur overall economic growth, development or competition. This rationale can be found in more recent calls for economic intervention. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, for example, was built on three central tenets, the first of which was relief for the unemployed.³⁶ Stemming from the New Deal was the Employment Act of 1946 which, as I mentioned above, held the government responsible for ensuring low levels of unemployment.³⁷ Later, the Office of Economic Opportunity would be created in 1964 as part of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty to oversee job-creation

³⁶ See, for example, Elna C. Green, ed., *The New Deal and Beyond: Social Welfare in the South Since 1930* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

³⁷ Ruth Ellen Wasem, *Tackling Unemployment: The Legislative Dynamics of the Employment Act of 1946* (Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2013).

programs such as VISTA and Job Corps.³⁸ And in more recent years, just about every presidential candidate has promised to support policies to create jobs as a way of improving the individual material conditions of the American electorate. Indeed, the now-common expectation that the government enact economic policies to create jobs can be traced back to the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, which illustrates the second key reason why I consider the Army's rhetoric to be significant.

Although scholarship evaluating the Army effort only in terms of its legislative failure might disagree with my assessment, some scholars have offered support for my claim that Coxey's Army provided a rationale for economic policymaking. One such scholar is Jerry Prout, whose 2012 dissertation challenged historians' treatments of Coxey's Army as "an ill-fated spasm of labor unrest."³⁹ Situating Coxey's Army at the center of what he calls the "nineteenth century anti-monopolist producer unrest," Prout argued that Coxey's Army was significant in its time because it "challenged the boundaries erected by those who sought to channel [the] popular expression of producer discontent into the People's Party."⁴⁰ Along similar lines, historian Carlos Schwantes located the significance of Coxey's Army in how it exposed flawed ideas about the relationship between labor, capital and the economy. Notably, Schwantes argued that

³⁸ William S. Clayson, *Freedom is Not Enough: The War on Poverty and the Civil Rights Movement in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

³⁹ Jerry Prout, "Coxey's Challenge in the Populist Moment," (Ph.D. dissertation, George Mason University, 2012), ix.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 376.

the Army gave voice to the idea that poverty is often a byproduct of a broken system, the response to which should be policy reform rather than changes in the decision-making of individuals.⁴¹ Thus, in the same way I consider Coxey's Army to be an important moment in the evolution of how Americans have provided rationales for economic policy, scholars like Prout and Schwantes emphasize the important role Coxey's Army played in responding to the post-industrial division between labor and capital.

In the preceding pages, I have shown that whereas economic policies before Coxey's Army were justified on the grounds that intervention would spur growth in businesses, industries and the economy at large, we now commonly justify economic policies based on the need for job creation to help individual producers. We owe this shift, at least in part, to Coxey's Army. Along with the fact that Coxey's Army contributed to a new way of petitioning and a precedent for marching on Washington, this argument suggests that Coxey's Army was a significant historical and rhetorical moment worthy of the attention it receives in this dissertation. These assessments are buttressed by the conclusions of a handful of scholars who, like me, have gone beyond the failure of the Army's legislative effort to see how its march was significant in both style and substance. Therefore, having shown why a study of this scope is warranted, the remainder of this chapter lays forth how I approach this study. But, because it is

⁴¹ Carlos Schwantes, *Coxey's Army: An American Odyssey* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985).

impossible to understand Coxey's Army without understanding the unrest of the 1890s, I take the next section to explain the historical context that gave rise to Coxey's Army.

Industrialization, Economic Unrest and Populism in the 1890s

The story of Coxey's Army is incredible, and the only way to fully understand how it managed to achieve what it did is by looking to the political, economic and social unrest of the 1890s. To understand what I mean, imagine the following plotline were it to happen today: a millionaire businessman convinces a bunch of poor, out-of-work laborers to walk several hundred miles from their small Ohio hometowns to Washington, DC, to tell Congress to invest a half a billion dollars in programs seemingly outside their legislative purview in the midst of an economic recession. Although the plotline seems contrived, it is more or less exactly what Coxey's Army managed to do in 1894. Sure, Congress did not pass the Army's legislation, but Coxey did convince the unemployed to put their faith in him by marching, the marchers did take their message all the way to Washington, and the Army did call attention to the serious economic challenges of the day. As I see it, all of this was possible because the Army's rhetoric transformed the unrest facing average Americans in the 1890s into activism. Therefore, I explore the historical context surrounding Coxey's Army in this section.

Economic Expansion Spawns Social Unrest⁴²

⁴² Much of the economic history presented in this section, unless otherwise noted, is adapted from: James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the*

As historians of the time period are quick to note, economic expansion was one of the defining features of the decades following the Civil War and leading up to the turn of the century. But this economic growth played into significant social unrest, which was as important as a defining feature of the era. Two factors—the growth of agricultural production and rapid industrialization—contributed to significant economic growth during this period.⁴³ In part, agriculture grew so significantly because of the population boom—between 1870 and 1900, the American population nearly doubled, meaning that there were twice as many mouths to feed. As the population grew by volume, it also grew by geographic expanse, and in 1890, the U.S. Census Bureau declared the frontier to be officially closed. This was made possible in part by projects like the First Transcontinental Railroad, which enabled people to travel and agricultural outputs to be distributed across the country much more quickly than before, resulting in a boom in overall agricultural production. Between 1860 and 1880, the number of farms

Compromise of 1850 to the McKinley-Bryan Campaign of 1896 (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1920); Festus P. Summers, *William L. Wilson and Tariff Reform: A Biography* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953); Donald L. McMurry, *Coxey's Army*; and Henry Vincent, *The Story of the Commonwealth* (New York: Arno Press, 1969).

⁴³ Unless otherwise noted, the economic history presented in this paragraph is derived from Peter James George, *The Emergence of Industrial America: Strategic Factors in American Economic Growth Since 1870* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), 1-8.

in the United States tripled from two million to six million, while the total value of farmland nearly doubled in that same time period, due in large part to increased productivity.⁴⁴ With more Americans living in more places and with the ability to transport products throughout the country, agricultural growth in the last three decades of the nineteenth century was substantial.⁴⁵

The other significant factor contributing to overall economic expansion in the last three decades of the nineteenth century was the rapid growth of industry. Even as agricultural output grew, only about half of working-age Americans by 1880 earned their living through farming. The other half made their living by working in industries that did not even exist a few decades prior, and the rapid proliferation of these industries and their outputs made the fact of industrialization undoubted.⁴⁶ Technological advancements, such as the birth of commercial electricity, made it possible for goods to be produced much more efficiently.⁴⁷ And, just as the population boom increased

⁴⁴ *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945: A Supplement to the Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1949), 95.

⁴⁵ Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York, Hill & Wang, 2007).

⁴⁶ Charles Hirschman and Elizabeth Mogford, "Immigration and the American Industrial Revolution from 1880 to 1920," *Social Science Research* 38, no. 4 (2009): 898.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

demand for agricultural goods, so too did it create demand for the types of goods produced in factories. As supply increased, so too did demand, resulting in the increase in volume of exports to other countries I mentioned in the previous section, as well as a sharp rise in net national product, which more than tripled between 1870 and 1900.⁴⁸ In all, rapid industrialization likely had an even more significant impact on overall economic growth between 1870 and 1900 than did the growth in agricultural production, and these two factors together left the economy much better off at the end of the century, at least on a macro level, than it had been at the end of the Civil War.

Despite the positive impacts of industrialization, the growth of existing industries and the emergence of new ones would herald a number of challenges, one of which was a significant need for labor. This need would be met in a couple different ways. One was through rural-to-urban migration, the pace of which picked up significantly between 1880 and 1900.⁴⁹ However, much more of the need for labor was met by a flood of immigrants, most of whom were European and came to cities like New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and others seeing the potential to build a better life.⁵⁰ Between 1880 and 1920, the number of foreign-born immigrants in the United States doubled from seven million to fourteen million. However, as sociologists Charles

⁴⁸ George, *The Emergence of Industrial America*, 5.

⁴⁹ Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁵⁰ Hirschman and Mogford, "Immigration and the Industrial Revolution," 898-899.

Hirschman and Elizabeth Mogford note, “these figures underestimate the economic and demographic contribution of immigrants” because “immigrants inevitably lead to a second generation—the children of immigrants—whose social, cultural and economic characteristics are heavily influenced by their origins.”⁵¹ The result was the emergence of immigrant communities in cities which had not previously existed. These immigrant communities, along with the influx of displaced agrarians from more rural parts of the country, led to the population growth in urban centers that helped to meet the growing demand for labor.

While the benefit of this influx in immigration to the US was an increase in cultural diversity, the drawback was that these immigrants faced poor working conditions and often had no recourse to address those conditions. Far from the narrative of prosperity that often accompanies stories of economic growth, the lived experiences of these workers was anything but prosperous. Factory owners’ drive to spend as little as possible to produce as much as possible translated into low wages, long hours and dangerous working environments. These challenges were even worse for the millions of children, sometime as young as ten years old, who were forced into factory life. Furthermore, the corporatization of industry contributed to a widening of the gap between the wealthy and the poor: whereas craftspeople once comprised a hearty

⁵¹ Ibid. See also Simon Kuznets, “The Contribution of Immigration to the Growth of the Labor Force,” in Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, eds., *The Reinterpretation of American Economic History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 396-401.

middle class, life in the corporation was dictated by wealthy owners and managers who paid extremely low wages to high volumes of producers.⁵² In some places, corporate control extended beyond working hours. In so-called “company towns”—entire towns owned by corporations that controlled not only the workplace, but also the homes, stores and virtually all other aspects of life—laborers lacked the vast majority of protections that most American workers are guaranteed today.⁵³ As a result of these conditions, laborers faced a conundrum: endure the physical risks of seeking industrial employment, or forgo any chance of economic prosperity.

In response to the grave risks facing workers, labor unions emerged to protect workers, but the growth of the labor movement spurred social unrest. Even before 1870, groups like the National Labor Union, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, and the Knights of Labor began to form, and prominent organizers such as Terrence Powderly, Eugene Debs and Samuel Gompers emerged as heroes of the worker. These unions served as advocates for workers, organizing strikes aimed at limiting work days to eight hours, responding to reductions in wages and protecting workers against having their labor replaced by machinery. In theory, participation in unions meant improved conditions and key protections for workers. However, in practice, participation in the labor movement was risky. At best, joining a union opened

⁵² Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 13-14.

⁵³ Neil White, *Company Towns: Corporate Order and Community* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 5-12.

workers up to the possibility of losing their jobs, while at worst, joining a union meant the possibility of being beaten or even killed. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, the three most famous labor firestorms alone—the Haymarket riots, the Pullman strike and the Homestead strike—resulted in dozens of deaths and more than one hundred people injured. Thus, while unions emerged as a response to the strife caused by rapid industrialization leading up to the turn of the twentieth century, they also became the source of significant social unrest.

The unrelenting social unrest surrounding the labor problem was further exacerbated by the concurrent deterioration of the economy. As I mentioned, unemployment emerged as a new social and economic problem because mass migration from the farm to the city and from Europe to the US caused the supply of labor to exceed its demand.⁵⁴ Furthermore, gold reserves, critical given the country's commitment to the Gold Standard, had dwindled to an all-time low of just \$59 million by 1893.⁵⁵ This problem was made worse by increases in government spending necessitated by a sharp uptick in public works projects that sought to develop roads and

⁵⁴ Some estimates hold that unemployment quadrupled between 1892 and 1893, pushing rates of joblessness to nearly 12 percent in 1893 and over 18 percent by 1894. For more on unemployment levels at the time, see Christina Romer, "Spurious Volatility in Historical Unemployment Data," *Journal of Political Economy*, no. 94 (1986): 1-37.

⁵⁵ Harold Underwood Faulkner, *American Economic History* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943), 553.

railways that would support burgeoning industries. To finance these projects and preserve its limited gold reserves, the government imposed the first-ever peacetime income taxes, which helped industry but hindered the ability of working Americans to be active contributors to the economy. Together, these economic challenges culminated in the Panic of 1893, which at the time was the most significant economic recession in American history. Unsurprisingly, the economic problems wrought by the Panic of 1893 intensified the social unrest already plaguing Americans during the Gilded Age.

Populism as a Response to Social and Economic Strife

Following the inquiries of a wide range of historians, I argue that one way to understand the social unrest of the last decade of the nineteenth century is by turning to populism. By the beginning of 1894 when Jacob Coxey first announced his plan to lead an army of the unemployed to Washington, populist ideas had been circulating in public discourse for quite some time, and from the expressions of these ideas emerged a rhetoric that I argue was one of the ways in which downtrodden Americans made sense of their dubious situations. Therefore, this subsection is devoted to explaining how I understand populism and how I relate populist discourse of the 1890s to the rhetoric of Coxey's Army.

Those who have studied populism have struggled to agree on a concrete definition for the concept, in part because it has been used to describe so many disparate ideas and in part because populist expressions evolve according to the historical contexts in which they arise. Speaking to the first of these challenges, political scientist Michael Kazin noted how journalists and others have developed "the habit of branding

as ‘populist’ everything from Bruce Springsteen to Rush Limbaugh to loose-fitting cotton trousers.”⁵⁶ By using the term to represent everything, Kazin argued, populism has become detached from any concrete meaning whatsoever. Complicating the fact that populism has been hard to define is the fact that it has been the outgrowth of a wide range of dissimilar historical contexts. For example, the Farmer’s Alliance—the rhetoric of which has frequently considered to be populist in nature—was an alliance between supporters of the Granger movement and the Knights of Labor. Because the Grangers were primarily farmers and the Knights of Labor existed to protect the interests of workers, the Farmer’s Alliance came together to represent the diverse interests of those in the agrarian community and those in the industrialized urban centers.⁵⁷ The disparate interests woven together into populist organizations have thus complicated scholars’ ability to define populism.

Given the fluid meaning with which populism has been associated, I am compelled to offer a framework for how I understand populism, as that framework guides the ways I relate Coxe’s Army to discourses of populism. This framework is founded on two assumptions. First, I embrace a polysemous understanding of populism, meaning that I appreciate its multiple and distinct meanings, rather than endorsing

⁵⁶ Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 5.

⁵⁷ Michael Allen Chambers, “Traditional Values and Progressive Desires: Tensions of Identity in the Rhetoric of the Granger Movement in Illinois, 1870-1875,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 2008), 28.

whichever definition would otherwise be deemed “the best.”⁵⁸ In other words, if populism meant something different to members of the People’s Party who held congressional office than it did to economically downtrodden factory workers, then I examine iterations of populism from both of these perspectives, rather than just one. This requires me to call on literature which best helps me explain the populist dynamics of the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army, even if that literature is in disagreement about what populism is or was.

Second, while populism has been used to describe political ideas, political parties, social movements and more, I treat populism as a rhetoric. This is the approach Michael Kazin took in his study of populism, in which he noted that populism can be seen as “a persistent yet mutable style of political rhetoric with roots deep in the nineteenth century.”⁵⁹ I believe that the most helpful description of the populist rhetorical style comes to us from rhetorical theorist Michael Lee, who identified four characteristics of what he calls the “populist argumentative frame.”⁶⁰ These

⁵⁸ Rhetorical scholar Leah Ceccarelli defined polysemy as “that state where a single lexical term has taken on distinct but related senses.” See Leah Ceccarelli, “Polysemy: Multiple Meanings in Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84, no. 4 (1998): 411.

⁵⁹ Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 5.

⁶⁰ Michael C. Lee, “The Populist Chameleon: The People’s Party, Huey Long, George Wallace and the Populist Argumentative Frame,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 4 (2006): 358-362.

characteristics include the constitution of the people as virtuous, the constitution of an enemy in opposition to the people, disdain for a vague notion of “the system,” and the promise of what Lee refers to as “apocalyptic confrontation.”⁶¹ This framework is helpful because it allows us to evaluate expressions of populism not as an existential belief system, but as a source of motivation that emerges through discourse. Therefore, this way of treating populism renders greater insights than were I to choose a monolithic definition for the word and apply that definition as a single, unifying lens for my study of the Army’s rhetoric.

Moreover, the benefit of this approach is that it enables me to draw on the insights of a range of scholars who have questioned what motivated populism in the 1890s. This is especially important given how different scholars have offered conflicting perspectives regarding what motivates populism. One groundbreaking study to offer a perspective on what motivated populism was John Hicks’ 1931 book, *The Populist Revolt*.⁶² In his work, Hicks argued that populism was motivated largely by economic downturn. Tracing the roots of populism back to the economic distress facing farmers in the 1870s, Hicks argued that populism is, in its essence, an expression of discontent. In some ways, this perspective makes a great deal of sense, as economic downturn in the 1890s and more recently has yielded populist sentiments in public discourse. Coxey’s Army, for example, came to being largely because of the economic downturn and mass unemployment facing millions of would-be workers. Even in

⁶¹ Ibid., 358.

⁶² John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers’ Alliance and the People’s Party* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1931).

contemporary contexts, economic downturn has played into pronouncements of populism. For example, the so-called “Tea Party” movement of the political Right that rose to prominence in the late 2000s and early 2010s branded itself as a populist response to the failed economic policies that caused the Great Recession.⁶³ At the same time, the fact that not every instance of economic downturn has been met with a sharp uptick in populist sentiment suggests that a fragile economy is not the only condition motivating populism. As historian Robert McMath put it, economic downturn is necessary, but not sufficient, for calling forth pronounced expressions of populism.⁶⁴

A differing and notably more negative perspective on what motivated populism maintains that populism was an expression of the tension between individual welfare and the collective good. This perspective was first offered by historian Richard Hofstadter in his rejoinder to Hicks, *The Age of Reform*.⁶⁵ For Hofstadter, populist reform movements are not “foolish or destructive” by nature, but have, “like so many

⁶³ See, for example, Anthony DiMaggio, *The Rise of the Tea Party: Political Discontent and Corporate Media in the Age of Obama* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2011). Although I do not consider the rhetoric of the Tea Party to be populist, many elected officials who proclaimed themselves as representatives of the Tea Party evoked populism referred to themselves with that term.

⁶⁴ McMath, *American Populism*, 180-212.

⁶⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955).

things in life, an ambiguous character.”⁶⁶ Hofstadter continued by arguing that “while rhetorics of individualism emphasize self-discipline and a strong work ethic, their focus on the self at the expense of the common good has been used to justify racist, nativist and anti-Semitic values.”⁶⁷ I find this perspective especially enlightening for my study because by my estimation, Coxey’s Army was a clear expression of the tension Hofstadter described. On the one hand, Army rhetoric emphasized the need for individuals to take control of their own personal situations, and much of Coxey’s rhetoric focused on how his supporters were looking for the opportunity to make an honest living, not for a handout from the government. But on the other hand, this rhetoric stood opposed to the Army’s denouncement of the lower classes—comprised, albeit implicitly, of the immigrants who were prohibited from joining the march. Hence, Hofstadter’s argument about the tension between individualism and the collective good provides a helpful entry point for understanding how Coxey’s Army was inspired by and responded to this important tension.

While both Hicks and Hofstadter offered a story about what motivated populism as it reached its apex in the 1890s, neither scholar sufficiently accounted for what motivated the formation of Coxey’s Army, and I argue that the key factor both of these scholars overlooked was the Army’s rhetoric. Hicks and Hofstadter’s explanations are only partially complete because they only account for the material conditions that inform populism and not the rhetoric which transformed those conditions into

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

motivation. On its own, unemployment would not be enough to stoke populist arguments about the need to create jobs. Instead, Coxey's Army had to craft rhetoric that would relate unemployment to the populist ideas that already circulated and transform those ideas into a reason why the government should take action. As I argue in Chapter Six, there was a great deal of similarity between populist rhetoric and what I call "Coxeyist" rhetoric, making it all the more remarkable to me that scholars of populism have largely ignored Coxey's Army. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to contextualize the rhetoric of Coxey's Army against the backdrop of populism, paying particular attention to what motivated Coxey's Army and how those motivations were and were not similar to the motivations that drove populism to its apex.

In the preceding pages, I have argued that the story of Coxey's Army is one we can only understand by looking at the political, social and economic unrest of the time. Rapid economic expansion in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, though good for the economy, created a demand for labor that jeopardized the well-being of workers, leading to overall social unrest. In response to this unrest, people turned to populism, but as I have argued here, extant explanations of populism in the 1890s are incomplete because they do not account for what motivated Coxey's Army as a more specific expression of economic unrest. Luckily, a handful of scholars who have studied Coxey's Army have shed light on these motivations. Therefore, I review those scholars' insights in the section that follows.

Scholarly Insights into Coxey's Army and its Rhetoric

In this section, I review the scholarly literature on Coxey's Army, both to deepen my readers' understanding of the historical moment, as well as to help situate the contribution this dissertation makes to that scholarship. Because I included much of the literature on Coxey's Army in the section on significance above, this section offers an overview of the scholarship to which I turn to explain Coxey's Army, rather than a comprehensive account of all existing literature. Furthermore, although I am primarily interested in the insights we glean from examining Coxey's Army from a rhetorical/public address perspective, there is a notable dearth of literature in this area. Therefore, in addition to rhetorical scholarship, I also rely in this section and in my dissertation more broadly on scholarship from other fields, as well as on the few comprehensive accounts available to me from the firsthand perspectives of those who participated.

The firsthand accounts left behind by participants in the march, though few in number, help me gain a sense of what life was like on the road to Washington. Although some of the literature on industrial army marches seeks to do this—either by focusing on the movement as a whole or on individual marches in particular—no scholarship offers an adequate glimpse into life in Coxey's Army. Furthermore, most of the scholars who have treated Coxey's Army have only done so as a means of providing context for other historical events, rather than offering in-depth analyses about the Army itself. Therefore, I first turn to the few accounts of people who actually participated in the Army to get a sense of what daily life was like for those who marched. One account comes from Henry Vincent, the official documentarian of the march, who kept a daily log of the Army's activities—this remains the most comprehensive and detailed account

available.⁶⁸ While Vincent's telling of the Army story is at times mundane, it offers a glimpse into the everyday lived experiences of those who risked so much to make the protest a success.

Like Vincent, Carl Browne—the man Coxe met in Chicago and who would later become the Army's "Chief Marshal"—also wrote an account of what life was like on the road to Washington, which he published as part of his personal memoirs in 1944.⁶⁹ Because Browne was known to embellish, I read his account with caution; indeed, his descriptions of life in the Army are much more colorful than Vincent's unadorned style.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, I find Browne's memoirs illuminative, because

⁶⁸ Henry Vincent, *The Story of the Commonweal*. I treat *The Story of the Commonweal* as a both a primary and a secondary account of Coxe's Army. When turning to Vincent's day-by-day reporting of what happened in and between Massillon and Washington, I treat his account as secondary, akin to that of an historian. When looking to Vincent for his commentary on what happened, I treat his account as primary.

⁶⁹ Carl Browne, William McDevitt and Jacob Coxe, *When Coxe's "Army" Marcht [sic] on Washington* (San Francisco: n.p., 1944).

⁷⁰ Several other scholars have retold the history of Coxe's Army, albeit in far less detail. See Sean Dennis Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age: From the Death of Lincoln to the Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Franklin Folsom, *Impatient Armies of the Poor: The Story of Collective Action of the Unemployed, 1808-1942* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 1991); and John

whereas Vincent's account captured the Army from the perspective of the rank and file, Browne offered a sense of what it was like to participate in the Army from the perspective of one of its leaders. Together, Vincent and Browne's insights reveal much about the physical struggles the marchers faced each day, the media's scathing depictions of the Army, and the efforts undertaken to boost and maintain morale. These insights point me to some of the ways the Army sustained commitment to their cause despite intensely challenging circumstances.

Although these firsthand accounts offer insightful details about daily life for those in the Army, they obviously did not contextualize those details within their historical moment, which is why I turn to historians for what they have uncovered about the Army. As I argued earlier in this chapter, these insights are limited, largely because most scholars have been dismissive of Coxey's Army, seeing its legislative failure as reason to discuss the Army only briefly, if at all. That does not mean, however, that all scholars have dismissed the significance of the Army, and to the contrary, I find myself repeatedly turning to a handful of scholars as I work to make sense of the Army's rhetoric. For example, Carlos Schwantes related the challenges facing the Army to traditionally held assumptions about poverty.⁷¹ These assumptions—rooted in the tension between individualism and the collective good that Hofstadter and others

Grant, *Coxey's 38-day March through the Alleghenies in Search of Economic Justice* (Frostburg, MD: Council of the Alleghenies, 1999). For Barber's discussion on Browne's personal memoirs, see Barber, *Marching on Washington*, 10.

⁷¹ Carlos Schwantes, *Coxey's Army*, 31.

described—played significantly into the Army’s rhetoric as it sought to prove that its members would work if given the opportunity to do so.

As another example of a historian whose work has enriched my understanding of Coxe’s Army, I find myself returning often to Donald McMurry, the first scholar to publish a book-length examination of the Army. McMurry, despite not being a scholar of rhetoric, was the first to make the case for Coxe’s rhetorical acumen, arguing that he carefully and successfully negotiated the tension between the need for government to be more proactive in its economic policy and concerns that such interventions would lead to paternalism.⁷² This is another example of scholarship that is insightful for how it related Coxe’s Army to the prevailing public opinion of the time; by calling attention to attitudes about the conditions under which the government should intervene in economic policy, McMurry pointed to one of the complex challenges the Army faced in advancing its cause.

I certainly appreciate the contributions of scholars like Schwantes, McMurry and others for what they tell me about the history surrounding Coxe’s Army, but these scholars say virtually nothing about the Army’s rhetorical strategies, leaving me to turn to rhetorical scholarship for these insights instead. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the lone rhetorical study to treat Coxe’s Army with any depth was Malcolm Sillars’ 1972 essay, “The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots.” Sillars’ scholarship provides deep insights that inform my own project. First, because Sillars approached Coxe’s Army in terms of its argumentative opposition, he emphasized how

⁷² Donald McMurry, *Coxe’s Army*, 260-285.

portrayals of the Army were shaped as much by the Army's detractors as they were by its participants.⁷³ Because so much of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army was generated in response to this criticism, Sillars' scholarship offers a helpful lens through which we can examine the rhetoric of this historic protest. Second, I appreciate Sillars for how he related Coxey's Army to the history of the 1890s, and specifically to ideas about populism. For Sillars, one of the Army's key successes was that it called attention to a set of ideas—"nationalization of the currency, land, transportation, communication and all public monopolies."⁷⁴ Similar to how Hicks and Hofstadter help us understand what motivated populism leading up to the turn of the century, so too does Sillars shed light on Coxey's Army as an expression of populist discontent that was motivated by these issues.

Despite Sillars' insights about the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, in my mind, several questions still remain to be answered. For example, while Sillars added texture to the narrative of the struggle between the Army and its opponents, that story really only captured the ways in which Army leaders engaged in that struggle. However, these leaders were not solely responsible for resisting that struggle, and so the question of how rank-and-file members of Coxey's Army engaged remains unanswered. Furthermore, while Sillars did much to explain Coxey and Browne's leadership roles once the march had gotten underway, he did not explain how these leaders managed to organize the march in the first place, leaving me to wonder how potential members of

⁷³ Sillars, "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," 92.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

the Army were motivated by Coxey's efforts to transform the condition of unemployment into a reason for the prescribed course of action. The answers to these questions, provided in this dissertation, are at the heart of why the current study makes an important contribution to our scholarly understanding of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army.

As I have attempted to show in this section, there remains an important opportunity to learn more about Coxey's Army and its rhetoric. While the scholarship I have highlighted in the preceding pages does much to light the path toward this understanding, the relative dearth of scholarship about Coxey's Army illuminates an opportunity to move farther down that path. Thus, a study of Coxey's Army of this magnitude is warranted because despite the extant literature, rich insights are still to be gleaned. With this justification in mind, the next section of this chapter is focused on the method by which this study works to glean those insights.

A Multifaceted Approach to Studying the Rhetoric of Coxey's Army

To motivate Congress to take action, Coxey's Army created rhetoric that transformed economic downturn, unemployment, and populist and producer unrest into reasons to pass the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills. Thus, a study of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army is a study of the power of rhetoric to transform intense social and economic conditions into reasons for social change. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to answer three key questions about Coxey's Army to enable a deeper understanding of the historical moment in which it came to life. First, how were potential participants in the Army motivated by Coxey's efforts to transform the

economic downturn of 1893-1894 and its effect on unemployment into a reasons to support the cause? Second, how were those who would comprise Coxey's Army motivated to generate and sustain commitment to the cause, both on the road to Washington and in the absence of the leaders once they arrived at Congress' doorstep? And, finally, how did the success of the march—as opposed to the failure of its cause—contribute to evolutions in petitioning and in the reasons why government is justified in intervening in economic policy? In the pages that follow, I lay out my method for answering these three questions.

Rhetorical Challenge & Response:
A Framework for Analyzing Army Rhetoric

I organize my analyses of each stage of Coxey's Army according to the challenges it faced and the strategies it used to overcome those challenges. This arrangement works well for the discussions I offer in the pages of this dissertation because at its heart, the story of Coxey's Army is a story of people overcoming adversity to advance a worthy cause. Whether it was the challenge of converting potential participants into willing marchers in an unprecedented protest, the challenge of sustaining personal commitment to the cause despite intensely difficult conditions, or the challenge of expanding the very purpose of the protest in the presence of signs that legislative success may not have been attainable, Coxey's Army found itself crafting rhetorical strategies to overcome significant challenges at each and every turn. This observation raises a series of general questions about the Army's rhetoric at each of its stages. Toward what end did the Army need to motivate at each respective stage of its lifespan? What challenges emerged that threatened to erode that motivation? What

rhetorical resources were available to the Army to strengthen motivation, and how did they leverage those resources to overcome their challenges? At a general level, these questions point to the strategies Coxey's Army used as it sought to achieve its broadest objective of getting Congress to pass its signature legislation.

As I answer each of these questions, there emerges a particular rhetorical complex, and this complex raises a set of more specific questions that I answer in my quest to show the potential these strategies had to succeed. First, how does rhetoric in each respective stage constitute its audience? Second, who is the rhetor responsible for creating this rhetoric, and what appeals do they craft? What motivational potential do those appeals exhibit? Third, how does the rhetor disseminate those appeals, and to what extent is the dissemination strategy successful? Fourth and finally, how does the rhetor attempt to overcome the challenges that arise as a result of each of these rhetorical choices? What potential do these efforts have to succeed? I work to answer these questions, albeit in various constellations, throughout each chapter of this dissertation because together, they comprise the general framework that I use to understand both the Army's motivational rhetoric and the challenges that threatened motivation.

My decision to focus on the Army's strategic responses to the challenges they faced, in addition to focusing on the challenges themselves, is premised on the idea that rhetoric does real work in shaping meaning in a given situation. In other words, I assume that the chances Coxey's Army had to succeed were not determined solely by the challenges it faced; in addition, its chances of success were determined by the ways in which the Army used rhetoric to navigate those challenges. To explain this point, I

turn to theories of situational rhetoric, which first captured rhetorical scholars' attention in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the publication of two pivotal essays. The first of these essays, authored by Lloyd Bitzer in 1968, gave voice to the deterministic approach to rhetorical criticism. In "The Rhetorical Situation," Bitzer argued that rhetoric is the result of a given situation and that there exists a finite range of acceptable rhetorical responses to that situation.⁷⁵ According to Bitzer, the dimensions of the range of appropriate responses to a given situation are shaped by the exigence (what he defines as the "imperfection marked by urgency"), the audience and the constraints.⁷⁶ I find this perspective on the rhetorical situation helpful in two different ways. First, Bitzer emphasized the importance of material conditions over which the rhetor has no control for how they limit and enable the ways in which a rhetor can respond to the situation. In the context of Coxe's Army, the material conditions of economic downturn were essential to Coxe's ability to organize the march in the first place. Had

⁷⁵ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968): 1-14.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 6. Important to note about Bitzer's conception of constraints is that they not only foreclose the appropriateness of some types of responses to a situation, but they also create opportunities for other types of responses. For example, when a U.S. president gives a speech in response to a mass shooting, that shooting becomes a constraining factor. However, in the same way the shooting constrains the tone of the president's oratory, it also creates an opportunity for her to develop her case for the need for gun control.

unemployment remained low, few would have been sympathetic to Coxey's claim that Congress should take significant measures to create jobs. Second, Bitzer revealed how the choices a rhetor makes are themselves a source of rhetorical constraint. "When the orator enters the situation, [her] discourse not only harnesses constraints given by the situation, but provides additional important constraints," Bitzer argued.⁷⁷ Within the context of Coxey's Army, this dynamic played out in each of the various stages of its lifespan; each rhetorical choice made yielded a challenge that constrained future discursive choices.

Although I find Bitzer's focus on materiality and constraints helpful in explaining how rhetorical challenges complicate the ability of rhetors to help their audiences make sense of their situations, I am troubled by how this perspective neutralizes the power inherent in rhetoric. Indeed, if I were to buy Bitzer's argument that rhetoric is always subservient to materiality, then my study of Coxey's Army would do better to focus on the situation to which it responded rather than on the rhetoric it used in that response. This critique is most clearly articulated by Richard Vatz, whose 1973 essay, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," is the second of the two pivotal works I referred to above. Vatz took issue with Bitzer's deterministic approach to the rhetorical situation, arguing that while situations can constrain the range of rhetorical responses we would consider appropriate, it is also true that the rhetoric shapes the

⁷⁷ Ibid., 8.

situation.⁷⁸ This perspective deemphasizes the importance of materiality by maintaining that rhetoric *creates* reality, rather than merely reflecting it.

Following Vatz's reasoning that rhetoric has the power to shape situations, my own perspective maintains that the ways in which people use discourse to respond to challenges is as important as the challenges themselves. A Bitzerian approach to studying the rhetoric of Coxey's Army would focus almost entirely on unemployment as the exigence demanding an appropriate rhetorical response; such an approach would pay little attention, if any, to the strategies the Army crafted in response to unemployment. While I see high levels of unemployment as a necessary condition for that particular group of people to come together to argue that Congress needed to pass job-creation measures, unemployment alone was not enough to give rise to the Army. Thus, following Vatz's argument that rhetoric has the potential to shape a situation, I attend not only to the challenges facing Coxey's Army, but also to the strategic rhetorical choices it made in response.

Having chosen a general framework for how I approach the rhetoric of Coxey's Army in the current study, the remainder of this section is dedicated to explaining the specific ways in which I seek insights about the body of texts in question. One important step in helping my reader to understand my method is to explain the scholarly lens through which I approach the Army's rhetoric. However, whereas some scholars examine rhetoric through a lens that is informed by only one scholarly perspective, I

⁷⁸ Richard E. Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 3 (1973): 154-161.

pick and choose a variety of perspectives, because I believe doing so renders greater insights about the rhetoric I explore. Therefore, before diving deeper into the perspectives on which I rely, I first explain the notion of critical pluralism, which is what authorizes my decision to pick and choose from the insights of a range of related but unique scholarship.

A Critical Pluralistic Approach to Studying the Rhetoric of Coxey's Army

To explain the challenges facing the Army and the rhetorical strategies it crafted in response, I select from a range of scholarly insights those perspectives which guide my study of Coxey's Army. Within the field of rhetorical criticism, debates over how best to approach the process of analyzing a text have given rise to two general schools of thought—one which emphasizes the need for a critical method, and one that argues that fixating on method is counter-productive to the goals of criticism. Those in the first of these schools of thought argue the need for selecting a single “critical method” through which the scholar comes to understand the text(s) she has chosen to analyze. Rhetorical theorists Bernard Brock and Robert Scott refer to this as the “paradigmatic approach,” noting that it was the only acceptable means of critiquing rhetoric for the first several decades of our field's existence.⁷⁹ Generally speaking, the argument in

⁷⁹ Bernard L. Brock and Robert L. Scott, *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective*, 2nd ed., rev. (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1980), 470.

favor of the paradigmatic approach is that encourages analytical consistency and ensures that critics glean particular types of insights about the rhetoric in question. As rhetorical scholars William Nothstine, Carole Blair and Gary Copeland explained, critics' emphasis on method is due, in part, to the belief that method in humanistic research is equivalent to method in scientific and social scientific research, "as if [critical methods] provide a direct and universal access bridge for the critic between 'data' and theoretical generalization."⁸⁰ Especially given concerns about the perceived legitimacy of rhetorical criticism as a distinct field of inquiry, emphasis on the need for sound methodological approaches in our research is understandable.

In opposition to the paradigmatic approach, the second school of thought regarding method in rhetorical criticism generally maintains that analyzing a text from a single perspective limits the range of insights that can be gleaned. Edwin Black gave voice to this argument in his 1965 book, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*. Examining the range of critical methods available to scholars at the time, Black argued that although each illuminated something about a text, none were adequately useful in explaining the full range of insights that could potentially be gleaned.⁸¹ Thirty-five years later, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell revisited the field's debates over method and found

⁸⁰ William L. Nothstine, Carole Blair and Gary A. Copeland, *Critical Questions: Invention, Creativity and the Criticism of Discourse and Media* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 40.

⁸¹ Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

that while more scholars than in 1965 were willing to dismiss the necessity of critical method, methodological fixation still remained. “Simplified ways of approaching texts that ease critical analysis” are dangerous, Campbell argued, because there can be no replicable formulas for understanding the complex ways in which language creates meaning.⁸² “Methods,” Campbell continued, “become screens through which we view this symbolic world, and in most cases, these screens distort, alter or damage what they are intended to explain and reveal.”⁸³ Thus, rather than encouraging analytical consistency as advocates of the paradigmatic approach maintain, emphasizing the need for critical methods only serves to foreclose the possibility of certain insights, which is counter to the purpose of rhetorical criticism.

I enter into this debate on the side of Black, Campbell and the many others who have made the case that exploiting the insights of a variety of perspectives is a more productive way of using rhetoric to illuminate our social world. This is not to say that studies that examine rhetoric through a single scholarly lens do not render helpful insights.⁸⁴ However, such approaches inherently limit the type and number of questions

⁸² Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “Rhetorical Criticism 2009: A Study in Method,” in Shawn J. Parry-Giles and J. Michael Hogan, eds., *The Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 93.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁸⁴ For example, Mari Boor Tonn, Valerie Endress and John Diamond’s study of the rhetoric surrounding the killing of Maine housewife Karen Wood exclusively employed Kenneth Burke’s theory of motivation as its method. See Mari Boor Tonn,

that can be asked about a text. Because my study of the rhetoric of Coxe's Army is designed to answer a number of distinct and sometimes unrelated questions, I embrace a critical pluralistic approach to criticism in this dissertation. Critical pluralism—as opposed to the methodological monism that dominated rhetorical criticism—maintains that the most productive way to analyze a text or set of texts is to exploit the most useful insights gleaned by other scholars. Therefore, my approach to studying the rhetoric of Coxe's Army is to understand the insights of scholars who have sought to answer questions similar to my own and to put those insights to work in service of my study.

Although pluralism authorizes the critic to weave together different perspectives in service of the rhetoric in question, *critical* pluralism demands that the critic do so with a particular level of care. Rather than examining discourse through any amalgamation of perspectives, a critical pluralist is one who establishes a set of criteria for determining which scholarly contributions will be most useful, based on the breadth, depth and types of insights sought. In other words, as a critical pluralist, I recognize that some perspectives are better than others because of how they illuminate the rhetoric of Coxe's Army, therefore leading me to prefer certain insights while discarding others that do relatively little in helping me to answer the questions I ask.⁸⁵ The utility of this approach over the paradigmatic approach is that I am not forbidden from asking

Valerie A. Endress and John N. Diamond, "Hunting and Heritage on Trial: A Dramatistic Debate over Tragedy, Tradition and Territory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 79, no. 2 (1993): 165-181.

⁸⁵ Booth, *Critical Understanding*, 25.

questions that might render useful insights but that cannot be answered by the chosen critical method.

Having chosen to adopt a critical pluralistic approach to my study of Coxe's Army, my task was thus to identify the criteria that would dictate whether or not I would call on particular bodies of scholarship. From this exercise, I discerned three important criteria, meaning I chose to examine Army rhetoric from the perspectives of scholarship *only* when that scholarship met each of the following three criteria. First, the utility or applicability of the perspective must be evident to me—a threshold Steven Pepper refers to as “theoretical skepticism.”⁸⁶ This criterion is what leads me to consider the insights of those who have studied the rhetoric of social movements, for instance. Because the dynamics of the Army's rhetoric are at times similar to movement rhetoric, the insights of scholars who have studied movement rhetoric can be useful.

Second, the explanatory power of the perspective must be evident to me. As rhetorical theorist Lawrence Rosenfield once noted, a critic must appreciate the rhetoric in order to critique it, as that appreciation informs both the critic's reason for commenting on a text in the first place, and the contours of their evaluation.⁸⁷ This criterion is what points me to literature about populist rhetoric, for example. Even

⁸⁶ Stephen C. Pepper, *World Hypotheses: Prolegomena to Systematic Philosophy and a Complete Survey of Metaphysics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942).

⁸⁷ Lawrence W. Rosenfield, “The Experience of Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60, no. 4 (1974): 489-496.

though populist rhetoric was most commonly tailored to address farmers—and even though farmers did not comprise the Army’s key audience—these rhetorics resembled one another in their emphasis on the need to stem the tide of economic downturn. Especially given my native curiosity for how downtrodden people make sense of their economic conditions, I find scholarship about populism useful in explaining the power of rhetoric during times of economic downturn.

Third and finally, the chosen perspective must enable me to posit an argument about the social world in which the rhetoric circulated in addition to positing an argument about the interior dimensions of the rhetoric itself. Following the lead of scholars like Wayne Brockriede, this criterion functions as an outgrowth of my belief that rhetorical criticism should explain something about the social world in which we live.⁸⁸ It is also what compels me to use perspectives on petitioning, for instance, to understand the magnitude of what Coxey’s Army set out to achieve. The scholarship on petitioning has already gleaned a great deal of insight and can therefore be put to work in service of my quest to understand the role of Coxey’s Army as a pivot point in the ever-evolving history of petitioning. Therefore, alongside my first two criteria, my third criterion requires that I draw on scholarly perspectives that enable me to make an

⁸⁸ This belief derives from the scholarship of Wayne Brockriede, who maintained that beyond merely saying something about the rhetoric itself, the role of the critic is to make an argument about how the rhetoric creates meaning for the audiences to which it is addressed. See Wayne Brockriede, “Rhetorical Criticism as Argument,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60, no. 2 (1974): 165-174.

argument about the social world in which we live, rather than saying something only about the textual interiors of the rhetoric I study.

Following the tenets of critical pluralism as the alternative to the methodological fixation that characterizes the paradigmatic approach, I exploit a wide variety of perspectives throughout this dissertation. In some cases, I draw on these perspectives deeply. For example, scholarship on movement rhetoric is so richly textured and so clearly applicable to my study that I call on this literature quite liberally. Conversely, some areas of scholarship have offered relatively fewer insights, or the insights offered illuminate only one particular nuance of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army. For instance, only a few scholars have examined petitioning as a rhetorical form. So, while I draw on the insights of these scholars to an extent, I devote notably less attention to their work. Therefore, rather than enumerating each and every study that meets the three criteria outlined above, the next section is arranged according to the broad bodies of literature on which I draw to understand the rhetorical life of Coxey's Army.

Examining the Rhetoric of Coxey's Army from a Multitude of Scholarly Perspectives

In explaining the bodies of literature to which I turn for my study, I am reminded that one benefit of critical pluralism is that I need not play servant to inconsistencies that arise when scholars engage in intellectual debates. For example, those who have examined rhetoric created by, for and about movements disagree about whether there is even such thing as a movement, existentially speaking. As one of the first scholars in the field of rhetoric to offer a definition of movements, Leland Griffin posited in 1952 that movements come into being when some group of people,

dissatisfied with their situations, work toward social change, efforts for which result in some degree of success or failure.⁸⁹ Following Griffin and the scholars who endorse his perspective, my task as a critic—if I were a critical monist—would be to analyze that “discourse generated in the conflict between a movement’s advocates and the defenders of the established social order.”⁹⁰ Likely, completing this task would render helpful insights about how people engaged in movements encounter and overcome opposition.

Despite how useful these insights may be, a critical monist following the “establishment-conflict” model as their method for understanding their text would struggle when faced with more recent scholarship which has critiqued this approach. A proliferation of scholars have used a series of counter-examples to show how a movement does not always arise from opposition between a subjugated public and the established social order, bringing us to the point where the existential perspective on movements breaks down. Public address scholar David Zarefsky, for example, challenged the assumption that movements are insurgent forces by turning to Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty.⁹¹ Rhetorical scholar Robert Cathcart problematized the existential approach by arguing that movements are better understood when we examine

⁸⁹ Leland Griffin, “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 38, no. 3 (1952): 184-188.

⁹⁰ Ralph R. Smith and Russell R. Windes, “The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61, no. 2 (1975): 140-153.

⁹¹ David Zarefsky, “President Johnson’s War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three ‘Establishment’ Movements,” *Communication Monographs* 44, no. 4 (1977): 352.

what he calls “dialectical enjoiment in the moral arena.”⁹² And indeed, Zarefsky and Cathcart are not alone; dozens of other scholars have posited their own views on which actors, conditions and discourses might help us to identify a movement, illustrating the problem with adopting a single method like the existential approach or the establishment-conflict method.

Luckily, as a critical pluralist, I am not fixated on method, meaning that I do not have to rectify which perspective on movements would comprise the lens through which I would evaluate the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army. Instead, at various points in this dissertation, I borrow the language of movements liberally to talk about Coxey’s Army. This is a useful way of advancing this study for a couple of reasons. First, evidence suggests that Coxey saw himself leading a movement, meaning he perceived the challenges he faced as similar to those facing other movement leaders. Therefore, because other scholars have asked how other movement leaders have overcome those challenges, I can exploit those scholars’ insights for my own purposes. Second, although other scholars’ descriptions of movements do not always describe Coxey’s Army, in some cases, the similarities are clear. Thus, by asking the same questions about Coxey’s Army that these scholars ask about the movements they study, I can glean helpful insights that would not otherwise be possible were I to adopt the paradigmatic approach. Therefore, regardless of whether or not other scholars would

⁹² Robert S. Cathcart, “New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically,” *Western Journal of Communication* 36, no. 2 (1972): 82-88.

classify Coxey's Army as a movement, I am still authorized to exploit their critical vocabularies for the current study.

Of course, because I am a *critical* pluralist, I am drawn to some specific lines of inquiry from within this broad literature over others. For example, the first question I grapple with is how potential marchers were motivated by Coxey in his role as leader and organizer of the protest. Despite differing perspectives, a common way of seeing rhetoric emerges in the literature: as a force leaders put to work to motivate active participation among potential supporters. Therefore, seeking to understand the appeals Coxey made to would-be marchers and the potential those appeals had for spurring supporters to action, I turn to insights about motivation and mobilization. Similarly, because I seek to understand how the Army brought others into their march, it makes sense that I would find insight in others' assessments about how leaders bring new supporters into their movements. Therefore, I find perspectives on movements useful in showing how people overcome opposition in their quest to enact social change. Finally, I am interested in explaining how the success of the march played into evolved ways of thinking about the justifications for why the government should intervene in economic policy. Therefore, I turn to studies of social movements from a public address perspective, as these studies trace the evolution of ideas as they emerge in public discourse. As a critical pluralist, I turn to all of these perspectives, carefully borrowing from each based on the usefulness of the insights they enable.

I should note here that in drawing on each of these narrower perspectives under the broad umbrella of rhetorical leadership in movements, I continually found myself grappling with *who* constitutes the rhetor in Coxey's Army. In so doing, I arrived at

three different perspectives, each of which has value. The first perspective maintains that leaders act as rhetors in efforts toward social protest. In the context of Coxeys' Army, Coxeys himself can be considered the rhetor at times. In 1970, Herbert Simons argued that critics of movements should examine the rhetoric of movement leaders, pointing to those leaders' roles in attracting followers, getting buy-in from external stakeholders and reacting to resistance.⁹³ Indeed, this approach has the potential to render helpful insights about Coxeys' Army, because we can very clearly see the ways Coxeys sought to carry out these rhetorical tasks.

The second perspective on who creates rhetoric in a movement advocates for treating the movement *as a whole* as the rhetor and thereby urges the critic to examine the rhetoric of the collectivity. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell used the feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s to justify this approach, arguing that treating the rhetoric of the whole is a much more fruitful approach because the voices of the "ordinary" members of movements are not always elevated.⁹⁴ This insight marks a clear evolution in the literature on movement rhetoric. Writing in 1973, Campbell urged critics to see the rhetorical power that inheres in a group, a vocabulary for which our field lacked at the time. I am especially drawn to this approach to seeing movement rhetoric because the

⁹³ Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 1 (1970): 1-11.

⁹⁴ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59, no. 1 (1973): 74-86.

rhetorical power of Coxey's Army often derived from the whole, rather than from its component parts.

Of course, this is not to suggest that the voices of the component parts did not emerge, and thus the third perspective on movement rhetoric from which I draw urges us to look at the discourse of the rank-and-file members of a protest. Several scholars have prodded critics to examine the rhetoric of these members. Karma Chavez, for example, argued that critics should understand the rhetoric that members of subjugated groups use to build coalitions with other groups that have been marginalized.⁹⁵ Similarly, Darrel Enck-Wanzer argued in his analysis of the Young Lords Organization that when disempowered from speaking, members of a subjugated community can use subversive action as rhetorical attempts to spur social change.⁹⁶ In a similar manner, the act of marching itself was one way that the rank-and-file members of Coxey's Army created rhetoric to advance the cause. Ultimately, each of these perspectives on who generates rhetoric in a movement lead me to conclude that rather than approaching Coxey's Army from the perspective of *just* the leaders or *just* the members—the way a

⁹⁵ Karma R. Chavez, "Counter-Public Enclaves and Understanding the Function of Rhetoric in Social Movement Coalition-Building," *Communication Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (2011): 1-18.

⁹⁶ Darrel Enck-Wanzer, "Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization's Garbage Offensive," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 174-201.

monist would do—more can be gleaned from looking at the movement from all three of these perspectives.

In addition to being able to choose multiple and sometimes disparate perspectives from within one body of literature, another benefit of critical pluralism is that it authorizes me draw on perspectives derived from different bodies of literature. Therefore, while those who have studied movement rhetoric offer a wealth of insights, their work alone is not sufficient for explaining Coxeys Army. To explain this point, I offer three examples of literature outside the field of movement study on which I draw to explain the rhetoric of Coxeys Army. First, I turn to historical perspectives on petitioning and on marches on Washington to understand the context of Coxeys claim that traditional modes of petitioning were ineffective. Second, I turn to insights on constitutive rhetoric to understand how economically downtrodden workers were constituted as political agents as a first step toward motivating their participation in the Army.⁹⁷ Finally, because I see populism as a style of speaking, I turn to scholarship that describes the characteristics of populist rhetoric as a backdrop against which we can better understand the rhetoric of Coxeysism.

⁹⁷ Whereas more rhetorical studies up until that point maintained that rhetoric worked instrumentally (i.e., as a means to an end, persuasion), Maurice Charland argued in 1985 that rhetoric also plays a constitutive function, meaning that it has the power to interpellate its subjects by discursively creating identities. See Maurice Charland, “Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133.

In sum, the diversity of these frameworks prove the utility of a critical pluralistic approach to studying the rhetoric of Coxey's Army. By situating Army rhetoric within the context of these related but distinct frameworks, I gain much more insight into the questions that drive this dissertation than were I to select one single perspective alone. In the preceding pages, I have explained the broad framework I employ in this dissertation, which examines both the challenges that faced the Army and the strategies it used to respond to those challenges, premised on the idea that the rhetoric of the Army did important work in shaping its situation. I also showed how, as a critical pluralist, I draw on a variety of scholarly perspectives in my quest to explain the rhetoric of Coxey's Army. These perspectives come from literature on social movements, petitioning as a rhetorical form, logics of constitutive rhetoric, populism as a rhetorical style and more. My next and final task, then, is to explain the rhetoric to be examined from the perspectives outlined in this section.

Discovering the Rhetorical Texture of Coxey's Army

Throughout this chapter, I have described how this dissertation approaches the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, the value of these approaches, the reasons why Coxey's Army represents a significant historical and rhetorical moment, and the ways this study seeks to contribute to what we already know about the protest. What I have yet to describe thus far is the rhetoric itself, including how it has endured over the past 120 years and the ways I treat it over the course of the five subsequent chapters that comprise this dissertation. By way of conclusion, this section addresses these unanswered questions.

The rhetoric I examine in the pages of this dissertation has been collected over the course of several years and from a wide range of different archives. My curiosity about Coxey's Army began at the very beginning of my doctoral education, when I was assigned the task of criticizing a rhetorical text for an introductory research methods course. As a student of the rhetoric of economic downturn, I stumbled upon Coxey's Army quite by accident, having found the speech Jacob Coxey intended to deliver from the steps of the U.S. Capitol on a Washington, DC, history blog. Thus, my initial research for this project was conducted back then, leading me to the repository for government documents at the University of Maryland, as well as to a small sample of newspaper articles about the march at the Library of Congress. It would be a few years before I realized Coxey's Army was to become the subject of my dissertation, and in those intervening years, literally hundreds more volumes of historical periodicals had become digitized. Although I still had to rely on microfilm for the dozens of periodicals not yet digitized, you can imagine how grateful I was to discover 120-year-old newspaper articles that were fully searchable!

It was not until 2012 when I made my first visit to an archival collection dedicated solely to Jacob Coxey and his Army. That collection led me to the Massillon Museum in Massillon, Ohio, where Coxey is somewhat of a local celebrity, even sixty years after his death. At the Massillon Museum, I gained access to over 1,200 original print newspaper clippings, more than five hundred pieces of correspondence, a small collection of handwritten speech manuscripts, a few of Coxey's own periodical publications, a couple hundred photographs and about a dozen folders full of documents from Coxey's life. (Of note, I even found ads for "Cox-E-Lax," Coxey's very own

legally patented laxative.) In addition to these primary sources, the Massillon Museum collection included a few master's theses and doctoral dissertations that were unavailable in scholarly databases, including that of Edwin Pugh, who completed his thesis on Coxe's Army in 1948 at the University of Pittsburgh.⁹⁸ I am grateful to the staff at the Massillon Museum, who not only helped me during my visit, but who have been invaluable as I have continued working to make sense of some of the particular idiosyncrasies I encountered about Coxe's Army since my visit to Massillon back in 2012.

The other critical archival resource to which I turned to collect rhetorical artifacts from Coxe's Army was Malcolm Sillars' personal papers, which he donated upon retirement to the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Although Sillars' collection was markedly smaller than the Massillon collection, it offered a rhetorical richness that I had not encountered in Ohio. For example, it included hundreds of newspaper articles that Professor Sillars had personally typed from their print versions and to which I would have otherwise lacked access. These typewritten newspaper articles often included Sillars' own, often instructive marginalia. Even more valuable were Sillars' personal notes, tracing themes in the Army rhetoric such as its use of military metaphors, devil and god terms, and more. While I did not get the chance to go to Salt Lake City in person to speak with the archivists there, I felt like

⁹⁸ Edwin V. Pugh, "General J.S. Coxe, Politician," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1957).

I had hit the rhetorical jackpot when photocopies of the entire collection arrived in the mail.

Finally, although the Massillon and Sillars collections offered me a great deal of data that I would otherwise have been unable to access, notably absent from these collections was the story of the Army as told by the members of its rank and file. Because it was important to me that these voices emerge in this dissertation, I relied heavily on newspaper articles. Some of these I found using the Library of Congress' *Chronicling America* database, while others were available on microfilm from the Frederick Public Library in Frederick, Maryland; the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland; the McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland in College Park; the Pennsylvania State Library in Harrisburg; and the Ohio Historical Society and the Ohio State Library in Columbus. I am grateful for each of these repositories and for the help of their staff members.

To be sure, relying on newspapers proved challenging, both because of the sheer volume of articles mentioning Coxey's Army and the other industrial army marches of 1894, and because most of these accounts talked *about* the marchers, rather than letting their voices speak for themselves. To negotiate these challenges, I looked specifically at newspaper articles that were published in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland and the District of Columbia—the jurisdictions through which the Army marched—between January 27 (when Coxey first announced the Army plan) and June 30, 1894 (when the Army's leaders had completed their jail sentences and most members of the protest had left the nation's capital). In particular, I paid specific attention to articles published in newspapers near the march route, especially in the days leading up to and shortly after

the Army's arrival in those newspapers' cities. In some instances, I chose to broaden this focus to include articles from newspapers in other cities that featured excerpts of the marchers' rhetoric.

These archives have given me a rich body of discourse with which to answer three critical questions about Coxey's Army. The first of these questions, which I address in Chapters Two and Three, relates to how potential participants were motivated to join the Army. At times, motivating potential participants to join the Army was the rhetorical task of Army leaders, especially Jacob Coxey and his chief marshal, Carl Browne. At other times, motivating participation in the Army was the rhetorical task of the marchers who had already pledged their support. Therefore, I look to the rhetoric of both of these groups of rhetors, which was primarily derived from the speeches Coxey gave at gatherings designed to attract participants, the series of bulletins issued by the J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association, and the hundreds of newspaper articles that featured rhetoric from and about the Army. The importance of this rhetoric relates back to my second argument about the Army's significance that in motivating support for their cause, Coxey's Army advanced a rationale for economic policymaking based on the need to help downtrodden individuals.

Having explained how people were motivated to participate in the march, the second main question I ask about Coxey's Army has to do with how its members sustained their commitment to the cause. Beyond converting new supporters, those who joined the Army needed to be motivated to continue participating despite the myriad of challenges they faced, a point which I discuss in Chapter Three. Therefore, in answering this question, my attention is drawn to rhetoric that illuminates the efforts of marchers

to persuade each other and themselves that continued participation was needed. This rhetoric was derived primarily from the hundreds of newspaper articles that were published while the Army was on the move from Massillon to Washington, but also from other sources. As one example, the Coxe papers in Massillon included sheet music for several of the songs that marchers would sing as they made their way toward Washington, and I argue that these songs were a critical way in which marchers kept morale high. Of course, the importance of these discourses relates back to the first significance I argument I laid out earlier in this chapter: that by calling attention to their cause, Coxe's Army also bought attention for their decision to march on Washington as a style of petitioning.

With an explanation of how the Army sustained commitment to its cause, we can see how the petition in boots made it all the way to Washington, where their leaders were promptly arrested. This moment raises the third main question addressed in the remaining chapters of this dissertation: How did the marchers, especially in the absence of their leaders, present an argument for their vision of social change? To answer this question, I look both to the rhetoric of the leaders as they continued working to pass the Army's legislation even from jail, and to the rhetoric of the marchers who had to find ways of voicing the necessity of their cause. One of the most pivotal texts I turn to in answering this question is "Coxe at the Capitol," the speech Coxe prepared for the Army's May 1 demonstration and which is the command of my focus in Chapter Four. In that chapter, I argue that the speech expanded the very purpose of the cause to include the assertion of the people's democratic right to petition. The rhetoric I analyze in Chapter Five thus explains how Army rhetors in the third and final stage completed

the expansion of purpose initiated by “Coxey at the Capitol” by transforming a series of themes and tropes that had served the Army well until that point. This rhetoric analyzed in Chapter Five is therefore derived from the newspaper articles written by the reporters who greeted the Army upon their arrival in Washington, as well as from a series of public documents. For example, the proceedings of Coxey and Browne’s court cases illuminate how Army leaders continued to advocate even after they were removed from the scene, while the Congressional Record illuminates how members of Congress were confronted by the marchers who remained at the Capitol. This rhetoric is important because it marks the convergence of the two significance arguments I crafted at the beginning of this chapter. As the apex of the Army effort, the marchers’ time in Washington is where their style of petitioning met the substance of their argument for social reform.

The answers to each of these questions lead me to my final task, which is to make an argument about the legacy of Coxey’s Army more broadly. With a thickened understanding of Coxey’s Army and the moment in which it took place, I make three key observations in Chapter Six, which serves as the conclusion to this study. First, I argue that Coxey’s rhetorical acumen—illustrated by his ability to weave together disparate rhetorics to transcend differences in his audience and his adaptability in the face of significant challenge—demands our celebration. Second, I call on specific examples from previous chapters to explain how the Army’s two key contributions—to economic policymaking and to our style of petitioning—were made possible by the Army’s rhetoric. Third and finally, I lay forth what I see to be the key characteristics of what I describe as “Coxeyist rhetoric,” the definition of which marks one of the ways

this dissertation makes a meaningful contribution to extant scholarship on Coxey's Army.

Rhetorically, historically, politically and economically speaking, the story of Coxey's Army is a story of triumph, and one need not be a student of public address for their curiosity to be piqued. As an instance of people coming together in the face of adversity to make their world a better place, those who comprised the Army—perhaps unintentionally—set the trajectory of American history on a slightly different course. At its best, this dissertation lets the voices of these brave advocates shine.

CHAPTER TWO

Rhetoric, Motivation and Mobilization: Recruiting Participants for the Petition in Boots

A person who has been used to luxury, a person, even, who has never suffered from lack of work, cannot understand the frenzy which possesses men who find themselves, however strong, and willing, and responsible, and true to the obligations of American citizenship, desperate, hungry, starving, or what is yet more bitter, their families crying out in want and misery. In these conditions men must simply act. There are many things they cannot do. They cannot employ themselves; they cannot change their occupations; they cannot, in the cruel, mercenary nature of things, fight their way into an honest living. They can, they will, they must plead, and fight, if necessary plead and fight, if necessary [sic], for their lives, and what is still more precious to them, the lives of those they love. These times develop sneaks, usurers, cutthroats [sic]. They also develop big, whole hearts. That charity is best and let's all try to have it which really tries to help others to help themselves.

—*Anonymous Letter to the Editor of the Washington Times, March 24, 1894*¹

About a week after newspapers began reporting on Jacob Coxey's plans to assemble a march on Washington, the J. S. Coxey Good Roads Association of America issued a bulletin which declared that "a procession of the enforced idle men of the country" would reach Washington on the first of May.² From this moment until the eve of Easter Sunday, Coxey exerted significant energy to motivate potential marchers to join the so-called Army. His efforts hinged on the idea that with enough men in line, the protestors could demonstrate to Congress that passing the Good Roads and Non-

¹ "Don't Laugh at Coxey," *Washington Times*, Mar. 24, 1894.

² *Bulletin No. 2* (Massillon, OH: J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the US, January 31, 1894). In the Ray Stannard Baker papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

Interest-Bearing Bonds bills was the will of the people. In Coxey's own words, "having very little faith that Congress would do more than pigeon-hole these bills, the idea was conceived of presenting the demand to Congress in the form of a petition with boots on."³ With the idea for a petition in boots so conceived, Coxey needed to reach as many potential marchers as possible with messages that motivated them to join the Army.

Therefore, this chapter is devoted to exploring the rhetorical strategies used to constitute an audience of potential marchers and to disseminate messages that would convert that audience's belief in Coxey's policies into action that would lead to the passage of the two bills. Specifically, I analyze the rhetoric of what I refer to as the Army's inception stage, which began with Coxey's announcement of his plans to assemble a march on Washington in late January 1894 and ended with the marchers' departure from Massillon, Ohio, on Easter Sunday, March 25, of that same year. This analysis leads me to conclude that there were some limitations of Coxey's rhetoric in the immediate term, evidenced by the fact that only a small number of people joined the Army. But in the longer term, Coxey saw substantial success because his inception-stage rhetoric established a structure for motivating participation that the Army would call upon in subsequent stages and in light of immense difficulty.

In the weeks leading up to the Army's Easter Sunday departure, Coxey and his chief marshal, Carl Browne, found themselves negotiating a rhetorical environment defined by a variety of factors, some of which bolstered their ability to motivate

³ Jacob S. Coxey, *The Coxey Plan* (Massillon, OH: self-published manuscript, 1914), 48.

potential marchers to join the Army and others of which had the potential to hinder motivation.⁴ The tense economic situation following the Panic of 1893, for example, created economic and psychological needs among potential marchers that Coxe and Browne argued would be solved by participating in the Army. But at the same time, Coxe and Browne needed to overcome a number of barriers that threatened to prevent potential marchers from joining the Army, such as the perceived difficulty of the march and the absence in that time of the belief that it was the role of the government to intervene in economy policymaking. With help from Browne, Coxe negotiated this rhetorical environment by working to reach as many potential marchers as he could with messages that signaled that their participation in the Army could help them overcome the economic and psychological challenges plaguing them.

I argue that Coxe's success in negotiating this complex rhetorical environment depended on four key factors. First, he needed a system for disseminating his messages about the protest to his large and geographically diffuse audience. Second, he needed to transform those whose problems could be solved by marching into an audience of potential marchers. Third, Coxe's messages needed to build the confidence of his newly constituted audience that marching on Washington was a legitimate and effective way of bringing about his prescribed reforms. And finally, he needed to neutralize the

⁴ My reader will notice that this chapter takes a leader-centered focus. Although the voices of other rhetors would become important later in the Army, motivating potential marchers for the protest in its earliest days was primarily the task of Jacob Coxe, who was occasionally supported by Carl Browne.

rhetoric of those who opposed the Army plan, as these “counter-rhetorics” threatened to erode potential marchers’ motivation to actively participate in the Army. The extent to which Coxey could craft rhetoric to manage these factors would ultimately determine whether he would depart from Massillon on Easter Sunday with enough protesters in line to show the national legislature that passing Coxey’s policies was the people’s will.

My analysis in this chapter finds that Coxey’s rhetoric helped him negotiate some of these factors better than others. This chapter proceeds in four major sections. In the first section, I argue that Coxey’s multifaceted system for disseminating his messages about the protest enabled him to reach a large and geographically diffuse audience, but in a way that required him to surrender some control over the framing of those messages. In the second section, I argue that Coxey successfully constituted jobless workers into potential marchers who could be motivated by his rhetoric. In the third section, I argue that while Coxey’s rhetorical choices helped motivate his newly constituted audience, they also gave rise to certain challenges and limitations. Therefore, the final section documents Coxey’s strategy for managing the tension between his own framing of the Army and the framing of counter-rhetors—a strategy which proved viable, but was executed with limited success. These four arguments culminate in the conclusion to this chapter, in which I assess Coxey’s overall success.

Disseminating Messages about the Petition in Boots

News of Coxey’s good roads proposal first surfaced on December 7, 1893, when the J. S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the United States issued a bulletin with the

full text of a bill that would improve the nation's aging infrastructure.⁵ At that point, Coxey had not made any mention of interest-free bonds, nor had he talked about the good roads proposal as job-creation strategy. To me, this suggests that Coxey's primary focus was initially on improving the roads, and that he saw the Good Roads Association, of which he was president, as his primary avenue for garnering support. However, on January 31, 1894, the Good Roads Association issued its second bulletin, which included the full text of Coxey's second proposal, the Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bill. That legislation would have capitalized the public works projects authorized by the Good Roads bill through interest-free bonds granted to businesses that paid jobless workers a modest salary to carry out the work. Thus, in the weeks between early December 1893 and late January 1894, there was an evolution in Coxey's focus, and that evolution enabled the good roads proposal to be framed as a job-creation measure.

Just as Coxey's focus had evolved, so too did his system for disseminating messages, and the purpose of this section is to unpack that evolution and the varying facets of his dissemination strategy. Initially, when Coxey's focus was exclusively on the good roads issue, his primary method for garnering support for his policies was to issue a series of bulletins under the banner of the Good Roads Association. However, as his focus expanded to include job creation, Coxey devised his plan to assemble the masses to march on Washington, meaning he needed a strategy to reach beyond the Association. To expand his audience, Coxey took to the stump, giving numerous speeches at gatherings where potential supporters could hear from him in person. Then,

⁵ Coxey, *The Coxey Plan*, 45-46.

recognizing the need to reach more people over a wider geographical expanse, Coxey built a network of organizers who would spread his messages and recruit supporters from other communities. But, although his network of organizers expanded his reach, Coxey still could not speak to the masses with this strategy. Therefore, Coxey sought to use the media as his megaphone by working to garner positive coverage of his policies and the march on Washington in newspapers. In the pages that follow, I analyze how what started out as a singular approach to generating support for a policy idea evolved into a multifaceted system designed to reach a large, diverse and geographically diffuse audience.

In the earliest weeks of Coxey's efforts to spread the word about his policies, his dissemination strategy hinged on the publication and distribution of a series of bulletins under the banner of the Good Roads Association. A civic organization of sorts, the Good Roads Association was presumably comprised of people concerned about the nation's deteriorating network of roads. Coxey's use of this vehicle reveals that he saw those concerned about good roads as an audience from which he could garner support. This choice made sense. By 1894, the good roads issue had gained traction in public discourse, and discussions about how to improve the national infrastructure were robust.⁶ In the first four months of 1894 alone, in fact, over nine hundred newspaper

⁶ Interestingly, the so-called Good Roads movement was an outgrowth of a movement to promote cycling. For more, see Carlton Reid, *Roads Were Not Built for Cars: How Cyclists Were the First to Push for Good Roads & Became the Pioneers of Motoring* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2015). For a helpful overview of legislative

articles on the topic were published, touching on everything from how to pay for projects to improve the roads to which candidates for public office would offer the best plans to overhaul the ailing infrastructure.⁷ Thus, issuing bulletins under the banner of the Good Roads Association to its members appears to have been a sound dissemination strategy.

Despite the strengths of the bulletin strategy however, speaking exclusively to members of the Good Roads Association would not enable Coxey to reach the wider audience that was essential to showing Congress that passing his policies was the will of the people. To be sure, this was not because there were too few good roads sympathizers. Rather, I argue that Coxey did not see the potential to motivate the good roads audience to make the significant sacrifice of marching to Washington. To make such a sacrifice, people needed to be deeply and personally affected by the problem they would try to solve in Washington. As a result, Coxey needed to frame his policies as a response to a more significant problem than the nation's ailing infrastructure, which helps to explain why his messaging evolved to focus on the potential of his policies to create jobs. However, emphasizing the job-creation benefits of his policy platform had

efforts to promote good roads, see John Williamson, *Federal Aid to Roads and Highways Since the 18th Century: A Legislative History* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2012).

⁷ A search conducted using the Library of Congress' historical newspaper database, *Chronicling America*, yields the phrase "Good Roads" in 905 separate newspaper articles between January 1 and April 30, 1894.

little potential to resonate with the good roads audience because they were not necessarily impacted by the growing joblessness problem. Therefore, Coxey needed to distribute his messages to an audience of potential marchers, meaning he needed to go beyond the Good Roads Association bulletins.

To garner support for his policies from a broader audience than the good roads sympathizers, one of Coxey's strategies involved giving a number of stump speeches. These speeches typically detailed what Coxey's legislation would do and asserted that marching on Washington would inevitably lead to the passage of the two bills. For example, in early March, Coxey gave a speech at the Anderson Hotel in Pittsburgh:

Our march is going to be as great a success as we can now expect. There is not a doubt of its attainment. In preparing for this grand emancipation, our leaders have accomplished more than the newspapers give us credit for. We have the endorsement of 24,000 labor organizations that have sent us words of cheer and promised aid.⁸

To his listeners, Coxey's Pittsburgh address conveyed two important messages. First, it asserted that the success of the march was inevitable by eschewing any possibility of failure. This was important because his listeners needed to believe in the viability of the march in order to be motivated to participate. Second, by insisting that tens of thousands of labor organizations had endorsed Coxey's protest, this speech showed potential marchers that support for the cause was sweeping the nation. In turn, Coxey's listeners could be motivated to join the march because it was portrayed as part of a burgeoning movement, rather than as an isolated expression of the challenges facing only a small group of downtrodden laborers.

⁸ "Coxey and His March," *Salem Daily Herald* (Salem, OH), Mar. 9, 1894.

Hence, there were advantages to giving speeches like the one Coxey delivered in Pittsburgh that the Good Roads bulletins did not offer. Whereas Coxey could publish as many bulletins as he wanted, those unconcerned with the good roads issue were unlikely to read the bulletins. Moreover, reading the bulletins did not guarantee support for Coxey's policies, and even if the bulletins did garner support, Coxey could not discern which of his readers might join the Army. The speeches, on the other hand, more or less guaranteed decent turnout, if for no other reason than the fact that they offered a cheap form of entertainment. More importantly, with members of a community gathered, Coxey could evoke enthusiasm and gauge how many of his listeners might decide to join the march on Washington. Furthermore, these stump speeches enabled listeners to hear about Coxey's ideas directly from the source. Although one could get excited about Coxey's policies by reading about them in the paper, hearing about the protest directly from its leader alongside other enthusiastic supporters there assembled was an entirely different experience. For these reasons, Coxey's stump speeches not only expanded his audience, but offered several advantages as well.

Today, giving speeches to garner support for a cause might be adequate because the messages of those speeches would be amplified through television and social media. But without the mass media channels we enjoy today, there was a natural limit to the number of people Coxey could reach with his speeches. And, because potential supporters were not concentrated in one region, speeches limited Coxey's audience by geography. To overcome these limitations, Coxey expanded his reach by building a network of organizers in towns throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland and

Washington, DC. These organizers were tasked with recruiting groups of men to meet up with the core members of Coxey's Army, either in Massillon or in towns along the Army's route once it got underway. In places like Reynoldsville, Pennsylvania, and Frederick, Maryland, organizers recruited participants for the Army by distributing the Good Roads Association bulletins and by using Coxey's talking points to tout the importance of his policies. Meanwhile, in the D.C. area where locals could show their support without having to march, Coxey's organizers encouraged locals to stand with those who came from outside the region during their planned May 1 demonstration. To encourage locals to support the protest, Coxey worked closely with "Colonel" A. E. Redstone, who led the organizing effort in Washington and who could spread the word about Coxey's policies and the planned demonstration to sympathizers in and around the nation's capital.⁹

The key advantage of building this network of organizers was that it enabled Coxey to recruit participants from a wider geographic expanse than he could have reached on his own. While he stumped in larger cities like Pittsburgh, his organizers worked on his behalf in smaller towns like Scranton. As a result, participation in the Army was not limited to those who lived near the planned route, but could include those who might gather their friends in their local communities to meet up with the Army and

⁹ For example, Redstone handed out brochures and pamphlets on a daily basis to convey information passed down from Coxey and Browne to potentially sympathetic Washingtonians. See "Coxey's Army of Peace," *Reynoldsville Star* (Reynoldsville, PA), Mar. 21, 1894.

expand the size of the protest. Armed with Coxey's messages, organizers could talk one-on-one with people in these communities who caught wind of Coxey's plans and might have considered joining the petition in boots.

However, the Army plan was premised on *mass* appeal: Coxey's theory of democracy maintained that Congress would pass his policies if its members could see that the people wanted those policies to become law. Therefore, Coxey needed to reach the masses. To do so, he sought attention from reporters who could amplify messages about the Army. Seeking to control the media to act as a megaphone for his protest, Coxey relied on two strategies: first, he ingratiated himself with reporters by offering easy access to even the most mundane details of his efforts to launch the petition in boots, and second, he sensationalized those details in order to compel reporters to write stories about the march.

To ingratiate himself with reporters, Coxey provided news outlets with easy access to information about the Army's progress. Cultivating close relationships with reporters would yield widespread media coverage for the march, Coxey reasoned, if reporters could see him as a source to which they could turn for content that would appease their editors and excite their readers. Thus, Coxey gave media interviews frequently, speaking with just about every outlet that requested his time. In fact, Coxey was so committed to providing the media with easy access that he invited about three dozen reporters to make the journey alongside the marchers. These choices undergirded Coxey's vision: if he made it as easy as possible to cover the march, reporters would write story after story to carry the Army to the masses.

Once ingratiated with reporters, Coxey sought to garner wide-reaching coverage by sensationalizing the march. Reporters would be more likely to cover the protest, Coxey reasoned, if the protest offered newspaper readers an exciting storyline to follow. Therefore, Coxey embellished a range of details about his organizing efforts. For example, on numerous occasions, he exaggerated the number of people who pledged to march to Washington, sometimes saying hundreds or even thousands of supporters were planning to show up in Massillon by Easter Sunday to begin the trek to Washington. Beyond those who promised to participate in the protest, Coxey also described how people across the country were inspired by his cause, a point which I discuss in more detail later in this chapter. I argue that Coxey embellished details like these to motivate reporters to cover the march, but that these embellishments also became central themes on which he would later draw to show potential marchers that joining the Army meant being part of a burgeoning movement that enjoyed the support of the masses.

To be sure, Coxey wasn't incorrect: giving reporters easy access to exciting storylines *did* lead to widespread media coverage. Outlets in Massillon, Washington, and towns in between and beyond wrote about Coxey's Army, with some outlets publishing multiple stories each day. However, despite the fact that this high volume of coverage enabled Coxey to reach the masses, it also required that he relinquish control over his messages. As reporters covered the march, they did so with their own framing and with the voices of others who weighed in on the Army and its proposals. In some cases, these messages were consistent with Coxey's depictions of his reform program and the people who supported it, but more often, Coxey was portrayed as a crank, his ideas were portrayed as far-fetched, and his supporters were portrayed as lazy tramps

looking for a handout from the government. Thus, alongside Coxey's narrative of a blossoming movement designed to pressure Congress to alleviate people's economic woes, a counter-narrative emerged that portrayed Coxey as the leader of a band of cranks working toward a reform program that would never come to fruition.

Coxey's dissemination strategies were important not just for how they enabled him to expand his reach, but also for how they established his authority as the leader of his protest. Several scholars have noted the importance of movement leaders' perceived authority as a resource for ensuring that followers are willing to place their trust in the leader and her prescribed courses of action.¹⁰ For Coxey, his dissemination strategies had the potential to both bolster and hinder his audience's perceptions of his authority. On the one hand, his knack for framing his policy objectives according to the audience he addressed—whether it was those concerned about good roads or those concerned with growing joblessness—revealed his strong rhetorical leadership. But on the other

¹⁰ Aldon Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg argued that numerous researchers have “examined the ways in which leaders gain legitimate authority in social movements.” One helpful perspective highlighted in Morris and Staggenborg's analysis is Weber's relational approach, which maintains that leaders must portray charisma in order for followers to cede agency to the leader. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), as cited in Aldon D. Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg, “Leadership in Social Movements,” in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi, *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 172.

hand, the decision to relinquish control over his messages to the media led to negative portrayals of himself and his protest, and these portrayals threatened to diminish his credibility. Furthermore, some of the messages he disseminated through the media, such as the embellished number of supporters who pledged to show up in Massillon on Easter Sunday, had the potential to backfire if Coxey could not deliver on his promises. Thus, Coxey's dissemination strategies were as important for their impact on his credibility as they were for how they expanded his reach.

Although establishing a system for disseminating information about the Army was critical, these messages could only contribute to a successful protest if they motivated people to participate. Therefore, in the next section, I turn my attention to how Coxey transformed jobless workers into an audience of potential marchers.

Constituting an Audience of Potential Marchers to Join the Petition in Boots

Although I referred in the previous section to Coxey's audiences in a general sense, I do not take rhetorical audience(s) as a given. Instead, I argue that those who might be motivated by Coxey's rhetoric needed to be transformed into an audience of potential marchers before they could be subjected to his appeals. Underlying that statement is my assumption that audiences do not simply exist, prior to a message and ready to hear what the rhetor has to say. Rather, rhetors *create* their audience(s) by addressing them with their rhetoric. This perspective maintains that rhetoric plays a *constitutive* function.

Three perspectives illuminate how rhetoric functions in a constitutive sense, and each of these perspectives explain a part of the process by which Coxey called his

audience into being. First, rhetoric constitutes an audience by creating an identity. In 1970, rhetorical theorist Edwin Black used his notion of the second persona to illustrate how the ways in which a rhetor constructs their “imagined” audience can influence the way she addresses her “actual” audience. For Black, the fact that rhetoric may change depending on how the rhetor imagines the audience proves that the audience is neither stable nor fixed, but rather called into being by the rhetor.¹¹ Expanding on Black’s understanding of audience, rhetorical scholar Maurice Charland theorized a constitutive logic of rhetoric which brought to light the problems with traditional rhetorical theories that fixated on persuasion.¹² If we cannot assume the “givenness” of the audience, Charland reasoned, then logically, the audience must be able to identify as the subject of a rhetoric before being persuaded by that rhetoric. Charland thus concluded that rhetoric must assert “the existence of a particular type of subject.”¹³ Put simply, rhetoric must create an identity before subjects can be called to it.

The second element of the process by which audiences are constituted requires that the constituted body is called to the newly established identity. To explain how rhetoric calls its subjects to the established identity, Charland turned to French philosopher Louis Althusser’s notion of interpellation. For Althusser, rhetoric expresses

¹¹ Edwin Black, “The Second Persona,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 2 (1970): 109-119.

¹² Maurice Charland, “Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133-150.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 137.

ideologies which recruit or transform individuals into subjects, a prerequisite for an individual's ability to be addressed by the rhetoric.¹⁴ To clarify this point, Charland used the case of a white paper issued by the provincial government in Quebec to show how it defined what it meant to be *Québécois*. Living in Quebec did not necessarily mean that residents of the province identified as part of a distinct group of Canadian citizens, and instead, the identity position needed to be crafted in order for the people of Quebec to see themselves as *Québécois*.¹⁵ Thus, the rhetoric of the white paper interpellated an identity position to which those in the province could be called—in other words, the *Québécois* were *constituted* by the white paper.

The third element of the constitutive process thus demands that once established as subjects, the interpellated audience is called upon to take some sort of action which enacts their subjectivity and which presumably would not be viable absent the audience's identification with the established subject position. Thought of another way, audiences bring their identities to life by responding to the rhetorical appeals targeting them. Indeed, there are an infinite number of actions a subject or audience could be asked to take, but it is important to note that the actions may or may not directly advance the collective goal of the audience. For example, a liberal presidential candidate who wants to be elected would call on all of her supporters to vote for her. However, in appealing to younger voters, the candidate may call on them to vote for her

¹⁴ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, translated by Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 174.

¹⁵ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 142.

to advance a progressive agenda, whereas she might call on voters with children to vote for her to uphold working-class values. Both of these calls to action contribute to the collectively shared goal—getting the candidate elected—but in the first example, potential supporters were constituted as progressive, while in the second example, would-be voters were constituted as working-class families. The potential of those appeals to resonate would thus depend on the extent to which members of each audience identify with the established identities. A younger voter who fails to identify as progressive might thus refuse to heed the candidate’s call to action. Thus, the constitutive process requires the creation of an identity, the calling of an individual or group of people to that identity, and appeals directed toward the aforementioned individual or group that invite them to enact their identity by taking a prescribed course of action.

Setting Coxey’s Army in the context of constitutive rhetoric, I argue that Coxey engaged in the constitutive process by (1) identifying those without work as potential marchers, (2) crafting an identity for those potential marchers as representatives of the downtrodden, and (3) inviting jobless workers to become the representatives of the downtrodden by choosing to march. The strength of this strategy was that it enabled jobless workers to see themselves not as voiceless or politically disempowered, but rather as advocates working to advance a better society. Once jobless workers saw themselves in this light, there were a variety of rhetorical appeals Coxey and his deputies could craft to call the marchers to action. While some of these appeals called directly on jobless workers to march to Washington, others claimed more indirectly that by joining the march and placing their faith in Coxey, jobless workers were key to

bringing about important social reforms. Before exploring in the next section the specific appeals Coxey used to motivate participation in the march, I spend the remainder of this section illustrating the first two parts of the constitutive process outlined here.

As I see it, there were at least two groups of people who had the potential to be constituted into an audience of potential marchers: those concerned about good roads, and those who lacked jobs. In an ideal world, Coxey would have appealed to both of these audiences, but his decision to focus on constituting jobless workers into an audience of potential marchers seems to have come at the expense of constituting good roads sympathizers into potential marchers. As I mentioned in the previous section, there was some potential to appeal to the good roads group because that issue had gained a great deal of traction by 1894. However, aside from his decision to issue his bulletins under the auspices of the Good Roads Association, Coxey made little to no additional effort to appeal to the good roads audience. Instead, the majority of his rhetoric focused on the issue of joblessness.

To shift from his original focus in early December on good roads to his focus on joblessness in late January, Coxey drew attention to a dream he had about assembling the march on Washington. The idea came to him, Coxey alleged, after being “so jolted and bedraggled by rough and deep roads that he carried the matter to bed with him.”¹⁶ Once asleep, he “dreamed of the employment of thousands of men at the Government’s

¹⁶ “Rise of Coxey and Browne,” *Middleburgh Post* (Middleburgh, PA), Apr. 5, 1894.

expense on the improvement of the highways.”¹⁷ Coxey’s narrative about how the idea for the march on Washington came to him was notable for a couple reasons. First, by treating his idea as a revelation that came to him in a dream, Coxey’s story was reminiscent of a divine awakening. Like the angel Gabriel appearing in a dream to tell the Virgin Mary that she was pregnant with the Messiah, Coxey’s story implied that God appeared in Coxey’s dream to call upon him to lead the Army. As I discuss in the section on Coxey’s moral appeals later in this chapter, the theme of being called upon by God is one that Coxey employed regularly throughout the inception stage. Furthermore, Coxey’s story is notable for how it moved him seamlessly from a plan about infrastructure development to a proposal for job creation. His portrayal suggested not that there was a weakness in his original strategy that he was now trying to correct, but rather that his thinking had evolved as a result of some divine intervention.

It is unclear whether Coxey’s decision to focus on jobless workers rather than on the good roads sympathizers was a strategic choice or an unfortunate oversight. On the one hand, Coxey may have realized that those who cared about the condition of the roads did so precisely *because* they were employed; the jobs that required them to make use of the roads on a daily basis were the same jobs that prevented them from dropping everything and marching for weeks on end. But on the other hand, even if they could not commit to marching, the Good Roads Association membership might have been convinced to support the cause in other ways, such as by helping to spread the word or by making donations to the Army’s commissary. Thus, although Coxey had articulated

¹⁷ Ibid.

a clear reason why those without work should put their faith in him, I interpret Coxey's decision to focus almost exclusively on the joblessness problem at the exclusion of the good roads problem as a missed opportunity.

Coxey was, in fact, much more successful in constituting those without work as potential members of his petition in boots. To be sure, there were clear material conditions on which Coxey could draw to invite those without work to be part of the protest. By 1894, more Americans than ever before lacked work, and the sparseness of jobs threatened to wreak havoc on folks in urban centers who, unlike their agrarian counterparts, could not rely on their land to provide sustenance. But because Coxey's policies promised to create 100,000 jobs with decent salaries in the midst of the growing joblessness crisis, there was a clear opportunity for him to transform the material conditions of unemployment into reasons to join the Army. Furthermore, these appeals had the potential to resonate because looking for work had proven futile for long-term unemployed workers; with no jobs to be had, Coxey could reasonably argue that potential marchers had nothing to lose but much to gain by joining the petition in boots.

To invite those without work to identify as potential marchers capable of advancing social change, Coxey needed to show his audience that they were capable of sounding their political voice. To do so, he cast personal joblessness as a problem of political economy, rather than as a deficiency of the individual. This required that Coxey talk about unemployment in an entirely new way. Throughout this chapter, I have used the term "unemployment" infrequently because unlike today, the term circulated only rarely in 1894. This was partly because, as I explained in Chapter One,

unemployment was still a new problem, brought about by the separation of labor and capital. A byproduct of this new condition was its label, which *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates did not appear in the public vernacular until 1888.¹⁸ In the six years between its first use and when Coxey announced his Army plan, the term “unemployment” was only used in a small handful of newspaper articles.¹⁹ Thus, the infancy of the term marked an opportunity for Coxey to reframe unemployment as a public policy problem that demanded federal intervention.²⁰

To be sure, treating unemployment as a public policy problem was a departure from traditional ways of thinking at the time. In the present day, most Americans recognize that an individual might be unemployed by choice, but we more often attribute rises in the unemployment rate to conditions in the labor market that prevent

¹⁸ “Unemployment,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed February 21, 2016.

¹⁹ Although several newspaper articles at the time mentioned unemployment, most simply described the number of people unemployed or described the meetings at which the unemployed came together to talk about their situations. These articles generally did not discuss unemployment as a social problem. See, for example, “Appreciation of Gold,” *Indiana State Sentinel* (Indianapolis, IN), Apr. 25, 1894; and “Our Boston Letter,” *People’s Voice* (Wellington, KS), Mar. 30, 1894.

²⁰ Throughout the remainder of this dissertation, I use the term “unemployment” because even though it did not circulate widely in 1894, it is a shorthand way of referring to the condition of being without work that is familiar to my contemporary readers.

people from finding work. However, this attitude was far from the norm in the last decade of the nineteenth century. A March 1894 *Pittsburgh Press* editorial illustrated this point in its claim that the growing number of jobless workers found themselves in their precarious situations because they were *unemployable*, not because of a constricted labor market.²¹ Thus, the advantage of reframing unemployment as a deficiency of the political economy rather than the individual was that it enabled those without work to see themselves not as lazy and politically powerless members of a lower class, but rather as victims of a broken system who could take matters into their own hands by choosing to advocate for social and economic reforms. Quite simply, they could see themselves as wielding political power.

Beyond the constitutive function of Coxey's framing of the unemployment problem, a second advantage to this approach was that it established the necessity of public policy interventions to solve the unemployment problem. Were unemployment constituted as a function of personal choice, then the onus would be on the individual to change their lives in such a way as to be employable. But instead, Coxey constituted the jobless as idle against their will. For example, in the second Good Roads Association bulletin, he called the march "a procession of the *enforced* idle men of the country."²² This statement emphasized how those who would become the petition in boots were not without jobs because they did not want to work—they were without jobs because they

²¹ Reprinted in "Unemployed or Unemployable," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 26, 1894.

²² *Bulletin No. 2*; emphasis mine.

had no other choice in the matter. As a result, it did not matter if unemployed laborers changed their behaviors; unemployment was a problem of the broken political economy, and it was therefore up to public policy to intervene in the matter.

Most certainly, Coxey did not completely unravel the popular narrative about what it meant to be unemployed, but the rhetoric of the Army's observers reveals that Coxey's reframing of the unemployment problem resonated with at least some segments of the public. For example, in an anonymous letter to the editor of the *Washington Times*, an Army sympathizer defended those without work and expressed an understanding of why one might be attracted to the Army: "In these [trying] conditions men must simply act. There are many things they cannot do. They cannot employ themselves; they cannot change their occupations; they cannot [...] fight their way into an honest living."²³ This commentary illustrates there was some potential to shift the dominant narrative that circulated in 1894. If Coxey could capitalize on that potential, then those without work might see participating in the petition in boots first as a way of shedding themselves of the negative stereotypes associated with joblessness, and later as a way of escaping their dubious economic situations.

In all, Coxey's rhetoric transformed a class of citizens who had been treated as unemployable—as lower-class citizens who were *lesser than*—into political subjects who could take matters into their own hands by choosing to join the Army. As subjects, these jobless workers could be targeted by rhetoric that invited them to place their trust in Coxey and to march to Washington to help spur the creation of jobs that would put

²³ "Don't Laugh at Coxey," 2.

them back to work. By constituting his audience of potential marchers in this way, Coxey had struck a rhetorical gold mine—if he could show jobless workers why participating in the Army would benefit them and millions of others like them, then they would embrace his invitation and declare to Congress that enacting Coxey’s policies was their political will.

Motivating Potential Marchers to Join the Petition in Boots

Once constituted as potential marchers, Coxey’s audience of jobless workers could be targeted with appeals designed to induce their motivation to join the Army. Those appeals needed to build belief in the cause, but also to remove any resistance to participation. Although some elements of the rhetorical environment could be exploited to increase the likelihood that potential marchers would join, other factors threatened to generate resistance and thereby undermine potential marchers’ motivation. Therefore, to explain how Coxey’s rhetoric appealed to his newly constituted audience, this section includes two subsections. In the first, I explain the elements of the rhetorical environment that could positively or negatively affect would-be marchers’ motivation, while in the second, I analyze the specific appeals Coxey crafted and the potential they had to encourage participation in the Army. I conclude this section by arguing that Coxey’s appeals did not immediately motivate the masses to march, but that they did enable him to construct a motivational framework that would serve as the rhetorical foundation for the remainder of the protest.

Opportunities and Challenges for Motivating Potential Marchers

Motivating potential marchers to join the petition in boots demanded that Coxey use his rhetoric to transform particular challenges into reasons for activism. Two sets of challenges in particular could be exploited, both of which resulted from the Panic of 1893. The first of these was the economic problem facing downtrodden laborers. As industrial production slowed, workers in factories were laid off in droves, leaving them without a source of income. Because Coxey alleged that his policies would create thousands of jobs that paid a modest salary, there was an opportunity to portray the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills as the solution to rising unemployment. At the same time, Coxey could also exploit potential marchers' psychological need to prove that they were not lazy or unemployable. Following the Panic of 1893, the inability to find work was increasingly common, but the fact that it was still a relatively new phenomenon meant people struggled to make sense of the reasons for unemployment. As a result, there was a stigma associated with unemployment, and if Coxey could frame participation in the Army as a way for potential marchers to disassociate themselves with the unemployment stigma, then potential marchers were more likely to see an opportunity to benefit from the success of the cause.

Considering both of these opportunities, there was a clear pathway for Coxey as he worked to build belief in his cause. However, instilling belief in the cause would not be enough on its own to launch the protest. In addition, Coxey needed to transform belief in his cause into action toward his goal, and that challenge required that he remove any resistance to participation. Indeed, when humans move from belief to

action, they must be compelled to expend their energy *and* prepared to overcome barriers that stand in the way of their activism. Coxe seemed well aware of these dual requirements as he not only addressed the motivations of the potential marchers, but also the factors which threatened to deter their participation, including the daunting physical demands of the march, prevalent attitudes about the relationship between government and the economy, and the media's propensity to criticize the marchers' every move.

The first barrier that Coxe needed to overcome to successfully remove the resistance of potential marchers was the perceived difficulty of the journey. Committing to walk several miles each day over the course of more than a month would alone prove physically demanding. Add cold and wet weather conditions, intermittent shortages of rations, and the physical strain that came with walking through mountains, across rivers and on unpaved roads, and suddenly, joining the Army amounted to a significant investment of physical energy.²⁴ Coxe was far from naïve about how these challenges threatened to deter potential marchers from joining, and he addressed perceptions about the difficulty of the march by saying the journey “will be no picnic, but a trying

²⁴ Redstone speculated that the harsh weather conditions that hit northeast Ohio on the day Coxe's Army was to depart was one reason why relatively few people turned out to march. See “Redstone is Sanguine,” *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 26, 1894.

ordeal.”²⁵ On the one hand, this rhetoric acknowledged the difficulty of the march but suggested that the sacrifice Coxeys was asking potential protestors to make would be worthwhile. On the other hand, this rhetoric appears to have been part of Coxeys’s strategy to minimize concerns about the difficulty of the journey, as if to say marching would be somewhat difficult, but not significantly so. In all, statements like these would be essential for removing potential marchers’ resistance to joining the petition in boots because they helped Coxeys contextualize the difficulty of what he asked his supporters to do.

To motivate commitment, Coxeys also needed to address people’s attitudes at the time about the role of the government in economic policymaking and the rights of the people to protest. In 1894, people held a number of philosophical predispositions that served as barriers to potential marchers’ confidence that what Coxeys asked was an appropriate course of action. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, marching on Washington was not a common strategy pursued by Americans seeking social change. When Americans petitioned, they did so through other forms such as by affixing their signatures to a document that would be filed with the government. As historian Lucy Barber argued, marching on Washington was so uncommon in 1894 that observers did not know what to make of the so-called Coxeites who came to protest in front of the

²⁵ *Bulletin No. 3* (Massillon, OH: J. S. Coxeys Good Roads Association of the US, December 7, 1893). In the Ray Stannard Baker papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

Capitol.²⁶ Without an established precedent for marching on Washington, potential marchers needed to feel confident that what they were being asked to do was an acceptable form of political engagement.

In a similar manner, philosophical predispositions about the conditions under which the government should meddle in economic matters threatened to deter potential members of the Army from joining. Whereas earlier efforts to justify economic policy interventions had been grounded in the need to stimulate economic growth, Coxey's proposition was that Congress needed to proactively support jobless individuals in their quest to find work by easing the constricted job market. This proposition was incongruent with prevailing attitudes at the time because, as historian Emily Rosenberg put it, "Americans remained wedded to the nineteenth-century liberal theory that government involvement in the private economic sphere would subvert individual freedom and distort the self-regulating nature of economic processes."²⁷ Therefore, to be motivated to join the Army, potential marchers needed to abandon their belief in the invisible-hand theory of economics to embrace the notion that government should be in the business of alleviating personal joblessness.

Although perceptions about the physical difficulty of marching and philosophical predispositions about politics and economics were external to Coxey's

²⁶ Lucy G. Barber, *Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

²⁷ Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1982), 48.

control, there were other barriers that arose as a direct result of his rhetorical choices. Each decision Coxey made had its drawbacks, even despite whatever advantages each might have offered. For example, Coxey's decision to ingratiate himself with reporters and to sensationalize details about the march certainly increased coverage of the Army. But at the same time, these strategies invited the press to circulate messages that framed Coxey's policies and his supporters in unflattering ways. As another example, asserting that thousands of jobless workers had already pledged to join the Army conveyed to potential marchers that the petition in boots was a growing movement that was on the brink of sweeping social reform, but this portrayal simultaneously risked obliterating Coxey's credibility when only a small fraction of that number turned out in Massillon on Easter Sunday. These tensions reveal how Coxey's rhetorical choices demanded that he carefully weigh their potential positive outcomes against their negative outcomes, and how he often faced unintended consequences of his decisions.

Altogether, the factors explored here illustrate that the rhetorical environment Coxey found himself navigating was complicated in ways that had the potential to both inspire and erode potential marchers' motivation to join the Army. To be motivated to join the petition in boots, jobless workers needed to see the economic and psychological problems they faced as a result of the Panic of 1893 as reasons why they should march to Washington. But they also needed to believe that the physical difficulty of the march was worth enduring, that their style of protest was acceptable and that their reasons for protest were legitimate. As I show in the remainder of this section, removing these barriers and building belief in the cause required thoughtfully and intentionally crafted rhetoric.

Moral and Pragmatic Appeals to Justify Participation in the Petition in Boots

Transforming belief into action—the act of mobilization—is an essential function of movements for social change. Rhetorical scholars Ralph Smith and Russell Windes highlighted this point in their work on mobilizational rhetoric, saying, “The rhetorical situation of a movement requires discourse to organize support for united action to reach a shared goal of social change.”²⁸ Smith and Windes went on to say that, “Unlike individual communicators, movements must also respond to mobilizational exigencies [...] for the pursuit of collective goals.”²⁹ In other words, those who believe in the promise of the proposed social change must be willing to take collective action toward a shared goal. Although any rhetor within a movement can contribute to motivating this collective action, movement scholar Herbert Simons argued that within movements that have identified leaders, mobilization is an essential function served by the rhetoric of the leader(s). Leaders must mold workers, Simons argued, to carry out the particular activities designed to induce social change.³⁰ Borrowing from the insights of these scholars, this subsection proceeds by examining how Coxey and Browne, as leaders of the petition in boots, crafted rhetoric to mobilize potential marchers.

²⁸ Ralph R. Smith and Russell R. Windes, “The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements,” *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 42, no. 1 (1976): 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁰ Herbert W. Simons, “Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 1 (1970): 3.

Among the infinite range of factors that determine whether someone can be mobilized to advance a cause, two factors in particular emerge as predictors of mobilization. First, potential protestors must feel that their participation in the protest is a legitimate course of action. This is especially true for protests designed to uproot elements of the status quo system because potential activists must believe that the proposed social change is legitimate (or, at the very least, that the status quo is worth rallying against) in order to be mobilized to disrupt existing norms. Second, potential protestors must feel that their participation will effectively render the desired social change. In other words, even if people believe that what they are being asked to do is legitimate, they will still resist if they do not see the potential for their efforts to succeed. Therefore, while a number of factors explain the likelihood that someone who believes in a cause will mobilize, the ability of a leader to induce belief in the legitimacy and effectiveness of the proposed course of action help to explain much about the chances a movement will succeed.

In their analysis of mobilizational rhetoric, Smith and Windes theorized these features and found that particular objectives must be achieved if those who are supportive of the cause can be inspired to act.³¹ One of those objectives is to demonstrate the *moral* reasons for participation—why action in service of advancing the cause is “consistent with the principles governing social life.”³² Meanwhile, another of these objectives is to demonstrate the *pragmatic* reasons for participation—why

³¹ Smith and Windes, “The Rhetoric of Mobilization,” 8.

³² *Ibid.*

action in service of the cause will be effective in overcoming the stated problem. I find Smith and Windes' framework of examining moral and pragmatic appeals to be a helpful way of understanding how leaders in movements mobilize participants. Therefore, I exploit this framework in the context of Coxey's Army by examining the moral and pragmatic appeals crafted to induce jobless workers' belief in the effectiveness and legitimacy of the march. Although a single appeal is rarely either wholly moral or wholly pragmatic and not both, I discuss Coxey's appeals in the following pages as though these appeals are distinct for the sake of clarity.

Moral Appeals to Induce Belief in the Legitimacy of the Cause

In examining Coxey and Browne's moral appeals, there was a particular structure that emerged which points to these leaders' perspectives on how to motivate potential marchers. That structure involved constituting both the marchers and the march itself as moral. When it came to their audience of potential marchers, Coxey and Browne constituted jobless workers in three particular ways: as morally scrupulous, as morally genuine and as morally virtuous. Then, when it came to the march itself, Coxey and Browne constituted the protest in religious terms, using appeals to religiosity to suggest that the petition in boots was ordained by God. Given this structure, I begin my analysis of Coxey and Browne's moral appeals by examining how they constituted the morality of the potential marchers.

Constituting the morality of potential marchers. To constitute potential marchers as moral, Coxey and Browne used class rhetoric to characterize their supporters as morally scrupulous, morally genuine and morally virtuous. To characterize their moral

scrupulousness, Coxey used antithesis to separate potential marchers from the lower classes of citizens that onlookers feared would comprise the Army. In one of his earliest public statements about the march, Coxey declared, “This will not be a gathering of the lower classes, who, by their number and consequent personal immunity from responsibility, expect to be enabled to forage and steal at will.”³³ This use of antithesis created rhetorical distance on the class spectrum to separate would-be marchers from others. On one end of the spectrum were the lower classes, which Coxey characterized as immoral because of their tendency toward criminal behavior. By focusing on the ways those in the lower classes violated social and moral principles, such as by foraging and stealing, Coxey dismissed those members of society as people who shirk their personal responsibilities. Then, Coxey set his supporters apart from the lower classes on the spectrum by insisting that his Army would not be comprised of anyone who engaged in unseemly behaviors. In comparison to their lower-class counterparts, Coxey’s followers were not prone toward criminal behavior, nor did they shirk their personal responsibilities to act in accordance with social and moral principles.

Whereas class rhetoric in this instance constituted the moral scrupulousness of potential marchers, other instances of class rhetoric constituted a related feature of the marchers’ character: their moral genuineness. Speaking to those who gathered outside Massillon on the day the Army was to depart, Coxey said, “Pay no attention to the snickering of those who have never felt the pangs of hunger, but be true to yourselves

³³ “To be Carried into Execution,” *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Jan. 27, 1894.

and it will cause others to be true to you.”³⁴ In this instance, Coxey’s use of antithesis distinguished potential marchers from a higher class of citizens—those who had never felt the pangs of hunger—to suggest that the higher classes were morally inferior to potential members of Coxey’s Army. Coxey’s use of *snickering* to describe the reporters who came to cover the Army’s departure implied that those reporters were being disrespectful to the inaugural members of Coxey’s Army. Then, by tying that disrespect to the fact that those reporters had never experienced the *pangs of hunger*, Coxey implied that there was something genuine about the financial struggles that lead one to experience hunger. This sense of moral genuineness was also evident in Coxey’s advice that the marchers “be true to themselves,” as if to say that those who snickered and who never felt the pangs of hunger were not being true to themselves in their treatment of the would-be Coxeyites. In comparison to those disrespectful, disingenuous reporters who snickered, Coxey’s rhetoric left his listeners with the sense that members of his Army would be nothing but respectable citizens who were being true to themselves by using their act of protest to take control of their personal situations.

Both of these dimensions of Coxey’s moral rhetoric contributed to a more general assertion about the marchers’ moral virtues. After Senator William Stewart of Nevada alleged that Coxey was leading a militant effort, Coxey penned a response, stating:

I have seen your letter addressed ‘General Coxey.’ I am not a general. I am simply the president of the J. S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the United States and ex-officio of the Commonwealth of Christ. I am not heading an army,

³⁴ “March of the Crank’s Army,” *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), Mar. 26, 1894.

no matter how much a subsidized press at the dictation of money power tries to make this apparent.”³⁵

Coxey’s rejoinder to Senator Stewart went beyond simply denying the potential for militancy and instead indicted particular groups of people on the grounds that they were corrupt. One group Coxey constituted as corrupt was the press, members of which Coxey insisted were being controlled by money and not by the people. Thus, there was another way in which Coxey sought to create rhetorical distance through the use of antithesis. On one end of Coxey’s spectrum was the press and the powerful, wealthy forces that controlled it, and these forces were characterized as corrupt. On the other end of Coxey’s spectrum were his supporters, who were taking a stand against corruption and were thus characterized as honest, law-abiding citizens committed to doing good in the world. As such, those who would march were portrayed by Coxey’s rhetoric as morally virtuous, a constitution which stood in sharp contrast to Coxey’s depiction of those he indicted.

In all, these examples illustrate how Coxey’s rhetoric constituted the morality of the marchers by evoking classism and by using antithesis. These moves suggested that the middle-class Americans who would comprise the Army were morally virtuous

³⁵ “Marching Along,” *Perrysburg Journal* (Perrysburg, OH), Mar. 31, 1894.

Carl Browne and others embraced the use of the “Army” label, and eventually, Coxey would use the term later in the protest. However, “Coxey’s Army” is the preferred term of many historians. Coxey himself eschewed this term in the protest’s earliest weeks, preferring instead to call it the “Commonweal of Christ,” the “petition with boots on” and other names.

precisely because of their middle-class status. Those who would join the petition in boots were morally superior to other classes of people, Coxe reasoned, because they were neither corrupt like their wealthier counterparts nor prone to criminal behavior like their poorer counterparts. As a result, this rhetoric had the potential to motivate would-be marchers because they could see marching as an expression of their moral superiority. However, as I mentioned earlier, Coxe's rhetoric did not just constitute the morality of the marchers; it also portrayed the march itself as a moral action. To do so, Coxe and Browne's rhetoric evoked religion to portray the march as ordained by God, suggesting to potential marchers that they had a moral obligation to participate.

Constituting the morality of the march. To portray marching as a moral imperative, Coxe and Browne used religious rhetoric to suggest that the petition in boots was ordained by God. Perhaps the clearest of their efforts to portray the march in this way was by labeling it as the "Commonweal of Christ." While I have used "Coxe's Army" or "the petition in boots" to refer to the protest, Coxe and Browne most often referred to it as the "Commonweal of Christ." In the letter to Senator Stewart mentioned above, for example, Coxe declared, "I am not a 'general.' I would respectfully announce that I am simply [...] ex-officio of the Commonweal of Christ."³⁶ Likewise, Coxe used this label in addressing the marchers in his daily orders once the march got underway. "Mr. Carl Browne has full charge of all horses, wagons and the supplies that are now with the commonweal" and "full command of the commonweal

³⁶ Ibid.

during my absence,” Coxe y once remarked, while Browne often addressed his daily orders to the “Comrades of the Commonweal.”³⁷

These and dozens of other uses of the “Commonweal of Christ” label by Coxe y and Browne illustrate how the leaders appealed to religion to show the moral necessity of the march. By definition, a “commonweal” is a political body, while “of Christ” implies that the commonweal was ordained by or otherwise embodied the spirit of Christ. Thus, the juxtaposition of these terms in the “Commonweal of Christ” label represents a marrying of the political with the religious, suggesting that those constituted by that label were carrying out Christ’s will by advancing a particular political ideology. By extension, *not* participating in the Commonweal was a deliberate choice to ignore God’s will—a disavowing of one’s moral obligation.

Having established the Army as an expression of God’s will through the “Commonweal of Christ” label, Coxe y built on this notion by likening potential marchers to Christ himself. For example, as Easter Sunday drew nearer, Coxe y issued a statement, saying, “By June 1 there will be work in this country at good wages for every man who wants work. The day of salvation is at hand.”³⁸ This rhetoric was a clear example of Coxe y exuding confidence about the eventual success of the Army, which was important because it enabled him to substitute his authority for the number of

³⁷ “Monday the Marching Day,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Apr. 21, 1894.

³⁸ “Reformer Coxe y’s Confidence,” *Frederick News* (Frederick, MD), Mar. 12, 1894.

pledged recruits, as if to say that the true test of success would come in May, not on March 25 when enough marchers either did or did not turn out. Moreover, Coxey's reference to the coming of "the day of salvation" conjured dual meanings. In the Christian tradition, Easter Sunday marks the day when Christ was resurrected from the dead, enabling His followers to be saved from eternal damnation for their sins, hence the literal meaning of that phrase. But at the same time, for Coxey, Easter Sunday marked the beginning of the Commonweal's journey, and by drawing on this sense of "the day of salvation," Coxey put the commencement of the Commonweal on the same plane as the resurrection of Christ. This move implied that the Commonweal would save the nation from its economic ills, just as Christ saved His followers from their sins.

Comparisons like these between the sacrifices Christ made and the sacrifices the Commonweal would make were somewhat common features of Coxey's rhetoric. In several instances, Coxey was asked about the viability of his protest given that his supporters came from little means. In one such instance, Coxey was asked what would happen when he showed up in a town of 10,000 with 100,000 men in line, to which he glibly replied that he knew "God would provide."³⁹ In another instance, Coxey was asked what would happen if there weren't enough rations for all the marchers who joined, to which he replied that the Commonwealers "would probably follow the

³⁹ "Coming of a Great Army," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Jan. 27, 1894.

example of Christ in plucking the ears of corn” to eat.⁴⁰ Whereas Coxey’s first response simply asserted that the Army enjoyed God’s support, his second response went a step further to suggest that there was something Christ-like about marching. This rhetoric reasoned that just like Christ was persecuted for plucking corn to feed his hungry disciples, his marchers would also be persecuted for staging their protest, but for good reason as they were helping others.⁴¹ In this way, Coxey insinuated that the sacrifices his marchers would make and the tribulations they would face were akin to the sacrifices Christ made and the persecution He faced for feeding the hungry.

In yet another comparison that drew on religion to characterize the petition in boots, Carl Browne compared the way the Commonwealth was being run with the “law of the Lord.” In refuting claims that the Army would be full of tramps who would disobey the Army’s regulations and the rule of law more generally, Browne remarked, “Order is the law of the Lord, and there must be order within the army.”⁴² Whereas the earlier

⁴⁰ “The Coming of Coxey,” *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 22, 1894.

⁴¹ This passage referred to the gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 12:1), which tells the story of how Christ plucked ears of corn from a field to give to his hungry disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they decried Christ for breaking the Sabbath by stealing, and they began plotting His death, suggesting that the act of stealing corn was morally repugnant, even though Christ stole the corn to help others.

⁴² “On to Washington,” *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 12, 1894.

examples I pointed to compared the sacrifices and tribulations of those who would march with the sacrifices and tribulations of Christ, this rhetoric insisted that the way to be more Godly was by maintaining orderliness. Put another way, if a marcher were to engage in disorderly conduct, they would be disobeying the law of the Lord. Hence, this rhetoric not only cast the Commonweal in godly terms, but it also signaled to those considering joining that misconduct would not be tolerated.

In all, Coxey and Browne's religious rhetoric constituted the morality of the march by suggesting that it enjoyed the support of God and by drawing comparisons between the petition in boots and what Christ endured in His life. In so doing, potential Commonwealers were presented with a choice: they could join the Army to be more like Christ by helping others and by maintaining order, or they could ignore the chance to be more like Christ by choosing not to participate in the Army at all. In this way, the choice to march in the Army was cast as a moral imperative; those who believed in the promise of Coxey's policies were *morally obliged* to march because doing so would enable them to act the way Christ did. Not fulfilling that obligation, on the other hand, meant making the deliberate choice to reject an opportunity to be like Christ.

I see two reasons why Coxey and Browne's use of religious rhetoric to convey the moral imperative to march might have motivated potential Commonwealers. First, religion had a significant influence on Americans in the Gilded Age, meaning people at the time were likely to be mobilized by religious appeals.⁴³ This influence is clearly

⁴³ Two helpful explorations of the influence of religion in Gilded Age America can be found in Herbert G. Gutman, "Protestantism and the American Labor

reflected in the social discourse of the time. The rhetoric of the social gospel, for example, served as the foundation for a movement during the Gilded Age to infuse Christian principles into all facets of life.⁴⁴ Similarly, capitalist greed and corruption—denounced consistently throughout the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army—was the focus of Christian socialism, which decried greed as a mortal sin and advocated against the many ways it contributed to social immorality.⁴⁵ The rhetoric of these and other movements in the last decade of the nineteenth century suggests that Americans’ social views were informed in large part by the values and ideals of Christianity. Thus, by transforming these values into reasons to join the petition in boots, Coxey could go beyond the argument that jobless workers *should* march to make the claim that those without work *must* march. Political scientist Michael Barkun supported this view, noting how Coxey’s Army had “profound religious implications” which were “rooted

Movement: The Christian Spirit in the Gilded Age,” *The American Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (1966): 74-101; and Paul Kleppner, *The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). Gutman explored the interplay between religion and economics, while Kleppner explored the interplay between religion and political engagement.

⁴⁴ Gary Dorrien, *Social Ethics in the Making: Interpreting an American Tradition* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

⁴⁵ Paul H. Boase, *The Rhetoric of Christian Socialism* (New York: Random House, 1969).

simultaneously in the radical monetary theories of Populism and the millenarian expectations of popular religion.”⁴⁶

Furthermore, religious rhetoric had the potential to mobilize supporters because it helped Coxey and Browne further establish their authority. I mentioned earlier that exuding confidence in the success of the protest was one way by which Coxey established his authority, but other rhetoric served the same purpose through different strategies. For example, in a statement to reporters, Coxey compared Browne with Christ, noting that Christ “was simply a great reformer. He went around like Browne, here, doing all the good he could, and as he preached against those who live upon interest and profit, they controlled the masses as they do now, and so they encompassed His death on the cross.”⁴⁷ Browne made this comparison more explicitly by saying Christ was, quite literally, inside of him and Coxey. “I believe that a part of the soul of Christ happened to come into my being by re-incarnation [and] I believe also that another part of Christ’s soul is in Brother Coxey,” Browne declared.⁴⁸ Both of these passages portrayed the leaders as Christ’s apostles, called upon to carry out God’s will. Coxey’s rhetoric made this declaration by comparing Browne’s history of reform with that of Christ, whereas Browne’s rhetoric declared that the Army leaders were agents of God because Christ lived within their reincarnated souls. Together, both of these

⁴⁶ Michael Barkun, ‘Coxey’s Army’ as a Millennial Movement,” *Religion* 18, no. 4 (1988): 363-389.

⁴⁷ *Bulletin No. 3.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

passages left the Commonwealers to conclude that if they felt compelled to heed God's calls, then they should follow the orders of Coxey and Browne to march because as agents of God, they spoke on His behalf.

Thus, Coxey and Browne's religious rhetoric served to not only invite potential marchers to fulfill a moral obligation, but also to establish their own moral authority by situating themselves as agents of God. In turn, potential marchers were called to a protest that was constituted in moral terms. This, combined with the fact that Coxey and Browne's rhetoric constituted the morality of those who considered marching, meant that would-be Commonwealers could see their participation in the Army as a legitimate course of action. However, Smith and Windes remind us that while moral reasoning can motivate desire to participate, moral appeals are insufficient on their own for recruiting participants to join the Army. To be motivated to join, potential marchers also needed to feel as though marching would effectively render a desirable outcome—they needed to sense that there was good reason for them to exert such a great deal of their energy. Thus, my attention in the pages that follow is focused on how Coxey's mobilizational appeals instilled confidence among his listeners in the effectiveness of their activism.

Pragmatic Appeals to Induce Belief in the Effectiveness of the Cause

To convey to potential marchers that joining the Army would be an effective way of bringing about social change, Coxey and Browne portrayed the Army as a movement that enjoyed both significant support and growing momentum. To construct the first of these arguments, Army leaders proclaimed extensive support beyond the

marchers themselves. In response to allegations that far fewer people were pledging their support than Coxey had made it seem, Coxey replied:

We not only represent ourselves who go, but we speak for the millions of workers comprising the American Federation of Labor, [...] the Farmers' Alliance of the United States, and the Knights of Labor, and other organizations, besides the thousands of signatures of professional mercantile and other citizens of the United States – in fact, we can safely say we represent two-thirds of the producing and useful citizens of the Union.⁴⁹

This passage advanced two distinct arguments. First, it suggested to those who interpreted the Army's relatively small number of recruits as a sign of failure that the Army's chances of success should be measured by the overall number they represented, rather than by the number of people who promised to march. By invoking institutions like the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor, Coxey insisted that the entirety of those organizations' memberships were in favor of his policies, whether onlookers could see that support or not. This notion was reinforced by Coxey's insistence that "millions of workers"—fully "two-thirds of the producing and useful citizens of the Union"—were in favor of the Army's reforms.

The other argument advanced in this passage signaled to those considering marching that they would not be alone if they joined the Army. Returning to the earlier discussion of pragmatic appeals, it was important that potential marchers saw their participation in the Army as an effective way of getting Congress to pass their legislation. Having already insisted elsewhere that Congress would act if enough people turned out to show their support for his policies, Coxey could use this passage to expand upon the argument that success was inevitable by saying there were already millions

⁴⁹ Ibid.

who would turn out to pressure Congress into acting. Thus, this rhetoric functioned to remove the resistance of Coxeys' listeners because those who worried that the effort might fail could see why that might not be the case.

Regardless of whether Coxeys distinguished those who were generally supportive of the cause from those who would actually march, what mattered if he were to compel Congress to act was the number of marchers he was able to recruit. Thus, Coxeys also needed to convey to potential marchers that beyond seeing signs of widespread support, he was also seeing signs that people were planning to join the Army in droves. To advance this argument, Coxeys frequently quantified the number of people who promised to fall in line on Easter Sunday, typically estimating that tens or even hundreds of thousands of people might march. In his initial announcement of the Army plan, Coxeys declared, "You'll find that when we reach Washington on May 1, we'll have 100,000 men."⁵⁰ That estimate was most certainly an exaggeration, not a misperception, and ultimately he would temper his projections. On March 12, just two weeks before the Army's departure from Massillon, Coxeys said he believed "there will be 5,000 in line when we start to Washington."⁵¹ He later went on to inflate that number, saying that five thousand was a "low estimate."⁵² Then, just three days before

⁵⁰ "To be Carried into Execution," 2.

⁵¹ "Reformer Coxeys' Confidence," 1.

⁵² "Coxeys' Army Gathering," *Middleburgh Post* (Middleburgh, PA), Mar. 15, 1894.

the Army's departure, Coxey edited himself again, stating that "at least 3,000 recruits would be in Massillon [...] to join [the] army and begin the march to Washington."⁵³

Like so many of the strategic choices Coxey made, the choices he made in crafting his pragmatic argument limited its potential for success. On the one hand, these exaggerations may have served a strategic purpose. I mentioned earlier how Coxey exaggerated estimates as a way of sensationalizing the march, which he hoped would lead to increased media coverage. In addition, exaggerating the number of recruits who had pledged to march had the potential to build confidence among others that joining the Army would inevitably result in the social change they desired. Coxey's use of the quantitative *topos*—a stock formula or "commonplace" on which rhetors rely when crafting and defending arguments—certainly reinforced the image of a burgeoning movement, and that image may have neutralized skepticism about whether joining the Army would have any meaningful effect.

But despite the strategic value of Coxey's exaggerations about the number of marchers he had recruited, his quantitative rhetoric was risky. Obviously, saying so many people would join did not make it true, and by insisting there would be tens or hundreds of thousands in line on Easter Sunday, Coxey risked diminishing his credibility if he could not deliver on his promises. Given how the inception stage ended, it's not difficult to imagine how this played out: by projecting that three, five or even one hundred thousand recruits would join, but then departing from Massillon with only eighty-four men in line, observers were left questioning whether Coxey was delusional,

⁵³ "Coxey in Town," *Salem Daily Herald* (Salem, OH), Mar. 22, 1894.

lying or both. The immediate problem with this conundrum was that the media, already skeptical that Coxey would manage to launch his protest in the first place, now had fodder for their claims that his vision would never come to fruition. In the longer term, the supposition that the success of the Army plan was far from inevitable placed immense pressure on Coxey to show potential marchers that what they were doing would result in its intended outcome. While this did not guarantee failure, it significantly complicated Coxey's ability to motivate those without work to join the Army. In short, by saying there was more momentum than he could actually demonstrate and by exuding confidence in the success of the Army, Coxey's rhetoric actually had the potential to backfire.

Of course, Coxey's pragmatic reasoning did not exist in a vacuum. Rather, those who might join Coxey's Army were exposed to his mobilizational appeals in conjunction with one another, in various constellations and at various points in time. Thus, it is important to understand how Coxey's moral and pragmatic reasoning *together* may have motivated potential marchers to join the Army. As I see it, the combination of moral and pragmatic appeals had potential because they capitalized on the feelings of despair that those without work must have experienced at the time. After months without a stable income, jobless workers felt like nothing they were doing to find work made a difference, and that their tenuous situations might have become permanent realities. In contrast to that feeling, the appeal of the march was that it promised its participants a chance to get Congress to adopt laws that would create jobs, while simultaneously helping them feel like for the first time in a long time, they were directing their efforts toward a fruitful endeavor. In turn, the march represented a

chance for those without work to disprove the claim that they were part of a lower class of citizens. Hence, even if marching on Washington would require a significant expenditure of their energy, downtrodden laborers could be motivated by the feeling that they would effectively bring about morally legitimate social change, while asserting their own moral righteousness.

Smith and Windes concluded their essay on mobilizational appeals by arguing that “patterns of response to mobilizational exigencies might differ significantly” across contexts, thus pointing to the need for more case studies.⁵⁴ As one such case study, Coxey’s rhetoric in this stage illuminates how protest leaders can build confidence among advocates about the effectiveness and legitimacy of the cause toward which they are asked to direct their energy. Furthermore, Coxey’s rhetoric reveals that moral and pragmatic reasoning do not motivate potential participants in social protest in isolation from one another. To be sure, Coxey seems to have placed greater emphasis on the moral justifications for participating in his Army, but absent rhetoric enabling potential marchers to see the effectiveness of their efforts, Coxey would have failed to attract anyone at all to the Commonwealth. By taking seriously the necessity of both moral and pragmatic appeals to convert belief into action, we walk away from our exploration of Coxey’s mobilizational rhetoric with a deep understanding of how he was able to motivate downtrodden laborers to commit to a significant expenditure of their energy.

Of course, even though Coxey did build potential marchers’ confidence about the legitimacy and effectiveness of their efforts, he still left Massillon with only eighty-

⁵⁴ Smith and Windes, “Rhetoric of Mobilization,” 18.

four Commonwealers in line. This, I argue, can be explained by a point I made earlier: that in addition to establishing motivation, Coxe also needed to remove resistance. The extent to which he did so played a significant role in how the Army was perceived by potential marchers. Therefore, I turn my attention in the next and final main section of this chapter to Coxe's efforts to overcome the counter-rhetorics which threatened to strengthen resistance to the petition in boots.

Rhetorics and Counter-Rhetorics to Persuade and Deter Potential Marchers

Although Coxe's overarching rhetorical objective during the Army's inception stage was to reach his audience of potential marchers with messages that induced their motivation to join, his was not the only rhetoric potential marchers encountered. Rather, as others learned about the Army through the media, they too could initiate rhetoric about the Army, and the media would act as a vehicle for circulating this new rhetoric. In particular, public officials emerged as a source of this counter-rhetoric; as police authorities, elected officials and others grew skeptical and sometimes fearful about the impact of the Army on their jurisdictions, they issued statements that, like Coxe's, were picked up by a variety of media outlets. Thus, Coxe was faced with a challenging dilemma: while the media could help him reach large and geographically diffuse audiences, they could also hinder his efforts by publishing the counter-rhetoric of the Army's detractors. Given this dilemma, this section is devoted to exploring the counter-rhetoric that circulated about the Army, as well as Coxe's efforts to manage the tension between that counter-rhetoric and his own framing of the Army plan.

The Counter-Rhetoric

The counter-rhetoric about Coxey's Army initiated by public officials took aim at Coxey himself, as well as his ideas and his supporters. One way it did this was by dismissing the viability of the Army plan. The viability argument was especially common among members of Congress. Although some senators and representatives sympathized with Coxey's policy proposals—such as a Senator William Peffer of Kansas, who would eventually introduce Coxey's bills in Committee—most asserted that Coxey's grand vision would never come to fruition.⁵⁵ Representative James Maguire of California, for example, said, "I do not attach any importance to the Coxey movement itself. It will amount to nothing."⁵⁶ Representative Albert Hopkins of Pennsylvania agreed, stating, "My judgment is that the army will never materialize in Washington. It is so perfectly absurd that I can't conceive how any number of men can be gotten together for such a purpose."⁵⁷ This rhetoric functioned by asserting either the Army would never make it to Washington to present their grievances in the first place,

⁵⁵ "Live Capital Items," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Mar. 20, 1894.

⁵⁶ Although Representative Maguire did not foresee Coxey's Army amounting to anything significant, he did sympathize with their cause, arguing that it was "a symptom of growing conditions which is fraught with infinite danger to the popular government and to institutions of liberty." See "No Longer Laugh at Coxey," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Mar. 25, 1894.

⁵⁷ "A Coxey Office," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 24, 1894.

as in the case of Maguire’s statement, or that if they did make it to Washington, it would be meaningless because Congress would never pass such outlandish policies, as in the case of Hopkins’ statement.

Senator William Stewart of Nevada, whose letter to Coxey I referenced earlier, also weighed in on the viability of the Army plan. In his letter, Stewart argued that even if the cause for which Coxey fought was worthy, his petition-in-boots approach was inappropriate, and that his policies would only be taken seriously if he opted for “other means,” such as through a ballot initiative, to get them passed.⁵⁸ This counter-argument was important because whereas Maguire and Hopkins merely dismissed the viability of Coxey’s plan, Stewart called into question whether the people even had the right to approach their elected officials in person to seek redress for their grievances. At a time when Americans saw petitioning through a much narrower lens, Stewart’s letter threatened to reinforce the argument that members of Coxey’s Army were in the wrong by staging their demonstration in Washington.

From my perspective, there are two reasons why counter-rhetorical efforts to call into question the viability and validity of the petition in boots threatened to disrupt Coxey’s inception-stage recruitment efforts. First, this rhetoric directly opposed Coxey’s pragmatic appeals about the inevitable success of the protest. In particular, the rhetoric of Representatives Maguire and Hopkins insisted that the march was not even possible, meaning that it could not feasibly bring about the social change that Coxey

⁵⁸ “Senator Stewart to Coxey,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Mar. 26, 1894.

invited potential Commonwealers to envision. Second, this rhetoric delegitimized Coxey's proposed course of action. For potential marchers who believed that it was inappropriate for people to go directly to their government's doorstep to seek social change, arguments like Senator Stewart's reminded those who considered marching that established modes of political protest were preferable to more radical demonstrations like the one Coxey proposed. To be sure, Coxey could transform statements like Stewart's into reasons why potential marchers needed to assert their democratic right to petition in boots, but without a doubt, the counter-rhetorics of these members of Congress added to the mounting pressure facing Coxey as he worked to attract participants in his Army.

Though vocal, members of Congress were not the only public officials who offered their perspectives on the viability of the Army plan. Particularly in places where the Army planned to march, local officials argued that there was no viable way for Coxey's vision to come to fruition. For example, several D.C. Commissioners were interviewed by the media for their take on the threat Coxey's Army presented for District residents. "I have too much faith in the good sense of the American people to believe in the consummation of such an absurd crusade," said Commissioner Ross.⁵⁹ Notable about Ross' statement beyond its dismissal of the Army as an "absurd crusade" was his appeal to the "good sense" of the people, as if he was suggesting that abiding by previously established social norms is common sense, while disrupting those norms is

⁵⁹ "Coxey's Army: Officials Do Not Think it is Likely to Reach Washington," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 17, 1894.

not. D.C. Commissioner George Truesdell echoed Ross' sentiment, stating, "I have merely heard of [the march] through the newspapers and have regarded it more in the light of a huge joke than anything else."⁶⁰ By regarding it as a "huge joke," Truesdell reinforced the idea that the plan was not viable, and that anyone with common sense would agree with his assessment.

Even in instances when public officials acknowledged that the Army could very well make its way to Washington, there still appeared to have been little faith that the Army's advocacy efforts would make any real difference. D.C. Police Superintendent William Moore, for example, acknowledged that the Army could cause trouble if it made it to Washington, but brushed off the likelihood of that happening. "I don't think the demonstration will amount to anything, but I am keeping an eye open toward it," Moore stated.⁶¹ This statement served the dual purposes of appeasing anyone who might have been worried about the coming of the Army by vowing to keep an eye on new developments in the interest of security, while simultaneously dismissing the need to take the Army seriously. State-level officials seemed to have adopted similar attitudes toward the Army. Newspapers reported that Pennsylvania Governor Robert Pattison "did not seem at all alarmed" by the coming of Coxey's Army,⁶² while on the eve of the Army's departure from Massillon, Indiana Governor Claude Matthews

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² "Gen. Coxey's Invasion," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 19, 1894.

declared that the Army “shall never invade his state.”⁶³ Like their counterparts in DC, the rhetoric of these governors assuaged the fears of those living near the Army’s proposed route while downplaying the probability that the protestors’ presence would amount to anything meaningful.

The rhetoric of these public officials reveals that their strategy for denouncing the Army plan was to dismiss its viability. However, counter-rhetoric about Coxey’s Army did not just target the Army plan—it took aim at with a series of *ad hominem* attacks that called his credibility into question. These attacks most frequently disclaimed Coxey’s intelligence and his character and, interestingly, were often published anonymously. One commonly used attack labeled Coxey a “crank.” The *Belmont Chronicle*, for example, published an anonymous opinion piece following Senator Peffer’s introduction of Coxey’s bills in Committee. “There’s a natural affinity between cranks the world over,” the editorial asserted. “Senator Peffer, of Kansas, has been smitten with the idea of Coxey, of Ohio, and has given the cranks of the world great encouragement by embodying Coxey’s ideas in a bill introduced in the Senate.”⁶⁴ Elsewhere, this attack was appropriated by placing Coxey in a superlative class of cranks, giving dimension to the dangers cranks presented to society. “Coxey is a crank,

⁶³ “Indiana’s Governor Cries ‘Halt,’” *Ohio Democrat* (Logan, OH), Mar. 31, 1894. Although the Army’s route did not take the Commonwealers through Indiana, Governor Matthews appears to have been concerned that bands of recruits from farther west might cross through Indiana on their way to Massillon.

⁶⁴ Untitled article, *Belmont Chronicle* (Belmont, OH), Mar. 22, 1894.

and if he were a poor crank, this would all be a joke,” one editorial quipped, “but he’s using his money to collect 500 men for the cause.”⁶⁵ This iteration of the crank trope implied that while poor cranks were harmless because they lacked the power to make any difference, a crank with money—like Coxey—could cause some serious problems.

Using the “crank” label to characterize Coxey suggested to the Army’s observers that he was insane and thus could not be taken seriously. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term “crank” grew out of the sixteenth century Dutch *krank*, which referred to someone who was sick or ill.⁶⁶ But, in these newspapers’ treatments of Coxey as a crank, they were implying something about *mental* sickness or illness, as if his far-fetched ideas were signs of insanity or senility. Furthermore, by calling Senator Peffer a crank and then associating Coxey with Peffer, as the *Frederick News* story did, this rhetoric threatened to undermine any sense of legitimacy Coxey’s ideas may have garnered from Peffer’s endorsement. Whereas the support of a Senator might have helped Coxey show that he was not crazy and that his policies garnered favor, the *Frederick* paper’s indictment of Peffer worked to neutralize any potential boost the Senator’s support might have offered by framing him as mentally ill as well.

Consistent with the crank trope, another theme which emerged in counter-rhetoric about Coxey painted him as a practical joker. Another anonymous editorial, this time in the Cumberland, Maryland, newspaper, called Coxey “either a very deep

⁶⁵ “Coxey of Massillon: A Millionaire Crank Organizing an Army to March to Washington,” *Frederick News* (Frederick, MD), Mar. 15, 1894.

⁶⁶ “Crank,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed May 18, 2016.

practical joker or an extraordinary crank,” saying “it is astonishing that this absurd scheme should receive serious attention.”⁶⁷ While this editorial also relied on the crank trope, it went a step further to label Coxey as a “practical joker,” meaning that by extension, his ideas were to be considered jokes. This practical joke theme was somewhat common in counter-rhetoric about the Army. In other instances, the theme was developed by poking fun at the fact that the Army was to arrive in Washington on May 1, rather than on April 1, which would have been more appropriate given that it seemed to be an April Fools’ joke. “No one in Washington is taking Coxey’s Army seriously,” another editorial argued. “‘Coxey’s Army’ is regarded in Washington as a sort of All Fools’ Day hoax pulled before it was ripe, and nobody has the remotest idea of making any preparation for its reception, for the simple reason that no one believes it will ever come here.”⁶⁸ By using the April Fools’ Day quip to connect the *ad hominem* attacks on Coxey back to the viability argument I discussed earlier, this rhetoric worked to suggest that there was no need to make preparations for the Army’s arrival because the protest would never coalesce. Extending the April Fools’ Day quip, the *Washington Evening Star* joked, “It might not [...] be out of place to suggest that the arrival of General Coxey and his army might be more timely if it occurred just one month earlier

⁶⁷ “Coxey’s Move on Washington,” *Cumberland Evening Times* (Cumberland, MD), Mar. 15, 1894.

⁶⁸ Untitled article, *Freeland Tribune* (Freeland, PA), Mar. 26, 1894.

than date specified, [May 1].”⁶⁹ Like the *Freeland Tribune*, the *Washington Evening Star* implied to readers that Coxey and his ideas were more akin to a hoax than to a meaningful plan for inspiring social change.

What these *ad hominem* attacks and the earlier attacks on the viability of the Army plan shared in common was that both threatened to undermine Coxey’s credibility, which would in turn deter potential marchers from joining the Commonweal. I discussed earlier in this chapter that Coxey did well to establish his credibility, partly by declaring his religious authority and partly by exuding confidence that the success of his protest was inevitable. However, the counter-rhetoric described in the preceding pages worked in opposition to that authority by insisting that Coxey could not be taken seriously. This left Coxey needing to overcome a significant challenge because in order for potential marchers who considered participating in the Army to feel confident in their decision, they needed to trust in their leader.

Further contributing to the pressure that mounted on Coxey was the counter-rhetoric about his eventual supporters. While Coxey was deemed a crank, potential marchers were described as “tramps,” and this counter-rhetoric worked in opposition to Coxey’s efforts to re-constitute what it meant to be jobless. In one example of this rhetoric, an editorial in an Ohio newspaper asserted, “Mr. Coxey and his army might do more toward the improvement of the roads if they would work on those they pass over

⁶⁹ Untitled article, *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 5, 1894. The Army planned to demonstrate in Washington on May 1, so the *Star’s* joke was a reference to April Fools’ Day.

on the way to Washington, but ‘reformers’ have ever shown so great an antipathy to work that it is feared this suggestion is futile.”⁷⁰ In another example, the *Washington Evening Star* proclaimed that, “Unless Mr. Coxey’s army of the unemployed makes haste so as to keep ahead of the industrial revival, it may be embarrassed with offers of work en route.”⁷¹ Both of these passages worked by contrasting Coxey’s portrayals of the marchers’ objectives with allegations that those who would join the Army were only agreeing to do so because they wanted an excuse to avoid working. Suggesting that reformers have an “antipathy to work” or that the marchers may be “embarrassed” with offers of work implied that would-be marchers had ulterior motivations for protesting.

Beyond the suggestion the marchers did not truly want to find work, also notable about rhetoric evoking the “tramp” trope was that it suggested something unscrupulous about the marchers’ moral character. *Oxford English Dictionary* equates late nineteenth century usage of “tramp” with vagrancy, referring to those “on the tramp” as “in search of employment, or wandering as a vagrant.”⁷² Thus, the tramp rhetoric painted those who would join the Army as vagrants, part of a class of people who do not hold steady work and thus maintain their standard of living in some disreputable or unscrupulous

⁷⁰ “Mr. Coxey’s Great Scheme,” *Democratic Northwest* (Napoleon, OH), Feb. 8, 1894.

⁷¹ “Officials Do Not Think it is Likely to Reach Washington,” 1.

⁷² “Tramp,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed May 18, 2016.

way.⁷³ For potential marchers, the problem with this label was that it insinuated that that they might engage in unseemly behavior because they were idle and lacked the means to do anything else. Meanwhile, for Coxey, the problem with this label was that it indicted his character by association. If he was leading a band of tramps, then onlookers could safely assume that he, too, was a tramp.

With potential marchers' motivation called into question vis-à-vis the tramp trope, counter-rhetoric further chipped away at the character of would-be Commonwealers by evoking fear that they would become dangerous. One way counter-rhetoric justified these fears was by insinuating that those without work tended toward criminal behavior. An editorial published by the *Belmont Chronicle* took this approach, stating that even though Coxey *claimed* his “band of lunatics” would not include “thieves, anarchists, boodlers or bankers [...], the fool idea would never have been originated” if Coxey were not surrounding himself with criminals.⁷⁴ Even though Coxey had already established the claim that his supporters were distinct from the lower-class citizens who were prone to crime, the criminal allegations nevertheless gave reason for the Army's observers to be skeptical about the effect the Commonweal might have on the communities through which it marched.

⁷³ “Vagrant,” *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed May 18, 2016. In the nineteenth century, calling someone a vagrant was a harsh insult, and several “Vagrancy Act” laws were passed at the state level, many of which forced those without jobs to work for a certain number of months.

⁷⁴ Untitled article, *Belmont Chronicle* (Belmont, OH), Mar. 8, 1894.

Considering that potential marchers might have been attracted to the Army because it offered them the chance to prove they were not lazy, it's not hard to imagine why the tramp trope and the criminal allegations might have caused them to rethink the decision to join. These attacks signaled to those without work that even if these negative stereotypes did not apply to *them*, they might apply to others within the ranks. In effect, joining the Army would force them to associate with a lower class of citizens. No matter how much Coxeys insisted that the lower classes would not be allowed to participate, someone considering joining the Army could not be certain that they would not find their way into the Army's ranks. Furthermore, regardless of who they associated with, the fact that they were being criticized even before formally joining the protest signaled to potential marchers that participating would make them a target for the media's criticism. Put another way, choosing to march meant subjecting oneself to media scrutiny and to being portrayed as a tramp on a very public stage. Hence, this counter-rhetoric directly opposed Coxeys's efforts to portray the moral scrupulousness of the marchers while simultaneously eroding potential marchers' willingness to join the Army. One of Coxeys's Pennsylvania-based organizers best summed up this threat by saying that he was "hard at work today endeavoring to keep his forces from disbanding," but that "disparaging reports have shaken [recruits'] confidence."⁷⁵

⁷⁵ "Coxey Encouraged," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 23, 1894.

Coxey Responds

In all, the viability argument, the *ad hominem* attacks and the critiques of potential marchers' moral character comprised a counter-narrative to the motivational framework Coxey had established. As a result, Coxey was left needing to manage the tension between his own narrative and the counter-rhetoric that circulated in the media and threatened to reframe the image of the Army. In an effort to manage this tension, Coxey took two approaches. First, he worked to show potential marchers that they could take control of their unfortunate situations by joining a burgeoning movement that would inevitably compel Congress to adopt policies that would put more Americans back to work. Simultaneously, he refuted the claims of counter-rhetors that the eventual members of the Commonwealth were tramps blindly following an untrustworthy crank in the name of an implausible cause because they were too lazy to pursue gainful employment. Unsurprisingly, executing these strategies would prove far from simple.

The fact that Coxey had laid the foundation for arguments that defended potential marchers and spoke to the underlying causes of unemployment meant that he had an opportunity to elevate his narrative over the narrative of the Army's detractors. For example, because he had already constituted the moral scrupulousness of his supporters, Coxey could draw on this theme to insist that no members of the lower classes would be permitted to participate. "No criminals or anarchists will be allowed to mingle with us," Coxey claimed on one occasion.⁷⁶ This rhetoric simply denied the possibility that criminals would make their way into the ranks because Coxey would not

⁷⁶ "To be Carried into Execution," 2.

allow it. To expand on this strategy of denial, Coxey insisted that the marchers' behavior would be nothing but perfect. For example, an article in the *Washington Evening Star* reported that when asked whether he thought he'd be thrown in jail for leading his protest, Coxey "advanced a new idea in stating that Congress will be so impressed with the peace army that a special bill will be passed to provide transportation home to the men who walk to Washington."⁷⁷ For those who were exposed to the counter-narrative about the Army and might have had concerns about its arrival in their communities, Coxey's strategy of denial asserted that there was nothing to fear.

In other instances, Coxey expanded upon his earlier claims about the nature of the would-be Commonwealers by focusing on how peaceful the Army would be. "The conduct of the army will be, as the name implies, an army of peace."⁷⁸ Whereas he had eschewed the portrayal of his protest as an army in earlier instances, such as in his rejoinder to Senator Stewart, this rhetoric embraced the army label, but juxtaposed it with peace to show his listeners that the marchers would not be militant. This focus on peace was one of the more pronounced features of Army rhetoric. The Commonweal even had a mantra—"Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Men, but Death to Interest-Bearing Bonds"—which was plastered all over the flags and banners that accompanied speeches and other gatherings. Notable about the placement of this mantra was that it

⁷⁷ "The Coming of Coxey," 3.

⁷⁸ "Coxey's Crusaders: They Will Bring the March on Washington Next Sunday," *Frederick News* (Frederick, MD), Mar. 20, 1894.

put peace and goodwill *before* its expression of the Army's anti-interest message.⁷⁹

Thus, the rhetorical emphasis on peace went a step beyond the assertion that the marchers would behave appropriately to declare that the Army was, in fact, committed to bringing peace wherever it went.

Although Coxey certainly could not ignore counter-narratives that framed his supporters as unruly tramps, I see his focus on refuting would-be marchers' tendency toward criminal behavior as somewhat of a strategic misstep because it drew attention to the possibility that the Commonwealers might actually be criminals. For example, Coxey's continual assertion of potential marchers' peaceful nature seems to have been a response to claims that "tramps" were necessarily violent. This rejoinder would have made sense if such claims had become prominent, but in only one instance was that the case—in a small-town newspaper several weeks before the Army was slated to leave Massillon. Whereas that claim would have otherwise failed to gain traction, Coxey repeatedly called attention to it, meaning that it stuck out in the minds of the Army's observers more prominently than it should have. Likewise, talking about how Congress would be so impressed with the marchers' behavior that the government would pay for their transportation back home only would have made sense if members of Congress indicated that they feared the Commonwealers' misbehavior. To the contrary, members of Congress made clear that they did not even think the petition in boots would reach Washington in the first place. However, by emphasizing the marchers' good behavior, Coxey brought into focus the potential that the marchers might misbehave once they

⁷⁹ "To be Carried into Execution," 2.

reached the nation's capital. Thus, Coxey's efforts to neutralize the counter-narrative about the Army were hindered by the fact that he attracted, rather than deflecting, attention to the possibility that the petition in boots would be comprised of violent, lawless tramps.

Given both the strengths and the weaknesses of Coxey's strategy for managing the tension between his own narrative and the counter-narrative of the Army's detractors, it's not surprising that the first wagons rolled out of Massillon with only eighty-four men in line. Indeed, Coxey had established motivation by inducing potential marchers' belief in the effectiveness and legitimacy of what they were being asked to do. But it was not enough to believe in the cause; believers needed to act. This demanded that Coxey remove the barriers which justified potential Commonwealers' resistance to the petition in boots. Despite his best efforts, this is where Coxey fell short. Having established motivation but failing to overcome some of the factors which threatened to deter potential marchers from joining the Army, Coxey was left with a slew of believers but only a small handful of mobilized advocates.

Assessing Coxey's Success

The complexity of the challenges facing Coxey during the Army's inception stage lead me to conclude that his rhetoric did well to motivate some potential marchers, but that it fell far short of attracting the masses to the petition in boots. At the same time, the power of the rhetorical appeals of the Army's inception stage were not limited to those few weeks leading up to Easter Sunday. Rather, they could and would be re-appropriated in subsequent stages, both to help the Commonweal attract new

recruits, as well as to help the Army achieve new objectives that emerged as the rhetorical environment evolved. This observation leads to an important question: How are we to measure Coxey's success during the inception stage?

One way to measure success in this stage is by applying Coxey's criterion, which relied on a quantitative assessment about the number of people who turned out to march. By that criterion, Coxey's rhetoric failed. Whereas he promised observers that there would be thousands in that field outside Massillon on Easter Sunday, eighty-four showed up, many of whom did not even make it past the Commonweal's first stop in Reedurban, Ohio, just four miles outside of Massillon. In this chapter, I have argued that this failure can be attributed to Coxey's inability to ensure that his narrative about the march was elevated above the counter-narratives which reframed the Army as a band of tramps pursuing far-flung ideas that negated long-held predispositions about the role of the government in economic policymaking. Attacks on Coxey's credibility, the viability of his plan and the character of his supporters each threatened to deter potential marchers from joining the Commonweal, and while Coxey did well to neutralize some of these attacks, counter-rhetoric about the Army continued to circulate alongside his own portrayal of who would comprise the Army and what they sought to accomplish. Thus, one might even consider it remarkable that Coxey recruited as many participants as he did.

But another way of assessing Coxey's success in this stage is by the criterion put forth by his detractors. For public officials, members of the press and other counter-rhetors, Coxey's Army would never even make its way out of Massillon. Looking at these projections, we can see signs that Coxey actually did enjoy some success in

building a structure of motivation that would carry with the petition in boots in its subsequent stages. I attribute this to the fact that even though he could not silence the counter-rhetoric of the Army's detractors, Coxey was remarkably successful in constituting an audience, disseminating his messages to that audience, and crafting moral and pragmatic appeals that would convert belief in the cause into activism toward social change. From the moment he announced his plan to assemble a march on Washington, Coxey focused on transforming jobless workers into an audience of potential marchers who could be motivated to join the Army. Once constituted, Coxey did well to reach this audience using the Good Roads Association bulletins, his speeches and his network of organizers to spread the message about the march. Meanwhile, Coxey executed a media engagement strategy that enabled him to reach the masses with high volumes of coverage of the plan. And, despite how his messages were reframed, Coxey crafted arguments that induced jobless workers' belief in the legitimacy and efficacy of their participation in the petition in boots. The result was a group of eighty-four marchers—few in number but enthusiastic for their cause—who began the trek to Washington on Easter Sunday.

Coxey's focus on the legitimacy and effectiveness of potential marchers' efforts is what I consider the foundation of the motivational framework that enabled the Army to sustain itself over the longer term, and consequently where I locate much of Coxey's success. What Coxey called on his supporters to do required a significant expenditure of their energy, and so they needed to see that their participation was a morally legitimate course of action. To help induce that sense among potential marchers, Coxey constituted those who would comprise the Army as morally scrupulous, morally

genuine and morally virtuous, while constituting the act of marching itself as a moral imperative. This enabled potential marchers to feel that they were fulfilling a moral obligation by joining, and that joining was necessary because they were called upon by God to do so. In addition to the moral case for marching, potential participants needed to feel as though their activism would effectively render a desirable outcome. To instill this sense among his audience, Coxey portrayed the Army as a growing movement with significant support that would inevitably create jobs because Congress would take action once presented with and pressured by popular demand.

Thus, the motivational structure established in the inception stage had as much to do with how we measure success as it did with any one appeal. In the immediate term, Coxey may have failed to assemble thousands in a field outside Massillon, but his moral and pragmatic rhetoric established his authority as the leader of a burgeoning protest. By exuding his confidence in the eventual success of his Army plan and by situating himself as an agent of God called upon to carry out His will, Coxey portrayed himself as the leader of a discipleship who deserved the support of the masses. Indeed, there were some missteps which threatened to erode Coxey's authority, such as when he exaggerated the number of recruits who had pledged to march from Massillon. But despite these missteps, Coxey's authority enabled him to assemble a small but committed group of advocates when no one thought it could be done. In turn, Coxey could argue that he was adept enough to exploit the resources available to him in service of bringing his vision to fruition, which would prove important when the counter-rhetoric of his detractors painted him as a crank who should not be taken seriously.

In the longer term, the motivational framework established in the inception stage was important because it gave leaders and rank-and-file members of the Army a vocabulary on which they could draw in subsequent stages. Especially because the number of recruits who joined the Army at Massillon meant that the Army needed to continue attracting new members, the appeals Coxey made in this stage could be appropriated throughout the journey to Washington. Moreover, these moral and pragmatic appeals proved versatile. As committed marchers needed reasons to stay the course when new challenges arose, and as the main objective of the Army expanded to include the need to defend petitioning in boots as an essential American right, Army rhetors would reshape these appeals to adapt to their evolving rhetorical environment. Of course, once on the road to Washington, Coxey and Browne were not the only Army rhetors who could rely on these appeals. Instead, there were eighty-four new voices who could do the work of bringing more Commonwealers into the fold, encouraging one another to stay the course and demonstrating the right of the people to bring their concerns to the doorstep of the national legislature. Thus, the rhetoric of the inception stage was one that endured over the entirety of the Army's lifespan.

While it would be easy to label the inception stage as a failure, there is indeed much to celebrate about Coxey's inception-stage rhetoric. By creating a structure of motivation that enabled the Army to depart from Massillon and to make it all the way to Washington to petition the national legislature, Coxey managed to launch a protest that had a meaningful impact on the trajectory of American history.

CHAPTER THREE

Boots Hit the Ground: Adapting Motivation Amidst an Evolving Rhetorical Environment

They may be poor and penniless, hungry, and idle but their presence in our political economy is not to be ignored nor dissipated with a sneer.

—Hocking (*Ohio*) Sentinel, April 26, 1894¹

Few in number but brimming with enthusiasm, those who were motivated by Jacob Coxey's inception-stage rhetoric to join the Army gathered in a field outside Massillon in the early morning hours of Easter Sunday, March 25. The marchers came from near and far, ready to begin the march they had anticipated for weeks. Joining the eighty-four marchers were dozens of others, some who came to show their support for the cause and others who simply wanted to see if the spectacle they read about in the newspapers would actually come to fruition. These onlookers offered their support in the form of cheers, prayers and donations to the Commonwealth's commissary, while the marchers themselves fell into well-organized units. Among the chaos there was order, and at last, these inaugural members of Coxey's Army took their first steps toward Washington and toward their place in history.

I argue that the Army's first steps toward Washington marked the beginning of the second stage of its lifespan, distinct from the inception stage because, among other reasons, the Army's rhetorical purpose had evolved. Like before, the Army still needed to motivate new members to join because the recruits who gathered on Easter Sunday,

¹ "The March of the Miserable," *Hocking Sentinel* (Hocking, OH), Apr. 26, 1894.

though enthusiastic, were small in number. But alongside this need emerged a new motivational purpose: the need to sustain the commitment of those who already pledged their support for the cause. In turn, the petition in boots had two audiences, one comprised of potential marchers and the other comprised of already-committed marchers. Although these audiences were similar in many ways, their barriers to motivation distinguished them. In the most basic sense, *experiencing* the difficulty of the march was notably different from reading about it in the newspapers. It was critical that the Army craft rhetoric that transcended the differences between audiences to address both of these motivational factors, but doing so would be far from easy. Furthermore, given that there were now rank-and-file members and unit leaders within the Army, the responsibility of addressing these multiple audiences no longer fell exclusively on Coxe's shoulders, which was another way in which the rhetorical environment had shifted. Of course, despite how the proliferation of rhetors enabled the petition in boots to expand its reach, it also made it more difficult for the Army's leadership to coordinate key messages, so the presence of new voices to speak on behalf of the protest was a double-edged sword.

In response to this evolved rhetorical environment, Coxe, Browne and the range of other voices that emerged in this second stage adopted a transcendent rhetorical strategy which was successful both in sustaining the commitment of those who departed from Massillon, and in attracting new members to the Commonwealth. In the texture of the rhetoric that drove that strategy, we can see how Army rhetors built upon the themes of the inception stage. For example, appeals in the inception stage called upon the power of religion to portray marching as a moral obligation. Drawing

on the success of these religious appeals, Army rhetoric on the road to Washington argued that heeding Browne and Coxe's calls to march was akin to heeding a call from God. By building on the motivational framework of the inception stage and adapting moral and pragmatic appeals to the Army's new rhetorical environment, committed and potential marchers alike could see why the sacrifices they were being asked to make were worthwhile.

Because of how Army rhetors adapted inception-stage themes in the context of their new rhetorical environment, the petition in boots achieved two important victories by the end of its second stage. First, against all odds, the Commonweal reached Washington. Despite the predictions of lawmakers and reporters who insisted the protest would fizzle within days,² Coxe's Army sustained the five-week journey, reaching Washington by the end of April. Yet the Army's more important and more impressive achievement was that by the time it reached the nation's capital, the number of marchers in line had grown fivefold compared to the number who left Massillon on Easter Sunday. In other words, the rhetoric of the Army's second stage was not just

² D.C. Commissioner John Ross, for example, said he had "too much faith in the good sense of the American people to believe in the consummation of such an absurd crusade," while an opinion piece in the *Cumberland Evening Times* argued, "It is astonishing that such an absurd scheme should receive serious attention from an intelligent newspaper." See "Coxey's Army," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 17, 1894; and "Coxey's Move on Washington," *Cumberland Evening Times* (Cumberland, MD), Mar. 15, 1894.

successful in sustaining the commitment of the original members of the Commonwealth—it was also successful in motivating new advocates to make great sacrifices in the name of the cause.

To unpack how the Army’s rhetoric on the road to Washington drew on the motivational framework of the inception stage to enable these two achievements, this chapter proceeds in two main sections. The first main section provides an in-depth analysis of the dimensions of the Army’s evolved rhetorical environment. Then, in the second main section, I provide an analysis of the ways in which Army rhetors built a transcendent rhetorical strategy, the characteristics of which drew on the moral and pragmatic framework of the inception stage to adapt to the evolved rhetorical environment. Specifically, I argue in that section that the Army’s transcendent rhetoric—characterized by appeals to religion, quantitative appeals and even protest songs—worked to motivate both of the Army’s audiences, despite how the threats to these audiences’ motivations were distinct. These analyses lead me to argue in the conclusion to this chapter that the rhetorical adaptations discussed not only met the Army’s immediate motivational needs, but also set the stage for success once the Army reached the nation’s capital.

Purpose, Audience & Rhetor: The Army’s Rhetorical Environment Evolves

The change in the Army’s rhetorical environment demanded that the Army adapt with evolved rhetorical strategies. When I use the phrase “rhetorical environment,” I am referring to the constellation of purpose(s), audience(s) and rhetor(s) to which discourse responds in a given moment. While I analyze the specific

rhetorical strategies that adapted to these factors in the next section, the following pages explore how these factors evolved and why they necessitated the Army's rhetoric to adapt.

The foremost distinguishing factor between the rhetorical environments of the Army's first two stages was its purpose, which expanded in scope and complexity as the Army transitioned to life on the road to Washington. Following their departure from Massillon, Coxey's Army still needed to attract new participants because the number of activists who joined on Easter Sunday would not be sufficient for a mass demonstration in front of the Capitol. Although not new to the Army, this purpose became more complex once potential participants—whose motivation was initially threatened by the *hypothetical* difficulty of the march—were exposed to the *reported* challenges of the journey as it was published in newspapers.³ No longer was there a *possibility* of the journey being difficult—the difficulties of marching were real, lived and reported on by

³ The *Scranton Tribune*, for example, often reported on the challenging conditions. On March 30, 1894, the *Tribune* noted how snow and harsh winds took a toll on the marchers, many of whom “were suffering from dysentery,” which the paper attributed to a lack of sanitary regulations in the camps. On April 13, 1894, the *Tribune* reported that “the road was a hard one” for the marchers due to steep hills and deep mud. See “March of Crank's Brigade,” *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), Mar. 30, 1894; and “March of Coxey's Heroes,” *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), Apr. 13, 1894.

the media. As such, challenges that once seemed distant and abstract now seemed concrete and immediate.

The Army's original purpose was made even more complex when its challenges expanded to include the need to combat what movement scholars call entropy—the threat that activists' dedication to the cause will erode over time and participants will abandon the protest.⁴ There was a range of factors, many of which I detail later in this section, that threatened to erode an individual marcher's dedication to the cause. Harsh weather, health and hygiene problems, and unrelenting criticism by the media were all reasons why the sacrifice of marching was immense, and unless Army rhetoric could articulate clear reasons why marchers should continue enduring these sacrifices, the protest would succumb to entropy. Thus, the petition in boots needed rhetoric that motivated already-committed marchers—as well as potential marchers—to stay the course.

⁴ According to Oxford English Dictionary, “entropy” refers to a gradual decline into disorder. From my perspective, social protest tends toward entropy unless participants work to sustain the commitment of participants. Herbert Simons argues that this is one function served by leaders in social movements; in addition to attracting followers, leaders must also ensure “adherence to [the] program [and] loyalty to [the] leadership.” See Herbert W. Simons, “Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 1 (1970): 3.

Despite the many similarities between would-be and committed marchers, they differed in terms of the factors that threatened their motivation. While potential marchers would find story after story in newspapers *reporting* the difficulties of marching, there was an even steeper uphill climb when it came to motivating those who were already committed to the cause, because they were now *experiencing* the challenging journey. I argue that the experience of marching served as a potentially greater threat to motivation than the anticipation of marching because suffering from illnesses like dysentery or constantly being ridiculed by the media felt more *real* than reading about those challenges in a newspaper. Therefore, motivating both of these audiences required that Coxey's Army evolve: whereas Army rhetors needed to attend to the *perceived* difficulty of marching during the inception stage, they now needed to craft appeals that attended to both the *reported* and *experienced* difficulties of sustaining the journey to Washington.

To be sure, there was no finite set of options for how the Army's rhetoric could adapt to its evolved rhetorical environment, but by my estimation, it was essential that Army rhetoric transcend the divide between these dual audiences. I argue that the rhetoric of the Army's time on the road did this by situating the immensity of the sacrifices being asked of the marchers within the context of the immensity of the payoff yielded by their sacrifices. In other words, rhetorically speaking, there is a *ratio* between sacrifice and payoff, and Army rhetoric attended to that ratio with a unified rhetoric that motivated participation in the petition in boots among both committed and potential marchers. Indeed, to see joining the Army or continuing to march as worthwhile, members and potential members needed to believe that the journey would

not be all that difficult, and/or that the journey would be difficult but still worth enduring because it would render significant positive social change. To induce this belief among those who were hesitant to join or who might have considered abandoning the cause, the rhetoric of Coxeys' Army could attend to each side of the ratio independently, but a more successful rhetoric would attend to both sides simultaneously.

As one might imagine, the rhetorical task of attending to the sacrifice-payoff ratio was far from simple given the range of material conditions that threatened motivation. Harsh weather, for example, made the *experience* of marching difficult for those who endured it, *and* it made the journey seem difficult to those who read about it in the newspapers. Sleeping on the snow-covered ground without a blanket or overcoat was nothing short of miserable, and reading about that experience likely deterred many of those who were on the fence and might have otherwise been compelled to join the Army.⁵ Even as winter gave way to spring, the Army was not immune to these challenges when it marched through the mountains, where snowfall in mid-April was common.⁶

Further intensifying the challenge of harsh weather was the toll it took on the Commonwealers' physical health. Even though Coxeys and Browne appealed to

⁵ "Coxey's Army Camps," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 26, 1894.

⁶ *Fairyland, Cumberland Mountains* (photo). In the Ray Stannard Baker Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

townspeople along the route for donations of food, they failed to collect enough to sustain the dozens and eventually hundreds who joined the Army.⁷ As a result, the marchers often went to bed hungry, only to wake to a breakfast of “bread, cold meat and weak coffee.”⁸ Without proper nutrition or a shield from the cold and wet weather, the marchers were susceptible to illness.⁹ It wasn’t long before reports of dysentery, small pox and other communicable diseases started to circulate.¹⁰ Given how each of these material conditions intensified the challenge of marching, it was critical that the Army’s rhetoric shift focus away from the significance of these problems, both to ensure that they would not deter potential marchers who read about the Army in the newspaper from joining, and to ensure that they would not compel committed marchers to give up and go home.

⁷ The third Good Roads Association bulletin included such an appeal: “Let every townsman [sic] along our line of march, when they come to meetings, bring with them something they can spare; butter, bacon, ham, fruit, grain and hay for our horses.” *Bulletin No. 3* (Massillon, OH: J.S. Good Roads Association of the US, 1894). In the Ray Stannard Baker papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

⁸ “The Peace Army Marching,” *Reynoldsville Star* (Reynoldsville, PA), Apr. 11, 1894.

⁹ Untitled article, *Democratic Northwest* (Napoleon, OH), Apr. 26, 1894.

¹⁰ “Random Remarks,” *The Columbian* (Bloomsburg, PA), Apr. 13, 1894.

While the threats to motivation posed by these material conditions were especially pronounced for those who were already part of the protest and experienced these difficulties on a daily basis, the rhetoric of the media added a new dimension to the motivational challenge in this evolved rhetorical environment. I already mentioned how reporting on the day-to-day challenges associated with marching threatened to deter potential activists from joining the Army. But in addition, the media threatened to erode the motivation of those who already committed by portraying the character of the marchers in a negative light. Negative portrayals of potential marchers circulated in newspapers from the moment Coxe announced his plans to assemble a march on Washington, but during the inception stage, these portrayals described *hypothetical* people—people who had not yet joined. On the road to Washington, reporters had direct access to the marchers, writing stories about their every move, many of which embellished instances of misconduct for a more compelling storyline. Marchers were portrayed publicly as unruly, lawless criminals, and the only way to avoid these portrayals was to disassociate oneself with the petition in boots.

As an example of these portrayals, reports surfaced in the first few days of the march about two Commonwealers who got into a physical brawl in a saloon in Louisville, Ohio.¹¹ On a separate occasion, newspapers wrote about a brawl in Kelly's Army that led to the death of one of its members in Billings, Montana, suggesting that if

¹¹ "Coxey Army En Route," *New Haven Register* (New Haven, CT), Mar. 27, 1894.

bloodshed was possible in Kelly's Army, it was also possible in Coxeys Army.¹²

Ultimately, there was no police report filed after the bar fight in Louisville. That, along with the fact that the incident in Billings had nothing to do with Coxeys Army, suggests that the media's depictions of these events lacked any factual basis.

Nevertheless, these reports threatened to erode the motivation of committed and would-be Commonwealers because they revealed that close public scrutiny was one of the price tags for joining the petition in boots. Because no reasonable person would want to be the subject of such harsh public criticism, the media's reports of life on the road to Washington was another challenge that Army rhetoric would need to contextualize in

¹² "Browne at Boonsboro," *Baltimore Sun* (Baltimore, MD), Apr. 24, 1894.

Kelly's Army was one of the most prominent of the several dozen other "industrial armies" that marched from various parts of the country to Washington in response to some of the same conditions Coxeys Army protested. A more detailed discussion of the other industrial armies of 1894 is provided in Chapter One. Following the incident in Billings, Kelly immediately acknowledged the impact the incident would have on the public image of the broader industrial army movement, noting in his official statement that, "This is the largest blow we have had [and] we will now be regarded as lawless men." See "Statement of Kelly on the Billings Fight," *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco, CA), Apr. 26, 1894.

terms of the rewards associated with marching in order to sustain and grow the size of the protest.¹³

As I alluded to earlier, the immense challenge of crafting rhetoric that contextualized the significant sacrifice of marching was not solely Coxey's responsibility. Marking another evolution in the Army's rhetorical environment as it transitioned to its second stage was the proliferation of rhetors. No longer was Coxey the only person responsible for motivating participation in the Army, as had more or less been the case during the inception stage. Rather, those who joined the petition in boots as rank-and-file members—though an audience for the Army's motivational appeals—also took on the role of rhetor because they could voice reasons why participating in the march was critical. Although these rhetors did not occupy the same highly visible platforms as their leaders, the rank-and-file members of Coxey's Army originated discourse that reinforced their own reasons for marching and encouraged potential marchers around them to join as well.

The proliferation of rhetors mattered not only because of the sheer number of people who could speak on the Army's behalf, but also because it enabled the Army's leadership to become more sophisticated in structure. Because the growth of the rank

¹³ The potential for these conditions to cause committed marchers to abandon the cause is made clear by the fact that many of those who left from Massillon did not even make it to the Army's first stop in Reedurban, just four miles east of Massillon. See "Coxey's Frozen Army: Cold Weather Depresses the Enthusiasm of the Army," *Frederick News* (Frederick, MD), Mar. 27, 1894.

and file necessitated careful management, members of the Army were organized into smaller units within the broader structure, which in turn demanded the appointment of new leaders who fell into an advanced hierarchical structure, not unlike an actual army. Each new leader thus became a source of rhetoric that motivated participation in the protest, either by addressing marchers directly, or by speaking to the public on the Army's behalf. The most notable of these leaders was Carl Browne who, although present in the inception stage, contributed to the Army's motivational rhetoric only occasionally in the weeks leading up to the march. However, as the Army's "chief marshal," he addressed the marchers once and sometimes twice daily on the road to Washington, giving orders and reminding the Commonwealers about the strict codes of conduct to which they were expected to adhere.¹⁴ Below Browne in the hierarchy was a series of deputies, such as Coxe's eldest son, Jesse.¹⁵ And, even unit leaders who did not have much of a public voice and whose rhetoric was not likely to circulate in the newspapers were important to the leadership structure because they were the conduits between the boots on the ground and the Army's top figureheads, Coxe and Browne.

Beyond the role these leaders played in addressing the marchers and working to sustain their commitment to the cause, there were still other rhetors who did not necessarily participate in the march, but who became prominent voices for the protest.

¹⁴ "Coxe in Pennsylvania," *Somerset Herald* (Somerset, PA), Apr. 4, 1894.

¹⁵ "Browne Still in Command," *Shenandoah Evening Herald* (Shenandoah, PA), Apr. 16, 1894. Jesse Coxe served as a deputy in the Army until he was discharged for getting into a dispute with Browne and other Commonwealers.

Many of these voices were part of what I call the Army's "advance guards"—people who acted as bona fide spokespeople for the Commonweal and were responsible for disseminating messages about the Army as it made its way through the communities along the route. For example, Albert E. Redstone—known as “Colonel Redstone”—was stationed on the ground in Washington to make arrangements for the Army, working in close concert with Coxe and Browne. Redstone became the media's go-to source for information about the preparations being made for the Army's arrival in DC, and in this way, the prominence of Redstone's rhetoric in the media illustrates one of the ways in which the Army's leadership structure had evolved from the inception stage.¹⁶

That these leaders and the rank-and-file members of the Army became additional sources of motivational rhetoric proved to be both an opportunity and a challenge in the context of the Army's evolved rhetorical environment. On the one hand, more rhetors meant more rhetoric, and with more people to spread key messages, those messages would surely reach wider audiences. Moreover, the proliferation of rhetors meant there were more people to endorse the protest and its goals. For example, someone considering joining the Army after hearing about it from Jacob Coxe several weeks earlier might have been skeptical about whether the journey would be worth enduring. However, hearing about the promise of the protest and its payoff from

¹⁶ See, for example, “Coxe's Tribulations: What the Commonweal Leader May Expect in Washington,” *Shenandoah Evening Herald* (Shenandoah, PA), Apr. 9, 1894; and “The Coxe Movement,” *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Apr. 27, 1894.

someone immersed in the daily challenge of marching may have helped chip away at the apprehension that potential marchers must have experienced.

But on the other hand, the proliferation of rhetors forced Coxey to cede control over messages about his policies to others who inevitably understood and articulated those messages in different ways. For example, hearing about the march from Browne, whose grandiloquent style contrasted sharply with Coxey's more moderate approach, might have left potential marchers with an impression of a movement that was more radical and perhaps more outlandish than Coxey would have portrayed it.¹⁷ In other words, having more rhetors to motivate participation in the protest was a strength of the evolved rhetorical environment, but one that would only translate into success if properly managed.

In all, my analysis in the preceding pages should illustrate that success in this stage was intricately tied to the ways in which the Army adapted to its evolved rhetorical environment. The expansion of the Army's purpose to include the need to attract new participants and the need to combat the threat of entropy meant that the Army was left to address dual audiences which, although similar, differed in their motivational requirements. In order to successfully motivate both of these audiences, Coxey's Army needed to craft a unified rhetoric that contextualized and justified the sacrifices of marching for both those who experienced the difficulties of marching and those who read reports of those challenges, rather than creating distinct appeals that

¹⁷ Malcolm O. Sillars, "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," *Speech Monographs* 39, no. 2 (1972): 92-104.

addressed one audience but not the other. Put another way, Army rhetors—stronger in number and more sophisticated in their leadership structure than before—needed to address both sides of the ratio between sacrifice and payoff by transcending the differences between the dual audiences called into being by the Army’s dual purposes. Therefore, my task in the next section is to provide an analysis of the specific rhetorical strategies developed to achieve this important accomplishment.

Adapting Rhetoric to Motivate Enduring Participation in an Evolved Environment

To motivate participation in the petition in boots by attending to the sacrifice-payoff ratio, Coxey’s Army adopted a transcendent rhetorical strategy. I use the term “transcendent” in two senses: the rhetoric transcended the divide between the Army’s dual audiences by attending to both audience’s motivational needs, but it also appealed to transcendent motivation. Therefore, the first subsection that follows explores the characteristics of transcendent rhetoric and how Army rhetors appealed to transcendence to motivate new and sustained participation in the protest. Then, in the second subsection, I analyze how the Army’s religious and quantitative rhetoric—tropes that served Coxey well during the inception stage—enhanced the motivation induced by the transcendent strategy. Finally, in the third subsection, I analyze the Army’s protest songs as another rhetorical enhancement to the transcendent strategy to argue that the rhetoric of the rank-and-file members of Coxey’s Army further enhanced their own motivation to participate, as well as the motivation of the potential marchers they encountered.

Crafting a Transcendent Strategy to Motivate Participation in the Petition in Boots

The Army's transcendent rhetoric in its second stage motivated participation among committed and potential marchers by emphasizing the ways in which advocacy toward the success of the protest would serve the overall greater good, as opposed to the activist's personal interests. Religious communication scholar Brian Betz argued that transcendent appeals motivate participation in movements by emphasizing that sacrifice, although trying, will enhance the lives of those in need.¹⁸ Sociologist Christian Smith supported this claim and argued that transcendent rhetoric has especially pronounced potential to motivate activism "when activism is costly for participants," as was the case for Coxey's Army.¹⁹ These scholars highlight that transcendent rhetoric has the power to enhance motivation by contextualizing the significance of the sacrifice in terms of the glorious reward that will result from the activists' expenditure of their energy.

Other scholars have pointed to a range of options available to the rhetor seeking to induce transcendent motivation in the context of movements. One such option is to emphasize the benefits other groups or individuals will glean from the activist's efforts. Kenneth Burke illuminated this notion by likening transcendent motivation to charity.

¹⁸ Brian R. Betz, "Transcendence: A Strategy of Rhetoric in a Theology of Hope," *Religious Communication Today* 8 (1985): 29; emphasis in the original.

¹⁹ Christian Smith, "Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back In," in Christian Smith (ed.), *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social-Movement Activism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 9.

In *Attitudes Toward History*, Burke argued that transcendence takes on a “charitable attitude [which is] required for the purposes of persuasion and cooperation.”²⁰ In this sense, transcendent rhetoric motivates by inspiring a sense of altruism—showing the audience targeted by the transcendent appeal how others stand to benefit thanks to their efforts. Rhetorical scholar Kristine Johnson further explained this notion by arguing that rhetoric can mobilize participants by framing the activist’s efforts in explicitly instrumental terms and situating participation as integral to bringing about a particular outcome that serves society more broadly.²¹ Exploiting the insights of Burke and Johnson sheds light on the multiple pathways rhetors can traverse to transcend the personal benefits of activism and exploit the greater good for enhanced motivation. From the perspective of a potential activist, the feeling that they’re making the world a better place can be as motivational as the feeling that they will be able to affect their own personal situation in a positive way.

Whereas Burke and Johnson illustrate how transcendent rhetoric can motivate by focusing on the *people* who benefit from social change, other scholars have shown how transcendent rhetoric can emphasize the magnitude of the cause toward which activists’ efforts are directed, in turn inspiring people to pledge or sustain their

²⁰ Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes Toward History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1984), 166.

²¹ Kristine Johnson, “The Things that Unite Us: Transcendence in the First Decade of the *Catholic Worker*,” *Journal of Communication and Religion* 36, no. 2 (2013): 180-181.

commitment. One approach to inflating the magnitude of the cause is to promise how much better the world will be if the protest achieves its ultimate goal(s). Rhetorical scholar Steven Goldzwig illustrated this point by analyzing President Johnson's Civil Rights Act rhetoric. Goldzwig argued, "By both word and by deed, [Johnson's transcendent rhetoric] imbued the nation with a distinctly hopeful sense that, despite the violence and the seeming chaos of the day, there were palpable means [i.e., by passing the Civil Rights Act] of recovery and redemption."²² For Goldzwig, President Johnson's Civil Rights Act discourse reminds us that transcendent rhetoric can show activists that the success of a movement will usher in a more perfect world, thereby casting their efforts as critical to positive social change that moves society beyond the tribulations of the status quo. To understand how rhetoric can invite activists to imagine the better world they can bring to fruition, I borrow again from Kenneth Burke, who used the term "crescendo" to describe how rhetoric can build upward toward a climax, in turn inspiring activists' optimism that a better future is within reach.²³

Of course, crescendo has a corollary. Rather than appealing to activists by inviting them to see the more perfect world ushered in by the success of the movement, rhetoric can also construct the threat of a much worse world in the event that the movement is unsuccessful and the status quo social order is maintained. Threat-based

²² Steven R. Goldzwig, "LBJ, the Rhetoric of Transcendence and the Civil Rights Act of 1968," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 1 (2003): 46.

²³ Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 45.

appeals typically work by evoking fear of what might happen if the social world were to continue on the downward trajectory characterizing the status quo. Similar to how crescendo builds rhetorically toward climax, transcendent threat builds rhetorically toward nadir, inviting potential activists to see their essential role in preventing a worst-case scenario. From the perspective of the potential participant, threat appeals motivate activism because of the chance that forgoing the protest will spell doom and damnation.

In other words, there is a range of ways in which transcendent rhetoric can motivate participation in efforts toward social change. I maintain that exploiting these insights to understand how the petition in boots adapted to its evolved rhetorical environment shows how Army rhetoric motivated participation in the march. In so doing, the Army's transcendent strategy attended to the sacrifice-payoff ratio by showing how the sacrifice of marching, though immense, would be worth enduring because it would bring about a better and brighter world, rather than allowing the problems of the status quo to continue. By and large, the Army's transcendent rhetoric did this in two ways: (1) by emphasizing how marching benefitted the growing segment of society that was disempowered by the political and economic systems, and (2) by using crescendo and threat to amplify the magnitude of the cause for which marchers were asked to fight.

One of the primary ways the Army's transcendent strategy motivated participation was by constituting the marchers as representatives of those who could not advocate for themselves. This rhetoric showed committed and potential marchers that their sacrifices, though significant, would be worthwhile because an overwhelming majority of Americans were relying on them to be their voice in Washington. Over

time, the group of people constituted as the marchers' constituency grew larger and larger, and in this way, the Army's transcendent rhetoric inflated the significance of what was at stake. An excerpt from the third Good Roads Association bulletin, which circulated widely in newspapers when the Army departed from Massillon, constituted the marchers as representatives in this way:

We not only represent ourselves who go, but we speak for the millions of workers comprising the American Federation of Labor, through their official convention at Chicago, December 15, 1893; also, the Farmers' Alliance of the United States, and the Knights of Labor, and other organizations, besides the thousands of signatures of professional mercantile and other citizens of the United States—in fact, we can safely say we represent two-thirds of the producing and useful citizens of the Union with Wall street and England, as in '76 against us.²⁴

This rhetoric contributed to transcendent motivation by expanding the scope of the Army well beyond those who had already joined or even those who would eventually join. By arguing that “millions of workers” would benefit if the Commonwealth could get Congress to pass its bills, the petition in boots was constituted as an effort to seek redress for the grievances of a variety of groups, including the Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor. Critical to this argument was the notion of representation. By marching, the bulletin reasoned, Commonwealers were the representatives of millions of workers whose voices needed to be heard. Therefore, even if an observer of the Army could not see demonstrable support from millions of Americans, this rhetoric reasoned that those who marched represented many more who did not. In turn, the protest would benefit not only those who participated, but more importantly, it would positively affect “fully two-thirds of the producing and useful citizens of the Union.”

²⁴ *Bulletin No. 3.*

Having established the argument that those who marched represented a large contingency of Americans who were relying on them to catalyze social change, the Army's transcendent rhetoric enhanced the motivational power of this argument by growing the number of people whose lives hung in the balance. This move is illustrated by an exchange between Coxe and a newspaper reporter, which took place after Coxe was notified that District of Columbia Commissioners had issued a proclamation forbidding the planned May 1 demonstration:

REPORTER:	If the police arrest yourself and army, what then?
COXEY:	Let them dare.
REPORTER:	Will you desist from encouraging other industrial armies from storming the capital?
COXEY:	On the contrary, I shall redouble my efforts to bring every unemployed man, woman and child to Washington.
REPORTER:	Will not the fear of possible bloodshed deter you?
COXEY:	I do not court a resort to arms. But we will demand our rights, even if it takes physical strength to prevail. I shall not commit myself to that, but will repeat my declaration to bring Congress to terms by besieging Washington until justice is done. ²⁵

Among the notable achievements of this exchange, Coxe's transcendent rhetoric here reveals how he wove together the moral and pragmatic themes that became the foundation of the motivational framework established during the inception stage. By inviting marchers to see their role in catalyzing social change to the benefit of those who would come to Washington in the absence of success, marching was portrayed both as an effective way to pressure Congress, but also as the fulfillment of a moral obligation to advocate for those in need. Furthermore, this rhetoric illustrates how

²⁵ "The Coxe Movement," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Apr. 23, 1894.

rhetorical crescendo can mobilize activists to ensure the success of a protest. Coxey's rhetoric in this exchange intensified the magnitude of the Army's cause by showing how the protest would reach its apex, becoming greater in number and more dedicated until Congress saw no other choice but to heed the calls of the people. In saying he would "redouble his efforts" by bringing "every unemployed man, woman and child to Washington," Coxey showed that the Commonwealth would not back down, no matter the gravity of the sacrifices required. Then, to reinforce this notion, Coxey enumerated the tactics the Army would use if Congress *didn't* heed their calls to action, such as demanding their rights, "even if it takes physical strength to prevail." Similarly, promising to continue "besieging Washington until justice is done" portrayed the significance of what was at stake to show that the success of the protest was inevitable, even though the cost would certainly be high.

This last point about the high cost of ensuring success is worth noting because it reminds us that in addition to *downplaying* the significance of the sacrifice of activism, rhetoric can also *enhance* the significance of a sacrifice in order to contextualize the importance of making that sacrifice. Put another way, Coxey's exchange with the reporter reveals how emphasizing the significance of sacrifice can justify it—as if to say the outcomes are only worth having if they're worth fighting for. This point is illustrated later on in that same exchange:

REPORTER:	What if the unemployed starve in the streets of Washington?
COXEY:	The stench from their ashes will force congressional relief.
REPORTER:	Is that intended in all seriousness?

COXEY: Certainly. Matters will be carried to that extent if necessary.²⁶

We might expect that Coxe, knowing his supporters were listening, would simply downplay or diminish the potential costs of ensuring the success of the protest. But instead, he tacitly acknowledged that significant sacrifices—even the ultimate sacrifice—might be necessary. By insisting that the marchers would stay in Washington, even if it meant starving to death, Coxe showed that the stakes were so high that advocacy toward ensuring the success of the cause was important. In this way, Coxe attended to the sacrifice-payoff ratio by situating the marchers' sacrifices as worthwhile because although they may not reap the rewards of their efforts, society at large would be better off.

Coxe's emphasis on the immensity of the sacrifices needed for the protest's success became a common trope in his interactions with the press. On the same day as the exchange described above, he was interviewed by another reporter from a different newspaper, and in this second exchange, Coxe placed additional emphasis on the limitless lengths to which the Army would go to get its bills passed. For example, when asked what would happen once the marchers reached Washington and Congress responded to the Army's pleas, Coxe said, "They will disperse. But if Congress turns a deaf ear to our demands we will remain and clamor at the doors of the national legislative halls until our cry is echoed by thousands of others who will flock there to

²⁶ Ibid.

insist on their rights.”²⁷ In response, the reporter asked what would happen if the police threw the marchers in jail, to which Coxe replied:

They had better not. We are an army of peace, but it would not be well to deny the people, as represented by us, the right to use the grounds. We own them, and unless we assert ourselves the lazy fellows in Congress will go on filling their bellies and neglecting the starving.²⁸

Finally, when asked whether the Army would resort to arms, Coxe replied, “No; we do not believe in the sword, but there are other means.”²⁹

Like his exchange with the other reporter, Coxe’s transcendent rhetoric in this exchange constructed magnitude by building toward a climactic moment while simultaneously acknowledging the threat of what would happen in the event of the protest’s failure. Once again, Coxe blended together crescendo and threat by building toward climax—by promising that thousands more would flock to Washington if Congress remained unresponsive—while simultaneously alluding to the consequences of congressional inaction. Coxe’s allusion to “other means” in his final statement in the exchange, for instance, implied that even though they would not resort to violence, those who comprised Coxe’s Army would resort to more pronounced measures if Congress refused to heed their calls. In so doing, Coxe reinforced his message that marchers and potential marchers should go to any length to ensure victory.

At other points during the Army’s time on the road, Browne drew on several of the same themes Coxe articulated in his interactions with the media. However, much

²⁷ “Coxe Tells What He Is,” *Somerset Herald* (Somerset, PA), Apr. 25, 1894.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

of Browne's rhetoric departed slightly from Coxey's in terms of how these themes were crafted. For example, in the exchange I analyzed previously, Coxey was vague in his description of the negative consequences of congressional inaction. By comparison, Browne took a more explicit approach in his transcendent rhetoric, which further intensified the magnitude of the cause. In a speech just four days before the Army's scheduled parade down Pennsylvania Avenue, Browne's rhetoric amplified the likelihood that the Army might resort to violence, saying, "We are now trying to prevent by peaceable means one of the most terrible revolutions the world has ever seen, which will surely come if Congress does not take favorable action on the proposed legislation."³⁰ Unlike Coxey's vague statements about "other means," Browne's rhetoric much more explicitly painted an image of what would happen if the protestors failed to convince Congress to pass their bills. "One of the most terrible revolutions the world has ever seen" was inevitable, Browne reasoned, if Congress did not carry out the will of the people, which was articulated by the marchers' actions. In this way, Browne's rhetoric relied on transcendent threat to invite his listeners to imagine what the world would be like absent the Army's proposed social change. If activists and potential activists feared that darker, scarier world, then they would be compelled to take action to prevent that world from coming into being.

Browne's message about the necessity of the marchers' efforts was reinforced elsewhere in his other rhetoric that attended explicitly to the sacrifice-payoff ratio. In

³⁰ "Police Prepared," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Apr. 26, 1894.

one clear example, he declared in the earliest days of the march, “All hell can’t stop this movement now. The cold weather and the newspapers will not be able to defeat the cause.”³¹ In just twenty-one words, Browne’s rhetoric contextualized and justified the marchers’ sacrifice by insisting that enduring any of the difficulties of marching would not be enough of a reason why the Commonwealers would give up and go home. Quite simply, Browne reasoned, the stakes were just too high. By admitting that the marchers would have to endure harsh weather and criticism by the newspapers, Browne expressly acknowledged that the marchers would make sacrifices to ensure the protest’s success, while still maintaining that marchers would not be deterred by those sacrifices because they understood how critical their efforts were to the broader movement.

The rhetoric of Army leaders further contributed to committed and potential marchers’ motivation by raising up the sacrifices they would make as a model for others. As one example, Coxey replied to rumors in the press that he was going bankrupt trying to sustain the petition in boots by saying, “It matters not to me if I’m deemed a crank. I know I’m right. I don’t care if I’m ruined financially in this work. I can recover.”³² This rhetoric functioned in multiple ways. Within the context of the immediate need to respond to rumors about Coxey that circulated in the press, his response was dismissive of these rumors, saying that it would not matter even if he did

³¹ “Coxey’s Army in Hard Luck,” *The Columbian* (Bloomsburg, PA), Mar. 30, 1894.

³² “Coxey’s Earnestness,” *Shenandoah Evening Herald* (Shenandoah, PA), Apr. 28, 1894.

go bankrupt or was deemed a crank because those risks were worth taking given all that was on the line. But within the context of the broader purpose of giving activists reasons to march, Coxe's rhetoric obscured the sacrifice of marching by arguing that if he was willing to make such a significant wager as to risk losing everything he had, marching to Washington was, by comparison, a small price to pay to catalyze the social good the Army envisioned.

In all, the preceding pages have shown how the Army's transcendent strategy motivated potential and committed participants by situating the sacrifices of marching within the broader context of the greater good that would result from those sacrifices. By constituting Commonwealers as representatives of the disenfranchised and of American society at large, Army rhetoric transcended any single activist to situate the protest as essential to bringing about a new social order. By evoking both crescendo and threat to convey the magnitude of the cause, Army rhetoric transcended the status quo to show the greater world made possible by the protest, as well as the world avoided thanks to the efforts of the marchers. And finally, by tacitly acknowledging that particular sacrifices would be necessary but worth enduring given what success would mean, Army rhetoric transcended the specific concerns about marching to show how sacrifices, no matter how significant, would be rewarded with substantial payoffs. From the perspective of a committed marcher considering abandoning the cause or a potential marcher considering joining the Army, this rhetoric diminished concerns about the difficulty of marching and ultimately strengthened their willingness to press forth toward their day of glory.

Adapting Religious & Quantitative Appeals to Advance the Army's Transcendent Strategy

At the end of Chapter Two, I argued that the strength of the Army's inception-stage rhetoric was that its moral and pragmatic themes laid the groundwork for a motivational structure that would carry with the Army throughout the remainder of its lifespan. Characteristic of the Army's transcendent strategy, two themes from the inception stage in particular were adapted to help the Army address the distinct needs of its dual audiences. The first theme I discuss in this subsection—the religious theme—enhanced transcendent motivation by situating the act of marching as a means of doing God's work.³³ Meanwhile, the second theme I discuss here—the quantitative theme—enhanced transcendent motivation by inflating the number of people who supported the protest, which ultimately portrayed the Army's figureheads as credible leaders of a burgeoning movement. Ultimately, these characteristics did well to help the Army address its dual audience with a unified rhetoric because the moral and pragmatic themes transcended the divide between these audiences. But, for those who had already committed to the Army from the time it left Massillon, this rhetoric was particularly motivating because it reinforced themes that were already familiar to them. Given the

³³ In Chapter Two, I discussed religion's power to motivate participation in the Army, specifically within the context of the 1890s, a time when attention to religion was heightened. See Herbert G. Gutman, "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement: The Christian Spirit in the Gilded Age," *The American Historical Review* 72, no. 1 (1966): 74-101; and Paul Kleppner, *The Third Electoral System, 1853-1892* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

potential of these moral and pragmatic themes to enhance the transcendent strategy, this subsection is dedicated to analyzing how these themes were adapted in the context of the Army's evolved rhetorical environment.

To adapt the religious theme to work within the context of the Army's evolved rhetorical environment, Army rhetoric constituted marching as the key that would open the heavenly gateway to perpetual bliss. Having already established the notion that God called upon the Commonwealers to bring about social and economic change, the rhetoric of the Army's second stage extended this theme by constituting the protest as a way of bringing Heaven to Earth. Carl Browne's rhetoric constructed the heavenly nature of the march in his response to early concerns about the lackluster number of recruits: "I have foreseen from the start just how it would be. I knew exactly how many men would start with us, what the weather would be, and all that. You can make up your mind that *the kingdom of Heaven* is at hand," Browne proclaimed.³⁴ This passage reinforced an earlier religious theme which maintained that the petition in boots was a holy movement ordained by God to bring a better life on Earth. In effect, Browne reinforced his own moral authority by situating himself as the leader of a holy endeavor.

At the same time, this passage supercharged the religious theme that characterized the inception stage by casting the decision to march in ultimate terms. By portraying the march as ushering in "the kingdom of Heaven at hand," Browne signaled to committed and potential Commonwealers that they would reap the ultimate reward if they remained committed to the success of the protest. In this way, Browne enhanced

³⁴ "Coxey's Army in Hard Luck," 1; emphasis mine.

the motivational qualities of the transcendent strategy by emphasizing the glorious reward that the marchers' commitment would earn them. This emphasis appealed to those who considered joining the Army because they could see their sacrifices within the context of payoff. However, for those who had been with the Army since its earlier days, this emphasis not only appealed because they could see the reward they would reap, but also because this religious rhetoric was familiar to them. In other words, the continuity of this theme from the first stage of the Army to its second functioned to reinforce the feeling among those motivated by religion that they could do the work of God and secure their place in Heaven by heeding the calls of the Army's leaders.

In my discussion of moral and pragmatic rhetoric in Chapter Two, I argued that the power of these themes to mobilize activists in a protest is strengthened when these themes work to further enhance one another. In the rhetoric of the Army's time on the road to Washington, one pragmatic theme in particular—the quantitative trope—enhanced the motivation spurred by the rhetoric of religion. In this stage of the petition in boots, the Army's quantitative rhetoric served the dual purposes of instilling confidence among marchers that the success of the protest was within reach, while also amplifying what was at stake by emphasizing how many people were in support of the cause.

To reinforce the pragmatic theme of the inception stage, Coxe's quantitative rhetoric on the road to Washington exaggerated the number of supporters who would greet the Army when they reached their destination. At one point, he estimated that more than 100,000 sympathizers would stand in line with the marchers in front of the

Capitol.³⁵ Later, that number swelled even larger: “I am now satisfied,” Coxeey declared, “that I will be followed into Washington by 150,000 men.”³⁶ Perhaps in response to criticism he faced when the number of marchers seemed lackluster, Coxeey added, “Up to this time, [people] have been afraid that we were bluffing. Now they see that we mean business.”³⁷ Here again, there was some risk in Coxeey’s quantitative strategy—if 100,000 or 150,000 supporters *didn’t* stand with the Commonwealers in Washington, then Coxeey’s credibility would suffer. However, the strength of this rhetoric was that it promised the success of the marchers’ efforts. Given that the entire theory of the protest was premised on Congress taking action when pressured by popular support because they were elected to carry out the people’s will, a high number of supporters was the linchpin to a successful petition in boots. Hence, by insisting that more than 100,000 people would turn out in support of the Commonweal, Coxeey once again reinforced the inevitability of the protest’s success. This made it seem to committed and potential marchers that their efforts would pay off in the form of the success of the protest, subsequently enhancing their motivation to make the sacrifices needed to carry the protest to its finish line.

To be sure, Coxeey was not the only Army rhetor who reinforced the quantitative trope. Colonel Redstone, one of the other voices to emerge as a result of the proliferation of rhetors in the evolved rhetorical environment, insisted, “The *American*

³⁵ “Coxeey’s Army,” *Ohio Democrat* (Logan, OH), Mar. 31, 1894.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

people are aroused, and they are going to be the jury to decide the case. The word has gone out over the country and the clans are gathering near and far. There will be 50,000 men in Washington on the first of May.”³⁸ The quantitative trope in Redstone’s rhetoric should be immediately clear—by insisting that 50,000 people would be in Washington by May 1, Redstone amplified Coxey’s messages about the growth and inevitable success of what was portrayed as a now-unstoppable movement. However, it should also be noted how Redstone adapted the quantitative trope by arguing—without any qualifiers—that the American people were behind the movement. Instead of giving an explicit number of people who supported the cause, Redstone implied that *all of society* was in favor of the Army’s protest. As such, focus shifted away from the number of people who would show up in Washington and toward the vast numbers of people who wanted the Commonweal to succeed.

This quantitative trope evolved once again later in the journey when Coxey framed it in terms of the rhetoric of representation I discussed earlier in this chapter. As the Army neared Pittsburgh, Coxey issued a statement in which he constituted the marchers as proxies for millions of others who suffered. The marchers were going to Washington, Coxey reasoned, “to get work for 4,000,000 idle men.”³⁹ Notable about this articulation of the quantitative trope was how it situated the Army as an effort to help not only the 100,000 or 150,000 who would descend upon Washington, but more

³⁸ “Redstone Joins the Army,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Apr. 24, 1894; emphasis mine.

³⁹ “Coxey’s Army,” *Tacoma Daily News* (Tacoma, WA), Apr. 4, 1894.

importantly as an effort to improve the lives of four million workers. A week later, Coxey expanded the scope of the constituency represented by the marchers even further, noting that the Army sought to help feed the “20,000,000 of [sic] starving men in this country.”⁴⁰ By quantifying the number of people who would benefit from the marchers’ efforts, Coxey not only signaled that success was inevitable because the Army’s policies were clearly the will of the people, but he also harkened back to the notion that millions were relying on the Commonwealers to stay the course. In this way, Coxey adapted the pragmatic trope by shrouding it in moral terms, thereby enhancing the motivation inspired by the Army’s transcendent rhetorical strategy.

Ultimately, these reinforcements of and evolutions in the moral and pragmatic themes that served as the foundation for the motivational framework established in the inception stage show the motivational force of these themes. Furthermore, as rhetorical characteristics of the transcendent strategy used to adapt to the Army’s evolved rhetorical environment, the tropes discussed here helped to enhance the likelihood that both committed and potential marchers would pledge their commitment to the petition in boots. For the marchers who committed to the journey early on, these quantitative appeals had clear potential to resonate because they were familiar, while for both of the Army’s audiences, Coxey and Redstone’s quantitative rhetoric enhanced motivation by contextualizing sacrifices in terms of the Army’s inevitable success. In other words, reappropriating these moral and pragmatic themes supercharged the Army’s ability to address its dual audiences and, at a broader level, adapt to the evolved rhetorical

⁴⁰ “Coxey’s Earnestness,” 3.

environment. Hence, on the foundation laid in the inception stage, we see a rhetorical building beginning to take shape during the Army's time on the road to Washington.

Singing Protest Songs to Justify Sacrifice and Enhance Transcendent Motivation

Thus far, I have spent this chapter discussing the ways in which Army leaders advanced a transcendent rhetorical strategy to adapt to the altered rhetorical environment. However, one feature of the evolved rhetorical environment I described earlier was the rhetors who proliferated in number once the Army's rank and file started to build. But the proliferation of rhetors vis-à-vis the rank and file was not just important because they added to the *number* of voices that could motivate participation in the protest; the rank and file were also important because hearing reasons to march from a peer had more potential to enhance motivation than did hearing about the importance of marching from an Army leader. This section is dedicated to an analysis of the rhetorical contributions of the rank and file—which took the form of protest songs—for how these characteristics of the transcendent strategy helped to motivate both committed and potential marchers to expend their efforts in the name of the protest's success.

A number of scholars have studied songs as rhetorical forms. For social movement scholars, protest songs represent a specific kind of rhetorical form that serves a variety of important functions. First, protest music can function as persuasion by inducing changes in beliefs and/or behaviors. Kerran Sanger found in her analysis of civil rights music that protest songs work by encouraging particular kinds of behaviors

and actions that help sustain the movement.⁴¹ Similarly, Stephen Kosokoff and Carl Carmichael, who treated popular musicians as rhetors in their analysis of protest music, found that songs are powerful because they can further contribute to changes in attitude that orators seek to catalyze with their speeches, meaning these songs can help to reinforce the ideas expressed in more traditional rhetorical forms.⁴² Common between Sanger's study and Kosokoff and Carmichael's study is the finding that protest songs can persuade the audiences who listen to the songs, as well as the songs' performers, that the social reforms sought are worthwhile or desirable.

Whereas these scholars understand protest songs in instrumental terms, other scholars have argued that protest music functions through identification. Ralph Knupp, for example, used his analysis of 1960s labor and anti-war music to show how protest songs have the potential to reinforce feelings of solidarity among members of a protest group or social movement, helping them feel more connected to one another and to the cause.⁴³ The feeling of solidarity with other group members is especially important in

⁴¹ Kerran L. Sanger, "Functions of Freedom Singing in the Civil Rights Movement: The Activists' Implicit Rhetorical Theory," *The Howard Journal of Communications* 8, no. 3 (1997): 179.

⁴² Stephen Kosokoff and Carl W. Carmichael, "The Rhetoric of Protest: Song, Speech and Attitude Change," *Southern Speech Journal* 35, no. 4 (1970): 295-302.

⁴³ Ralph Knupp, "A Time for Every Purpose Under Heaven: Rhetorical Dimensions of Protest Movement," *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 46, no. 6 (1981): 377-389.

social protests where few other factors unite those working toward social change. David Carter made this point in his study of the songs sung by members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a labor union founded on ideals not unlike those of Coxey's Army.⁴⁴ Carter found in his analysis that protest songs unite by polarizing protesters against a common enemy, thereby enabling them to relate to one another when they might otherwise lack the common ground needed to co-identify.⁴⁵

Third and finally, rhetorical scholars have found that protest songs can serve to diminish the perceived difficulty of the situation, which helps downtrodden or subjugated groups justify their efforts despite hard times, oppression or otherwise unbearable circumstances. Carter's analysis of the IWW is again helpful in understanding how protest songs function in this way. As he noted, the IWW was founded to help its members deal with "harsh working conditions and 'the boss.'"⁴⁶ Therefore, contained in its *Little Red Songbook* was music with lyrics that promised a brighter future for the worker. By reassuring workers that the sacrifices they were enduring would soon to give way to more prosperous times, these songs helped those who performed them imagine better conditions, while simultaneously raising awareness

⁴⁴ Carter described the Industrial Workers of the World as "Born of frustration and discontent among the unskilled, poor, often uneducated workers." See David A. Carter, "The Industrial Workers of the World and the Rhetoric of Song," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66, no. 4 (1980): 365.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 373-374.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 365.

among listeners about the plight of the worker. In effect, Carter argued, the worker was empowered with “courage to organize, to fight and to hope.”⁴⁷ Considered in the context of Coxe’s Army, Carter’s insights compel me to examine how the Commonwealth’s protest songs motivated marchers to stay the course by framing their sacrifices in terms of the good that would come from their efforts, thereby making their sacrifices seem more bearable.

Exploiting the insights of these scholars, I treat the protest songs sung by the rank-and-file members of Coxe’s Army as rhetorical forms that enhanced the motivation of the Commonwealth’s dual audiences. Notably, this characteristic of the Army’s strategy for adapting to the transformed rhetorical environment transcended the divide between audiences because these songs reinforced the key ideals underlying the protest for the committed marchers who sang them, and for the potential marchers who encountered the petition in boots. One of the most common of these, known simply as “The Commonwealth Song,” illustrates the motivational power of protest music on the road to Washington. Each of the song’s six verses ended with the same chorus:

Hurrah! Hurrah! Let Congress hear our plea,
Hurrah! Hurrah! The people now decree,
Laws that speak for justice and for pure humanity,
While truth is marching on to victory.⁴⁸

These four simple lines induced marchers’ motivation to sustain the journey in several important ways. First, by arguing that *truth* was marching on—when in fact it was the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 374.

⁴⁸ “The Day Near at Hand,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Apr. 22, 1894.

members of the Army who were marching on—the last line of this verse used simile to associate Coxey’s Army with truth. This rhetorical move cast the marchers as honest, which in turn enabled them to co-identify as part of a morally virtuous constituency. Second, by arguing that truth—and by extension, the Commonwealers—were marching on to victory, this verse promised the pragmatic: that the success of the protest was inevitable. This is one of the ways the Army’s protest songs contextualized the sacrifice of marching. Just as the IWW’s songs instilled hope for a brighter future, so too did “The Commonweal Song” help marchers see that victory was within reach, but only if they stayed the course.

One other point worth noting about the chorus to this song was how it evoked notions of “the people.” By asserting that “*our* plea”—what the Army set out to do—was the decree of *the people*, those who sang “The Commonweal Song” celebrated themselves as representatives of the people. I argue that this expression of “the people” is polysemous, meaning that it evokes multiple meanings. In one sense, “the people” referred to a fixed and stable group of individuals—the two-thirds of the population who were disenfranchised by economic problems or the twenty million starving workers who would perish without the Army’s intervention. In this way, “The Commonweal Song” expanded upon earlier appeals to transcendence by re-appropriating the rhetoric of representation. But in another sense, “the people” refers to a much more nebulous and abstract body of individuals. As rhetorical scholar Michael McGee argued, in political argument, “the ‘people’ is so indeterminate an expression”

that it obscures almost all political discussions.”⁴⁹ In the context of social protest, “the people” is often introduced into public argument as a way of “legitimizing” a vision of social order, such that the audience reacts “with a desire to participate” in that vision “to *become* ‘the people.’”⁵⁰ In other words, “The Commonweal Song” motivated committed and potential marchers by inviting them to see a more perfect world made possible by their efforts, and by inviting them to fight for those who lacked political voice. Furthermore, the fact that the marchers performed these themes, taught to them by their leaders, illustrates why the proliferation of rhetors in this evolved rhetorical environment mattered: the messages of the songs reinforced much of the other rhetoric of the Army’s second stage.

Other protest songs motivated participation in the Army by weaving the themes of “The Commonweal Song” together with other themes I have discussed in this chapter, such as religion and transcendence. “The Battle Hymn of Labor,” sung to the tune of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” was one of the songs Commonwealers performed as they paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol Building:

Ye have offered bribes and share of spoils to rulers of our land;
Ye have subsidized our teachers and sown lies on every hand.
But the suf’ring people rising now, come forth at God’s command,
For God still marches on.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Michael C. McGee, “In Search of ‘The People’: A Rhetorical Alternative,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61, no. 3 (1975): 238.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 239-240.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Just as “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” contextualized the risk and difficulty of going into battle for Civil War soldiers by promising they would be rewarded with the glory of God, so too did “The Battle Hymn of Labor” punctuate the immensity of sacrifice while promising the rich reward associated with carrying out God’s will. By saying “the suffering people” were coming forth “at God’s command,” for example, the song further reinforced the notion that the marchers were representatives of the downtrodden. This not only appealed to transcendence, but it again likened the marchers to God by saying that just as He sacrificed for those who suffered, so too were the marchers sacrificing to help those in need. The final line in the verse further advanced the marchers’ likeness to God; as “God still marches on,” so too should the Commonwealers who were carrying out His command by marching. Finally, the song identified an (albeit amorphous) enemy around which the song’s performers could unite. The first line about the “bribes and share of spoils” offered to “rulers of our land” reasserted the corruptness of the Army’s enemy, which in this case referred to members of Congress who had succumbed to bribery. In turn, the virtuousness of the marchers was once again elevated, enabling members of the rank and file to see marching as a way of legitimizing their moral character. In these ways, “The Battle Hymn of Labor” attended to the ratio between sacrifice and payoff by suggesting that even though the sacrifice of marching would be immense, the opportunity for the marchers to do the work of God while simultaneously asserting their moral virtuousness would render immense rewards.

Yet another popular protest song performed by the Commonwealers adapted themes of sacrifice and transcendence to strengthen the motivation of committed and

would-be marchers. Known as “The Silver Song,” a representative verse went as follows:

Ho! boys, what’s this that we hear?
They’ve struck a new scheme we are told,
We have got to kill silver old England declares,
And pay what we owe her in gold.
Now she is the creditor nation,
This old tyrant from over the sea,
Eight billions of wealth she owns and controls
In this beautiful land of the free.⁵²

Here, “The Silver Song” explicitly named an enemy to help the performers of the song co-identify with one another. On this occasion, however, Commonwealers indicted members of Congress by associating them with the British monarchy, which laid the foundation for later rhetoric that connected the Army’s cause to the American Revolution. The “call to kill silver” and the reference to England as our “creditor” demanding to be paid in gold both implied the need to more fully break free from the throne. Although this nod to the American Revolution was subtle in “The Silver Song,” I discuss in the next chapter how as a trope, these references were characteristic of a broader rhetoric of revolution that was a common feature of the Army’s later rhetoric. Browne’s claim I discussed earlier about “trying to prevent [...] one of the most terrible revolutions the world has ever seen,” for example, insisted quite overtly that the current situation had become so dire that revolution—a complete overthrow of the system—was necessary.⁵³ Less subtle than Browne’s rhetoric, however, was the way this verse

⁵² C. M. Maxson, “Silver Song.” From the Jacob S. Coxey Papers, Massillon Museum, Massillon, Ohio.

⁵³ “Police Prepared,” 6.

indicted the monarchy as tyrannical, which implied that the U.S. government was also tyrannical because it was following in the footsteps of its British predecessors. Thus, “The Silver Song” transcended the Army’s dual audiences by inviting them both to stand up against tyranny and to defend their democracy.

One other point about “The Silver Song” worth mentioning is how it aligned the Army with the populist ideology by alluding to the currency issue. By giving a nod to bimetallism, “The Silver Song” paved the way for an expansion of the Army’s base of supporters. As I discussed in Chapter One, the ideals of populism attracted a great deal of support in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and because bimetallism was at the top of the populist political agenda in 1894, indicting efforts to “kill silver” framed the Army’s policies in populist terms. Whereas efforts to motivate potential marchers during the inception stage emphasized unemployment—an issue that lacked salience among the many populists who earned their living through agriculture—“The Silver Song” exploited the currency issues to bring farmers and laborers together as a unified audience. Although this framing might not have appealed to those who had already committed to the cause, it did exhibit some potential to motivate those who were considering whether to join the Army.

In all, the small sampling of verses analyzed here represent just a few of the many songs sung by members of Coxey’s Army.⁵⁴ There were several reasons why these protest songs, when considered as a body of rhetoric, enhanced motivation to

⁵⁴ The full lyrics to these and other protest songs sung by the Army are found in Appendix C.

participate in the petition in boots. First, because the lyrics of these songs reinforced many of the Army leaders' key messages for both those who sang and those who listened, performing these songs expanded the reach of those messages, demonstrating why the proliferation of rhetors was a critical element of this evolved rhetorical environment. Second, by treating participation in the Army as a way of carrying out God's command, these songs promised those who sang them that their immense sacrifice would be rewarded with an incredible payoff—the abundant glory of God. Given people's belief at the time in the principles of Christianity and their propensity to be motivated by religion, this was perhaps the greatest reward they could hope for in exchange for the sacrifices they would make. Finally, by framing the Army's issues in populist terms, those who were inspired by the populist ideology could find reasons to be supportive of the Army, which was not the case when Army rhetoric framed their cause more narrowly in terms of unemployment. In all of these ways, protest songs became a key characteristic of the Army's transcendent strategy, thereby enabling the rank-and-file members to enhance the motivation of the Commonwealth's dual audiences and to adapt to the broader changes of the evolved rhetorical environment.

Ultimately, the ways the Army's transcendent rhetoric responded to the changes in the rhetorical environment underpin why the petition in boots left Massillon with only eighty-four recruits but showed up in Washington nearly six weeks later with upwards of five hundred activists eager to demonstrate the need for Coxey's policies.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Because the Army was met in Washington by a number of parallel industrial armies, and because the Army gathered alongside locals who turned out to watch the

By contextualizing the sacrifices being asked of the marchers in terms of the payoff of those sacrifices, committed and potential marchers alike could see why their activism was worthwhile. By enhancing this motivation through the adaptation of moral and pragmatic themes that were familiar to the early members of the Army and through the performance of protest songs that reinforced key messages, the Army did not simply resist entropy. More impressively, it grew in number and in strength, thereby setting the stage for a sustained fight for its cause.

Enabling Protest in the Nation's Capital: The Impact of the Rhetoric of the Army's Second Stage

I began this chapter by arguing that the many ways in which the Army's rhetorical environment evolved from its first stage to the next necessitated that Army rhetoric adapt accordingly. Ideally, this adaptation would involve a unified rhetoric that could address potential and committed marchers by weaving together appeals that could motivate both groups, despite the distinct challenges that threatened to erode their commitment. Though this was no easy task, Coxey's Army crafted a transcendent rhetorical strategy which did exactly that, enabling the now-expanded group of rhetors to attend to the ratio between sacrifice and payoff. As a result, the petition in boots

spectacle, it is difficult to discern the exact number of people who were officially part of the Army on the eve of its demonstration at the Capitol on April 30. William Stead, a well-known reporter from Chicago, estimated that there were about six hundred marchers by the time the Army reached Washington. See William T. Stead, "Coxeyism': A Character Sketch," *Review of Reviews* 49 (1894): 52.

made its way to Washington by the end of April with far more activists in line than there were when it departed from Massillon on March 25.

To be sure, the marchers' ability to endure a three-hundred-mile, thirty-eight-day journey through intense climate conditions and numerous threats to their physical health was itself notable. But even more impressive was the number of recruits who had been motivated by Army rhetoric to make and sustain the journey. Rather than succumbing to the very real threat of entropy, Coxey's Army actually grew in strength and size as it progressed, maintaining the commitment of many of its original members while securing the support of new recruits along the way. In part, the significance of this accomplishment was tied to the theory of the petition in boots: that Congress was much more likely to pass the Army's policies if hundreds or thousands of supporters came to Washington to demonstrate popular support, rather than just a few dozen. Perhaps more importantly, however, the significance of this accomplishment derived from the fact that as the petitioners made their way toward Washington, they morphed from voiceless citizens into empowered agents of social change. No longer seeing themselves as victims of a system stacked against them nor reasonably regarded as second-class citizens, those who sustained the journey all the way to its final destination proved they were not lazy or unemployable tramps looking for a government handout. Instead, they were political agents, primed to make a persuasive argument to their national legislature for unprecedented economic reform.

Hence, from my perspective, the rhetorical efforts during the second stage of the Army's lifespan mattered because they laid the groundwork for a demonstration that started on the east front of the U.S. Capitol but extended for several weeks as these

marchers—deeply dedicated to their cause—remained in Washington. As such, this rhetoric punctuates another reason why as scholars, we cannot assess the impact of social protest solely in terms of whether the desired outcome was achieved. Just like the inception stage established a motivational framework that Army rhetors called upon and adapted in this stage, so too did the Army’s rhetoric on the road to Washington enable a mass demonstration in front of the Capitol that focused the public’s attention on problems of political economy that had once been considered private matters.

Moreover, the Army proved to the world—themselves included—that they were beyond capable of adapting to a rapidly evolving rhetorical environment. This was especially important because when they arrived on the doorsteps of the national legislature, they faced an existential crisis: their purpose would transform, or the protest would fade quickly into dissolution. Thus, when assessing the rhetoric of advocates for social change, we must consider what is made possible by their discursive action, whether or not those actions directly or indirectly result in the social change initially intended.

Moving on from what the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army made possible in the second stage of its lifespan, my analysis of the next stage is dedicated to understanding how the marchers attempted to sustain and extend their protest once in Washington. However, it is important to understand the turning point at which the Army pivoted from the objectives of its first two stages to its broader purpose in its third stage. That pivot point—marked by the arrest of the Army’s leaders and the speech Coxey prepared for the Army’s May 1 demonstration—commands my focus in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Expanding the Purpose of the Protest: Reading “Coxey at the Capitol” as a Pivotal Moment in the Army’s Rhetorical Career

The Constitution of the United States guarantees to all citizens the right to peacefully assemble and petition for redress of grievances, and, furthermore, declares that the right of free speech shall not be abridged.

—Remarks prepared by Jacob S. Coxey, May 2, 1894

If all went according to Jacob Coxey’s plan, May 1, 1894, would take its place as one of the most important days in our nation’s history. After a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue to the east front of the Capitol Building, Coxey would ascend the Capitol steps to deliver a speech. In that speech, he would paint a vision for a new American political system—one in which economic decisions were made by the people and with their best interests at heart. Hearing Coxey’s words and seeing the support he had garnered from the masses, members of Congress would recognize the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills as the cornerstone legislation for the new system Coxey envisaged. Having championed the bills, Coxey would descend the Capitol steps to rejoin the masses as their leader, and Congress would quickly begin the work of turning Coxey’s policy proposals into codified law. Within weeks, those who marched on Washington and the thousands of unemployed laborers they represented would be back on the job, carrying out public works projects that paid a modest but livable wage. In due time, the nation would return to prosperity, all thanks to a vision that came to Coxey in a dream some five months prior.

Of course, my reader knows by now that all did not play out according to Coxey’s plan. Instead, when he approached the Capitol steps, he was confronted by

authorities who asked what he wanted to do. When he told them he intended to deliver a speech, he was forbidden from doing so. Unwavering, Coxey then indicated that he wished to enter a protest, permission for which was also denied. Effectively silenced, Coxey willfully surrendered to the police and, along with Carl Browne and Christopher Columbus Jones of the Army's Philadelphia branch, was hauled off to the D.C. jail, but not before dropping a piece of paper on the ground, saying, "That is for the press."

Contained on that piece of paper was a handwritten manuscript that would eventually be published by a series of newspapers. Despite the fact that Coxey never uttered the words in front of the masses there assembled, I argue that the speech on that piece of paper is a significant text because it marked a key pivot point in the Army's rhetorical career. Like it had all along, the need to address the unemployment problem remained central to the Army's purpose. But at the same time, the arrests of Coxey, Browne and Jones were significant for reasons beyond how those arrests threatened the Army's ability to get Congress to pass the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills. At this key turning point, Army rhetoric could continue asserting the need for job-creation proposals. But given how the leaders' arrests signaled that Coxey's bills were unlikely to pass, the Army would only overcome this new exigence if it adapted. To do so, Army rhetoric garnered renewed commitment from supporters by transforming the purpose of the protest to include and emphasize the people's right to petition at the seat of their government. I argue that the speech Coxey fed to the press initiated a transformation in the Army's purpose, and in so doing, it offered a number of themes on which future rhetors could build to complete that transformation of purpose and motivate commitment to the newly expanded cause. Those themes offered by "Coxey at

the Capitol” built on the motivational appeal of rhetoric that had served the Army well in earlier stages, but adapted those themes in a way that emphasized the people’s democratic right to petition at the seat of their government. These adaptations gave voice to what historian Lucy Barber termed “a new form of political expression.”¹

This new form of political expression is why I devote this chapter to “Coxey at the Capitol.” To show how the speech shifted its emphasis and initiated the expansion of the Army’s purpose, this chapter proceeds in two main sections. The first provides an analysis of how the exigence of the Army leaders’ arrests could be interpreted as a key opportunity for the protest to broaden its purpose by shifting its rhetorical emphasis. Despite what seemed like imminent failure because the Army’s bills were almost certain not to pass, “Coxey at the Capitol” successfully transformed the purpose of the protest, leaving an indelible mark on the trajectory of the petition in boots. Thus, the second main section of this chapter aims to illustrate how this transformation was achieved. Recognizing the power of the motivational themes that had served the Army well, but also cognizant of the many ways in which the situation had changed, “Coxey at the Capitol” adapted the earlier themes and tropes of the petition in boots in a way that addressed both of the Army’s core purposes but placed greater emphasis on the people’s right to petition. This analysis culminates in this chapter’s brief conclusion, in which I ponder the significance of “Coxey at the Capitol,” both in its moment and for the effect it had on the Army’s subsequent rhetoric.

¹ Lucy G. Barber, *Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 18.

The Silencing of Protest: Coxey's Arrest as a Pivotal Rhetorical Moment

The notion that the people have the right to petition their government by going to their elected representatives in person had always been at the core of the Army's rhetoric. That Coxey decided to assemble a march on Washington, rather than seek social change through some other means, underlies a premise that was foundational to his protest: when the status quo does not sufficiently meet the needs of the people, the people can approach their lawmakers in person to demand change, and their lawmakers should respond. This premise was reflected throughout the Army's discourse in its first two stages. Coxey's pragmatic rhetoric in the inception stage, for example, worked to show potential marchers that if the bodies gathered at the Capitol were numerous enough to demonstrate that passing Coxey's bills was the will of the people, then those bills would become law. Once on the road to Washington, the marchers' protest songs reinforced this very idea with lyrics that urged Congress to hear the pleas of the people.² In other words, the idea that the people could petition at the seat of their government was always central to Coxey's march on Washington.

As I discussed in Chapter One, people have petitioned their government since well before the dawn of the Republic. Among the freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution, "the right of the people peaceably to assemble" and "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" are both squarely enumerated in the First Amendment, fundamental to the American democratic system. Because there had been

² "The Commonweal Song." In "The Day Near at Hand," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Apr. 22, 1894.

no indication early on that these rights would not be upheld, Coxey and the Commonwealers emphasized what they hoped their petition would do—encourage the passage of job-creation measures—instead of emphasizing their right to petition in the first place. This emphasis was consistent from the earliest days of the inception stage. For example, in the earliest days when Coxey needed to create an audience of potential marchers, his decision to constitute jobless workers by framing them as the victims of a broken political economy emphasized the need for economic policy interventions, rather than the need for the people to take matters into their own hands by petitioning. In other words, although the people’s ability to petition at their seat of the government was fundamental to the protest, it did not command the focus of the Army’s rhetoric during its first two stages.

The emphasis of the Army’s rhetoric changed at the moment when Coxey and Browne were arrested. Because the arrests of the Army’s leaders signaled that the Commonwealers’ First Amendment rights might not be upheld, the energy of the protest began to change. Although the Army could continue to advocate for its job-creation proposals, sustaining the motivation of the protestors would prove difficult given signs of apparent failure. To see the value in remaining committed to the petition in boots, the Army’s supporters needed to see a pathway to social change, even if that social change did not come in the form of the job-creation measures they initially envisioned. Thus, the most fitting response to the evolution in the Army’s situation was to redirect the supporters’ energy toward a broader purpose: the need to assert the right of the people to petition at the seat of their federal government. As I argue in this

chapter, “Coxey at the Capitol” gives us the first glimpse into how Army rhetoric initiated this transformation to expand the very purpose of the protest.

There are a couple different vantage points from which we can understand how the Army’s rhetoric transformed the protest’s purpose. In Chapter One, I discussed Lloyd Bitzer’s notion of the rhetorical situation. Borrowing from the vocabulary of the rhetorical situation, unemployment had been the *controlling exigence*—the “imperfection marked by urgency,” as Bitzer put it—to which the Army’s rhetoric needed to respond.³ But, once D.C. authorities threatened to and eventually did abridge the right to petition by arresting Coxey, Browne and Jones, Army rhetoric needed to respond by attending to the unemployment problem while focusing more intensely on the right of the people to petition their lawmakers in person. From this perspective, the controlling exigence changed, and the Army’s success would be measured by the extent to which it responded appropriately.⁴

Although Bitzer’s theory of the rhetorical situation offers a helpful heuristic for thinking about the conditions facing Coxey’s Army when its leaders were hauled off to jail, problematic about Bitzer’s framework is how it sees the power of the situation to

³ Lloyd Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968): 1-14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7. In his discussion of the rhetorical situation, Bitzer also noted that, “In any rhetorical situation there will be at least one *controlling* exigence which functions as the organizing principle,” explaining that a situation may actually be characterized by multiple exigencies.

shape rhetoric but not the power of rhetoric to shape the situation. As I argued in Chapter One, Richard Vatz's articulation of this critique maintained that while situational elements can come to bear on rhetoric, it is ultimately the rhetor's choice of how she responds to the material realities of a situation, and the rhetorical decisions she makes do indeed shape the situation itself.⁵ Thought of from this perspective, we can read "Coxey at the Capitol" for how it actually transformed the Army's situation, rather than merely responding to it. I see this as a more fruitful way of understanding the speech because it enables us to question its impact. Because "Coxey at the Capitol" reoriented supporters' attention toward the right to petition, rather than focusing exclusively on the Army's job-creation measures, it did not simply respond to the situation—it fundamentally reshaped the protest to be about citizens' rights in a democracy.

Reading "Coxey at the Capitol" according to Vatz's perspective on the rhetorical situation has another benefit as well, which is that it allows us to see Coxey's adeptness as a rhetorical leader. As I see it, the speech he dropped on the ground for the newspapers proves that he was keenly aware of and well-prepared for how events would play out. The version of the speech that was published in the papers following the Army's attempted demonstration placed notably greater emphasis on the democratic right of the people to petition than on the need for government to take proactive measures to create jobs. This suggests that Coxey actually prepared two versions of his

⁵ Richard Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 3 (1973): 154-161.

speech: one that he would have delivered had he not been arrested, and one that he would feed to the media in the event that authorities made good on their promises to arrest him for attempting to speak. This interpretation is at odds with those of historians who have argued that Coxe believed local authorities would not follow through with their threats to arrest the Army's leaders.⁶ However, I argue that the version of "Coxey at the Capitol" that was printed in the newspapers would not have made sense if Coxe had been given the chance to stage his protest from atop the Capitol steps—one typically does not assemble the masses to give a speech defending a right that has not been impeded. Therefore, by my estimation, Coxe was not naïve to the threat that he might be arrested, but instead prepared two versions of the speech in recognition of that very real threat.⁷ The adaptability and versatility of this strategic move illustrates one of the reasons why an appreciation of Coxe's rhetorical leadership is warranted.

Of course, even if my hypothesis that Coxe prepared two versions of the speech is correct, we will never know what he would have said if given the chance to speak from the Capitol steps. Luckily, because he fed his speech to the press, "Coxey at the Capitol" remains a living text to which we can look to understand the significance

⁶ Osman Hooper, for example, argued that Coxe and Browne believed that the police would refrain from arresting them because doing so would be too much of an ordeal. See Osman C. Hooper, "The Coxe Movement in Ohio," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1900): 169.

⁷ "Carl Browne to His Men: General Orders of the Marshal as Given Exclusively to The Times," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 1, 1894.

of the moment for which it was prepared, as well as the role the speech played in shaping Army rhetoric later in the protest. When we compare the Army's rhetoric before and after Coxey's arrest, we see that although the fundamental themes had not been discarded, they were adapted and even transformed, emphasized to differing degrees given how the Army's purpose was evolving. Hence, the importance of the speech and my admiration for Coxey's rhetorical adeptness lead me to devote the pages that remain in this chapter to the ways in which "Coxey at the Capitol" transformed the purpose of the protest to sustain the commitment of supporters. Important to note is that the analysis I provide here does not treat the speech as a print version of what would have been uttered were Coxey permitted to speak, but rather as its own rhetorical text—a text which initiated a transformation of the purpose of the petition in boots, thereby enabling it to overcome the threat of entropy and continue pressing for social change.

Adapting Rhetoric to Expand the Purpose of the Petition in Boots

The version of "Coxey at the Capitol" that was published by newspapers and thus available for our consideration today was comprised of 895 words. In those words, there were a variety of themes and tropes that had characterized the Army's earlier rhetoric. But whereas those themes and tropes in their earlier articulations were directed primarily toward asserting the need to alleviate the unemployment problem, these themes in "Coxey at the Capitol" both asserted and emphasized the democratic right of the people to petition at the seat of their government. In the following subsections, I explore what I refer to as "clusters" or "groups" of these themes. Although my purpose in this analysis is not to classify the rhetoric into these clusters or groups of themes, I

divide this section by theme to illustrate how the Army's early vocabularies were transformed within the context of its new exigence. Therefore, in select instances where appropriate, I highlight for my readers the ways in which many of these themes were deeply intertwined.⁸

Magnitude, Sacrifice and Payoff:
Transcendent Rhetoric in "Coxey at the Capitol"

In Chapter Three, I discussed the merits of the Army's transcendent rhetoric, arguing that by amplifying the magnitude of the cause, the Army successfully grew in size and strength between the time it left Massillon and when it arrived in Washington. Especially during the time the Army was on the road, transcendent rhetoric was critical because it justified the significant sacrifices required to march by stressing the significant outcome that would come to fruition if the protest proved successful. To appeal to transcendence, Army rhetoric articulated a range of different claims which, though unique in substance, each contributed to the common goal of amplifying the magnitude of the cause. For example, the Army's religious rhetoric transformed high levels of religiosity at the time into a reason why marching marked the enactment of God's will, while the Army's rhetoric of representation told marchers that they needed

⁸ To aid in this recognition, there are passages from the speech I discuss multiple times. Although the repetitiveness of doing so is not lost on me, this approach is best for showing my readers how certain parts of "Coxey at the Capitol" reconfigured or reoriented multiple themes at once.

to keep fighting because so many downtrodden workers were relying on them to be their voice in Washington.

As the Army's earlier rhetoric had done, "Coxey at the Capitol" continued to motivate action by building up the magnitude of the joblessness problem, a quintessential feature of the Army's transcendent rhetoric. To intensify the joblessness problem, Coxey constituted the situation facing downtrodden Americans as a matter of life or death. A few paragraphs into the speech, Coxey declared:

We come to remind Congress here assembled of the declarations of a United States Senator, "That for a quarter of a century the rich have been growing richer, the poor poorer, and that by the close of the present century the middle class will have disappeared, as the *struggle for existence* becomes fierce and relentless" (25-28; emphasis mine).⁹

⁹ The full text of the remarks Coxey dropped on the ground for reporters following his arrest can be found in Appendix B. That version is recreated from the version of the speech that appeared in the *New York Times* on May 2, 1894, because that was one of the first versions to which the public would have had access. See "The Protest Coxey Didn't Read," *New York Times* (New York, NY), May 2, 1894. It should be noted that there are slight differences between this version of the speech and those printed by other newspapers, as well as the version entered into the Congressional Record (53rd Congress, 2nd Session) on May 9, 1894. The numbers in parentheses that follow direct quotations from the speech correspond to the line numbers found in the version of the speech originally printed in the *New York Times* and reproduced in Appendix B.

In this passage, the situation facing the middle class was constituted as a “struggle for existence.” By framing the woes of the middle class in this way, Coxey insisted that the inability of people to find work was not just a matter of their chances to get ahead financially, but rather could spell the death of the middle class. In this particular expression, Coxey remained ambiguous regarding whether the middle class would die in a metaphorical sense (i.e., those who were once part of the middle class would be relegated to the lower classes because of their deteriorating financial situations) or in a literal sense (i.e., middle-class Americans would die because they could no longer provide for themselves). However, Coxey’s rhetoric later in the speech clarified this ambiguity: “We are here to tell our representatives [...] that the *struggle for existence* has become too fierce and too relentless. We come and throw up our defenseless hands and say: ‘Help, or our loved ones must *perish*’” (40-43; emphasis mine). By saying explicitly that people may “perish” if Congress failed to act, Coxey made clear that joblessness was to be seen not just as a matter of political economy, but rather as a “struggle for existence”—a matter of life or death.

Although amplifying the magnitude of the unemployment problem remained important, it was unlikely that Commonwealers would be motivated to continue pursuing that cause because the arrests of the Army’s leaders made passage of Coxey’s policies seem doomed to fail. As a result, motivating the marchers to assert the people’s right to petition their government became critical, for that purpose offered a potential pathway to victory. Therefore, “Coxey at the Capitol” reoriented supporters’ attention toward the democratic right to petition by emphasizing the sacrifices the marchers already made. “We have come here,” Coxey declared, “through toil and weary marches,

through storms and tempest, over mountains, and amid the trials of poverty and distress to lay our grievances at the doors of our national legislators” (62-64). In this passage, Coxey returned to the significance of the sacrifice of marching, which had been a prominent theme on the road to Washington. But whereas the theme of sacrifice in earlier stages motivated participation in the march, it was adapted here to show why the people’s right to petition demanded protection. Because the marchers had already given so much of themselves to ensure the success of their cause—by enduring “toil and weary marches, “storms and tempest,” and the like—this rhetoric insisted that the Commonwealers had already given up too much for their rights as citizens to be undermined. With the stakes so high, those who comprised the petition in boots needed to keep fighting, rather than let the protest succumb to failure at the hands of those who prevented their demonstration.

Toward the end of the speech, Coxey added further dimension to the importance of the newly expanded cause by crafting a vision of the better world that was possible if the Commonwealers were empowered to exercise their right to petition their government. If Congress heeded the Army’s calls to action, Coxey maintained, it would “bring happier conditions to the people, and the smile of contentment to our citizens” (68-69). As he had done before, Coxey used crescendo in this passage, this time to build discursively toward a better world in which all people were prosperous—a world significantly better than the status quo. This rhetoric framed the inevitability of the protest’s success, and this was an important move considering the context of Coxey’s speech. For someone seeing the arrests of Coxey and the other leaders as signs that failure may have been imminent, this passage promised that success was still well

within reach, so long as the Commonwealers were willing to fight for it. In so doing, it attended to the Army's more immediate need of ensuring that the rank and file did not disband when their leaders were arrested, but at the same time, this rhetoric articulated why it was essential that the people exercise their right to petition, even if doing so would not succeed in pressuring Congress to pass Coxey's bills. If the people could exercise their right to petition, Coxey reasoned, they would usher in a world defined by happiness and contentment among all citizens.

This better world that Coxey envisioned stood in stark contrast to the life-or-death situation facing the nation, a point which Coxey reaffirmed later in the speech by likening the fight in which the Army was engaged to a war. In this way, Coxey constituted the Army protest in militant terms. This was a notable departure from his previous rhetoric which eschewed the idea that he was leading an "Army" and instead emphasized the peacefulness of the protest by using the "Commonweal of Christ" label.¹⁰ In his speech at the Capitol, on the other hand, Coxey actually embraced the war metaphor:

We are engaged in a bitter and cruel war with the enemies of all mankind, a war with hunger, wretchedness, and despair, and we ask Congress to heed our petitions, and issue for the Nation's good a sufficient volume of the same kind of money which carried the country through one awful war and saved the life of the Nation (43-46).

¹⁰ Keep in mind that "Coxey's Army" is historians' preferred name for the protest, but was not a label Coxey used himself. Rather, he insisted he was not leading an army. In Chapter Two, for example, I discussed how Coxey's letter to Senator William Stewart of Nevada denounced the "Army" label to emphasize the marchers' peaceful nature.

Despite the militant undertones of this passage, it is important to note that Coxey was careful not to argue that the marchers were at war against another group of people. Instead, this passage constituted the Army's struggle as a war of downtrodden American workers fighting against challenges like hunger and despair. In this way, Coxey amplified the magnitude of the situation by likening it to war—itsself typically considered a life-or-death matter—while still carefully preserving the peaceful image with which he portrayed the marchers. As a result, the marchers were not characterized as violent or unruly, but instead as relentless in their pursuit of victory over evils like hunger and despair.

This rhetoric of representation, which maintained that the marchers represented the victims of wretchedness and despair, became more explicit in its amplification of the number of people who relied on the Commonwealth to be their voice. Millions of downtrodden Americans, Coxey alleged, needed the marchers to stand up for them to alleviate their struggles. Later in the speech, Coxey's quantitative rhetoric declared:

We stand here to-day in behalf of millions of toilers, whose petitions have been unresponded to, and whose opportunities for honest, remunerative, productive labor have been taken from them by unjust legislation, which protects idlers, speculators and gamblers (20-23).

Indeed, the very premise of the petition in boots was to show widespread support for the proposed reforms, and so Coxey still needed to portray the Commonwealth as a growing movement that enjoyed the support of the masses. In this passage, he turned once again to the quantitative *topos* to portray the protest in this light, insisting that the Commonwealth represented “millions of toilers.” But he also shifted his focus from the sheer number of people represented to emphasize who those millions of toilers were: people who had petitioned their government, but whose petitions remained

“unresponded to” and whose opportunities for honest work had been “taken from them by unjust legislation.” By constituting the Commonwealers’ constituents in this way, Coxey attended simultaneously to the unemployment problem and to the problem of the infringement on the marchers’ right to petition at the seat of their government. But these problems did not enjoy equal weight. Coxey’s indictment of members of Congress for representing the “idlers, speculators and gamblers” instead of the “millions of toilers” shifted focus away from the unemployment problem and toward the issue of the right to petition.

Beyond reorienting the Army’s focus, its rhetoric of representation was also significant for how it reestablished the power of the people in a democracy. The notion that citizens of a democracy wield political power was not a new concept to the petition in boots, but whether the people could exercise that power had been called into question by the steps taken to silence the Commonweal’s protest. Hence, Coxey’s rhetoric of representation reasserted that in a democracy, the people are entitled to particular powers, one of which was their power to elect their representatives. Coxey emphasized this point in his declaration of why the Army marched to Washington: “We have come to the only source which is competent to aid the people in their day of dire distress. We are here to tell our Representatives, *who hold their seats by the grace of our ballots*, that the struggle for existence has become too fierce and too relentless” (39-41; emphasis mine). This passage again reinforced the earlier indictment that Congress was failing to enact the will of the people. But in response, “Coxey at the Capitol” constituted the power of the people to hold Congress accountable for their failure by voting them out of office if they did not heed the calls of the constituents who elected them. To the

downtrodden—whose feeling of political disenfranchisement was only exacerbated by the quashing of the Army’s protest—this rhetoric reminded them that they had the power to catalyze change and could use their ballots to sound that political voice. Hence, the rhetoric of representation in “Coxey at the Capitol” served to inflate the magnitude of the cause by showing how many downtrodden workers were relying on the marchers’ efforts, but it also functioned to constitute marching as a way of performing a political right that otherwise appeared to be in jeopardy.

On its own, Coxey’s rhetoric of representation intensified the magnitude of the Army’s dual purposes. But toward the end of the speech, Coxey encased his rhetoric of representation in divine terms, a move which further amplified all that was at stake. In earlier stages, Coxey and Browne had done this by claiming that they were reincarnated versions of Christ to show committed and potential marchers that committing to the Commonweal was akin to heeding a call from God. In Chapter Two, for example, I discussed how Browne remarked, “I believe that a part of the soul of Christ happened to come into my being by re-incarnation [and] I believe also that another part of Christ’s soul is in Brother Coxey.”¹¹ This rhetoric of reincarnation equated a call from the Army’s leaders on the same plane as a call from God, which in turn positioned commitment to the cause as a moral obligation.

¹¹ *Bulletin No. 3* (Massillon, OH: J. S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the US, December 7, 1893). In the Ray Stannard Baker papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

By the time “Coxey at the Capitol” was dropped on the ground, however, this rhetoric had evolved to constitute the rank-and-file marchers as embodiments of God’s spirit. Toward the end of the speech, Coxey claimed that the Commonwealers approached their elected lawmakers to “ask them, *in the name of Him* whose banners we bear, *in the name of Him* who pleads for the poor and the oppressed, that they should heed the voice of despair and distress that is now coming up from every section of our country” (64-66; emphasis mine). This passage encased the rhetoric of representation in divine terms by situating the marchers as holy agents, called upon by God to do His work. If God represented the “poor and the oppressed,” and if the marchers represented God by protesting “in the name of Him whose banners we bear,” then by extension, the marchers were protesting to represent the poor and the oppressed in their time of distress. In other words, they were doing God’s work, and as such, too much was at stake to allow the petition in boots to dissipate.

As is characteristic of transcendent rhetoric, each of these ways in which “Coxey at the Capitol” amplified the magnitude of the cause signaled that the potential outcome of the protest’s success or failure was reason to extend the duration of the protest—the stakes were just too high to let the protest fade into dissolution. But whereas Army rhetoric in previous stages framed what was at stake in terms of the problem of the jobless, in this rhetoric Coxey framed the stakes in terms of *both* the problem of the jobless *and* the people’s right to petition their government. It should be noted, however, that these frames were not emphasized equally. Coxey’s greater emphasis on the need for people to assert their right to petition marks his adaptation to his arrest. In other words, examining the speech’s transcendent rhetoric reveals how a

protest that once emphasized the need for solutions to the unemployment problem was transformed by rhetoric that now emphasized the democratic rights of the people to approach their elected officials in person to seek redress for their grievances.

Constituting a Rhetoric of Classism to Situate the Virtuous Middle Class against their Economic Oppressors

To enhance its rhetoric of transcendence, “Coxey at the Capitol” sharpened its audience’s focus on the right to petition by transforming its earlier rhetoric of classism. In previous chapters, I argued that Army crafted a rhetoric of classism by constituting would-be marchers as part of a virtuous middle class that was differentiated from the lower classes through rhetorical antithesis. This rhetoric motivated participation in the Army by enabling jobless workers to see the protest as an opportunity to assert their strong moral character, and by giving the Commonwealers a common enemy around which they could unite. “Coxey at the Capitol” drew on the motivational power of this rhetoric by making classism central to the speech, but in the speech, Coxey used antithesis to distinguish between the virtuous middle class and their oppressors, constituted as the upper class who denied the people their rights. In this subsection, I argue that by making class central to the speech and by constituting the upper class as economic oppressors of the virtuous middle class, Coxey asserted that exercising the right to petition was the essential remedy for the denial of the people’s rights.

Making classism a central theme in Coxey’s speech was an appealing strategy in part because rhetorics of class had proven to motivate in earlier stages. As I argued in Chapter Two, for example, Coxey used antithesis to separate those who would join his Army from the lower classes by accepting and enunciating narratives that denigrated the

“anarchists,” “thieves” and “criminals” who comprised the lower classes. By contrast, those who would join the petition in boots were virtuous, honest people simply seeking to get by. The virtuousness of the people was reinforced by “Coxey at the Capitol” in its insistence that the marchers were committed to upholding law and order. “We stand here to declare [...] that we are law-abiding citizens, and, as such, our actions speak louder than our words” (32-34), Coxey declared in the middle of the speech. “Our actions,” in this case, referred to the steps marchers had taken to adhere to the law. Coxey then clinched this argument in the conclusion to his speech: “Coming, as we do, with peace and good-will to men, we shall have to submit to these laws, unjust as they are, and obey this mandate of authority of might which overrides and outrages the law of right” (71-73). This passage inflated the moral virtuousness of the marchers by emphasizing the “peace and good-will to men” mantra, which reminded observers that the petition in boots would remain committed to peace, no matter the cost. The marchers’ moral virtuousness therefore demanded to be evaluated according to their actions, which together proved that there was no legitimate reason for their rights to be denied.

To be sure, rhetoric reinforcing the marchers’ moral virtuousness on its own did not constitute their middle-class status. Rather, that middle class status was established in opposition to the moral unscrupulousness of their opponents—those who denied their right to petition. In this way, morality and immorality became code for the middle class and upper class, respectively. A declaration Coxey made early in the speech reveals this moral dichotomy: “Upon these steps, where we stand,” Coxey stated, “has been spread a carpet for the royal feet of a foreign Princess, the cost of whose lavish entertainment

was taken from the Public Treasury without the consent or the approval of the people” (14-16). In the next paragraph, Coxey intensified his criticism of the extant system by saying, “Up these steps the lobbyists of trusts and corporations have passed unchallenged on their way to committee rooms, to which we, the representatives of the toiling wealth producers, have been denied” (18-20). Here we see the emergence of Coxey’s denigration of the upper classes. According to his speech, those who abridged the Commonwealers’ constitutional rights—people who “spread a carpet for the royal feet of a foreign Princess” and whose “lobbyists [...] passed unchallenged on their way to committee rooms”—were cast as part of the wealthier upper class. Both of these passages mark those in the wealthier class—those who represented the “trusts and corporations” and who showed more regard for the Princess’ “lavish entertainment” than for the interests of the people—as the economic oppressors of the virtuous middle class. In opposition to the wealthy, immoral oppressors of the people stood the people themselves, who by contrast were constituted by their moral act of representing “the toiling wealth producers.”

Having established this dichotomy, Coxey amplified the classism trope by casting the plight of the middle class as a matter of life or death. I discussed earlier in this chapter one of the statements Coxey used to describe the struggle facing the middle class:

We come to remind Congress here assembled of the declarations of a United States Senator, “That for a quarter of a century the rich have been growing richer, the poor poorer, and that by the close of the present century the middle class will have disappeared, as the struggle for existence becomes fierce and relentless” (25-28).

Notable about this passage is how it conjured an image of the middle class engaged in a bitter fight for existence. By pointing to how the rich were “growing richer” and “the poor poorer,” Coxey called attention to the divisions between classes and emphasized that the middle class now found itself in dire straits.

With the dividing lines in his class hierarchy thus accentuated, Coxey’s final move to transform his earlier rhetoric of classism such that it expanded the purpose of the protest involved situating the exercise of the right to petition as the essential remedy to the denial of that right:

We chose this place of assemblage because it is the property of the people, and if it be true that the right of the people peacefully assemble [sic] upon their own premises, and with their petitions has been abridged by the passage of laws in direct violation of the Constitution we are here to draw the eyes of the Nation to that *shameful fact*” (5-9; emphasis mine).

Whereas this passage constituted the people’s economic oppressors as *shameful*, he constituted the marchers themselves in corollary terms a few paragraphs later, where he described the march as “unstained by even the slightest act which will bring *the blush of shame* to any” (33; emphasis mine). As had been the case on numerous occasions before, we see here again how Coxey used antithesis to magnify the difference between the shamelessness of the marchers and the shamefulness of their oppressors.

Beyond reinforcing the morality of the marchers and the immorality of their opponents, these passages situated petitioning as the essential remedy for the denial of the people’s rights. It did this first by identifying the abridging of the people’s rights as unconstitutional. The laws used to quell the protest were, by Coxey’s estimation, “in direct violation of the Constitution.” This passage then claimed that the Army would remain in Washington to “draw the eyes of the nation,” which emphasized the

shamefulness not of the problem of the jobless, but rather of the abridging of the people's rights. If the people had the right to assemble peacefully with their petitions, and if that right was infringed upon by their oppressors using laws that stood in direct violation of the U.S. Constitution, then it was critical that the people assert their rights in the face of this shameful injustice.

In short, the analysis offered here has aimed to show how "Coxey at the Capitol" adapted its rhetoric of classism to expand of the Army's purpose. This expansion in purpose stemmed in part, from Coxey's decision to make class a central theme of his speech, but in part from how he transformed classism to suit the new purpose. Whereas previous rhetoric focused on the moral virtuousness of the middle class to differentiate them from the lower classes, "Coxey at the Capitol" denigrated the upper class by framing the wealthy as the oppressors of the downtrodden. In comparison to their oppressors, the middle class was constituted by their moral virtuousness, reinforced through the use of antithesis. In the struggle between the virtuous middle class and their wealthy oppressors, "Coxey at the Capitol" proposed the assertion of the right to petition as the remedy to the denial of the people's constitutional rights. In turn, Coxey's adapted rhetoric of classism did not emphasize the unemployment problem, but preferred instead to emphasize the need to assert the right of the people to petition at the seat of their government.

Democratic Tyranny, Economic Enslavement and Rhetorics of Revolution in "Coxey at the Capitol"

One feature of the economic rhetoric I mentioned briefly in the preceding section was its identification and indictment of the nation's persistent allegiance to the

British throne. As I show later in this section, this anti-British theme was significant because it contributed to a broader rhetoric of revolution that Coxe crafted in the speech he prepared for the Army's May 1 demonstration. But before I dive into Coxe's anti-British rhetoric, it is important to understand the power of revolution as a motivating rhetorical force. Appealing to revolution was a promising strategy for Coxe given the historical moment for which he prepared his speech. Historian Alfred Young has described how in the antebellum years, Americans held the Revolution in an almost nostalgic regard, in part because memories of the grave effects of the war had lost their immediacy and were replaced with reverence for the cohort of patriots who fought in the Revolution, most of whom had died or were nearing the end of their lives.¹² But with the cohort of revolutionaries waning, there was a sense that the work of the Revolution remained unfinished, a trope that historian Garry Wills explained in his analysis of the Gettysburg Address. For Wills, the power of President Lincoln's rhetoric was that it "revolutionized the Revolution, giving people a new past to live with that would change their future indefinitely."¹³ Put another way, Lincoln constituted the American Civil War as picking up where the American Revolution left off.

Thus, for two reasons, notions of revolution had clear potential to resonate with 1890s Americans. First, given that Coxe rose to rhetorical fame some thirty years after

¹² Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1999).

¹³ Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 38.

the Civil War, itself a revolutionary moment in U.S. history, Americans in the 1890s could relate to the same feeling that antebellum Americans felt when their own cohort of revolutionaries were dying out. Second, from a rhetorical perspective, the idea that the work of the Revolution remained undone gained new traction thanks to Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. If the work of the Revolution was to ensure Americans' freedom from the bondage of monarchical rule, then the work of the Civil War was to ensure Black Americans' freedom from the bondage of slavery. Hence, by the time of Coxe's Army, the revolutionary trope was ripe for the picking, and if Coxe could draw on the revolution as a rhetorical resource by appealing to notions of freedom from bondage, then he could blaze the pathway to motivating action not only toward the Commonwealth's economic ideals, but also toward the now-central need for Americans to assert the people's right to petition their elected officials in person.

To be sure, "Coxe at the Capitol" was neither the first nor the only point at which Army rhetoric evoked notions of revolution. In Chapter Three, for example, I discussed how Browne's rhetoric evoked the American Revolution by maintaining that the Commonwealthers, themselves revolutionaries, should fight for their freedoms just as our forefathers did. However, these references to the Revolution were made largely in passing, and were far from the central focus of Browne's rhetoric. In the speech Coxe prepared for the May 1 demonstration, however, notions of revolution were more coherently and comprehensively articulated than in any of the aforementioned references. Furthermore, "Coxe at the Capitol" grounded the justification for the march as an effort to carry out the unfinished work of the Revolution. As such, Coxe's revolutionary rhetoric transformed the very purpose of the Army's protest from a

peaceful assembly to advocate for discrete economic policies into a full-fledged crusade to free the nation from the bondage of the extant political and economic systems.

To establish the significance of revolution as a theme he could draw on throughout his speech and beyond, Coxey emphasized the democratic principles enumerated in one the republic's founding documents—the U.S. Constitution. In the first three paragraphs of the speech alone, Coxey referred to the Constitution four times, which helped him to establish the centrality of the document to the principles of democracy. In the very first line of the speech, Coxey declared, “The Constitution of the United States guarantees to all citizens the right to peacefully assemble and petition for redress of grievances, and, furthermore, declares that the right of free speech shall not be abridged” (1-3). Immediately, Coxey instilled for his readers a sense that the rights enumerated in the First Amendment—the right to peaceful assembly, to petition for redress of grievances and to free speech—were essential to American democracy. If Coxey could show how these rights had been abridged by the authorities who prevented the Commonwealth's petition, then the government on whose behalf those authorities were operating was actually working *against* the central tenets of democracy, rather than advancing them as they were called to do.

Coxey's rhetoric could thus justify revolution by leveraging the argument that the government was undermining democracy, and his constitution of the government as tyrants helped establish this justification. “In the name of the Commonwealth of Christ, whose representatives we are, we enter a most solemn and earnest protest against this *unnecessary and cruel act of usurpation and tyranny* and this enforced subjugation of the rights and privileges of American citizenship” (50-53; emphasis mine). In this

passage, casting the abridgement of the Army's petition as an act of tyranny enabled Coxe's audience to see the government not as democratic actors, but rather as extreme dictators. In response, the American people had an obligation born of the Revolution and carried out by our forefathers. The tyranny theme was then reinforced by Coxe's use of *usurpation*, which characterized the infringement of the Army's right to protest as a deprivation of their political power. In effect, this rhetoric intensified the situation by framing it not as an isolated violation of a single right, but rather as a "subjugation of the rights and privileges" of citizens of a democracy.

"Coxe at the Capitol" amplified the tyranny theme by crafting an anti-British sentiment which relied upon, among others, a discourse of economic enslavement. It was the duty of the petition in boots, Coxe argued, to "*emancipate* our beloved country from *financial bondage* to the descendants of King George" (34-37; emphasis mine). Notable about this passage was how it equated the extant economic system to enslavement. Just as colonial Americans demanded freedom from the bondage of the British and just as slaves demanded emancipation during the Civil War, so too did working-class Americans demand emancipation from their financial bondage. In turn, this rhetoric advanced three critical arguments. First, it insisted that the American government was enslaving its people, which once again amplified the magnitude of the situation and reinforced the notion that the government was acting tyrannically. Second, it likened the tyranny of the American government to the system of British rule, thereby advancing the anti-British sentiment that percolated throughout the speech and had motivated the American Revolution. And finally, this rhetoric insisted that the fundamental tenets of democracy, enunciated in the documents of the Revolution, were

under attack. The gravity of each of these three problems, Coxe reasoned, warranted an overthrow of the extant system—it warranted a revolution.

With the need for revolution squarely established, “Coxey at the Capitol” constituted the Commonwealers who came to Washington to protest as committing the revolutionary act. Early in the speech, Coxe declared:

We stand here to-day to test these guarantees of our Constitution. We chose this place of assemblage because it is the property of the people, and if it be true that the right of the people peacefully assemble [sic] upon their own premises, and with their petitions has been abridged by the passage of laws in direct violation of the Constitution, we are here to draw the eyes of the Nation to this shameful fact (5-9).

Here, Coxe constituted the protestors as revolutionaries by asserting that they came to the seat of their government to “test” the guarantees of the Constitution. Where the core premise of Coxe’s march on Washington in earlier stages *presumed* the right of the people to petition at the seat of their government, this rhetoric indicated that the people’s rights could not be taken for granted—they instead needed to be tested. And, if that test were failed, the guarantees of the Constitution needed to be defended from attack. Given that Coxe had already established the supremacy of the Constitution, this rhetoric declared that the petition in boots marched to Washington to protect the rights enumerated by the First Amendment. In this way, Coxe reasoned, the Commonwealth of Christ was doing the unfinished work of the Revolution.

Ultimately, Coxe’s rhetoric of revolution expanded upon the Army’s earlier allusions to our nation’s forefathers to justify the need for revolution and to situate members of the Commonwealth as catalysts for revolutionary change. By evoking an anti-British sentiment and likening the tyranny of the U.S. government to its British predecessors, Coxe argued that working-class Americans needed to take revolutionary

actions to free themselves from bondage, just as earlier Americans had done. Furthermore, by constituting the Commonwealers as defenders of the rights enumerated by our nation's supreme document—the U.S. Constitution—Coxey portrayed his followers as carrying out the unfinished work of the American Revolution. Both of these rhetorical moves further contributed to the transformation of the purpose of the protest from its narrower focus on job creation to the broader need for citizens of a democracy to approach their elected officials directly when seeking redress for their grievances.

Liberty and Justice for All: Principles of Democratic Citizenship in “Coxey at the Capitol”

Coxey's rhetoric of revolution was enhanced by the ways his rhetoric constituted democratic citizenship. I argue that as a distinct but related theme of the speech, Coxey defined what it meant to be a citizen of American democracy in terms of two particular democratic values: justice and liberty. Not only did Coxey's rhetoric hold these values in high regard, but it also crafted the existential threat facing these values if the status quo system were not immediately overthrown. As the analysis I provide in this subsection shows, “Coxey at the Capitol” established justice and liberty as central values by evoking them ideographically, and then enhanced the power of those values by crafting a rhetoric of place which facilitated the audience's connections to justice and liberty.

When I argue that Coxey established the centrality of justice and liberty by appealing to these values in an ideographic sense, I mean that he used these terms explicitly to call on a more implicit meaning behind these values. To explain this

concept, I return again to rhetorical scholar Michael McGee. Seeing an intellectual impasse between those who insist on the power of materiality and those who see power inherent in language, McGee coined the term “ideograph” to explain how as little as a word or phrase can express a particular ideology. A phrase like “civil liberties,” for example, conjures notions of the rights and freedoms associated with citizenship in a democracy, but the meaning of “civil liberties” is uniformly interpreted across all audiences. In the context of Coxey’s speech, evoking justice and liberty in an ideographic sense meant motivating audiences by calling on the material power of the worldviews of those who held those values in high regard. In this way, justice and liberty became rhetorical resources, and by drawing on these resources, “Coxey at the Capitol” justified the efforts of the Commonwealers to sustain their protest, even though success in achieving the original purpose seemed unlikely.

“Coxey at the Capitol” evoked justice by establishing criteria to distinguish between what is just and unjust, which in turn enabled Coxey to frame the actions of the Commonwealers as just and the actions of their opponents as unjust. One of the most significant articulations of this theme spoke to the need for impartiality in governance, which evoked justice by alluding to the Declaration of Independence. “In the name of *justice*, through whose *impartial administration* only the present civilization can be maintained and perpetuated,” Coxey declared, “we enter a most solemn and earnest protest” (48-52; emphasis mine). Here, Coxey returned to the revolution trope to evoke justice. Just as the Revolution’s other great document—the Declaration of Independence—justified the revolutionary act by indicting the British throne for “obstructing the Administration of Justice,” so too did the petition in boots call on

“impartial administration of justice” to showcase a fundamental presumption about democratic governance: that a just system required impartial administration. Given that Coxey already established that trusts and corporations enjoyed unfettered access to committee rooms in Congress, this passage went a step further to characterize that fact as evidence of the inherent injustice of the extant system. The implied conclusion, of course, was that just as our revolutionary forefathers did, those who sympathized with the Army cause needed to stand up against injustice by sustaining their commitment to the petition in boots.

“Coxey at the Capitol” evoked and adapted the justice theme elsewhere in the speech by characterizing the laws used to silence the Army’s the protest as acts of injustice. On three separate occasions, Coxey called out these laws as reasons why the suppression of the right to petition demanded redress. Early in the speech, Coxey declared, “We stand here to-day in [sic] behalf of millions of toilers, whose petitions have been unresponded to, and whose opportunities for honest, remunerative, productive labor have been taken from them by *unjust legislation*, which protects idlers, speculators and gamblers” (20-23; emphasis mine). At the end of the paragraph that followed, Coxey continued, “We have assembled here, in violation of no *just* laws, to enjoy the privileges of every American citizen” (53-55; emphasis mine). Finally, at the very end of the speech, Coxey reiterated this idea once more, stating, “Coming, as we do, with peace and good-will to men, we shall submit to these laws, *unjust as they are*, and obey this mandate of authority of might which overrides and outrages the law of right” (71-73; emphasis mine).

Each of these passages served several important functions. First, this rhetoric sharpened the dichotomy between justice and injustice by naming the laws used to suppress the protest as fundamentally unjust. This argument was essential because it adapted to the Army's expanded purpose by going beyond simply lauding the people's right to petition to insist that any restriction on the people's democratic rights was an instance of government-sponsored injustice. Second, this passage situated Coxey's construction of justice within a broader framework for democratic citizenship. By emphasizing in the same sentence how "We have assembled here, in violation of no just laws, to enjoy the privileges of every American citizen" (53-55), Coxey furthered the divide between the just marchers and their unjust opponents, while simultaneously positioning the right to peaceful assembly as foundational to the experience of American citizenship. In this way, the suppression of the Army's petition was more than an injustice—it marked the denial of the people's citizenship. Finally, this rhetoric elevated the moral virtuousness of the protestors once more, this time by promising they would adhere to the rule of law, despite how unjust those laws were. By "submitting to these laws, unjust as they are," Coxey showed his audiences that the Commonwealers were committed to maintaining the peace because it was their obligation as citizens to do so.

Along with justice, constructions of liberty were also wrapped up within Coxey's rhetoric of democratic citizenship. The liberty trope situated the petition in boots as essential to defending specific rights guaranteed to citizens of our democracy. For example, at one point in the speech, Coxey wrote, "Here, rather than at any spot upon the continent, it is fitting that we should come to mourn over our dead liberties,

and by our protest arouse the imperiled nation to such action as shall rescue the Constitution and resurrect our liberties” (11-13). I discuss below how this passage framed the significance of the place of the protest, but more immediately, I mention this passage for how it personified liberty. This rhetoric asserted that the Army’s protest was critical because Americans’ civil liberties were *dead*, and with the death of those liberties came a threat to the broader set of rights guaranteed to Americans. In turn, this passage inflated what was at stake, as if to say that Americans faced the possibility that all of their rights might be stripped from them. Indeed, the very foundation of what it meant to be an American citizen was under attack. Then, to intensify this threat, Coxey claimed that the people were *mourning* over their dead liberties, which insisted that what happened was not merely unfortunate—it demanded a guttural, emotional response that would motivate those who grieved to take action. Participating in and expanding the duration of the Army’s protest was thus necessary, Coxey reasoned, because it was the only Americans could avenge the death of their liberties.

I should note here the variety of ways in which Coxey’s personification of the life and death of the people’s liberties exploited some of the Army’s earlier themes. Each of Coxey’s choices of verbiage I have noted in this section constructed how the very tenets of American citizenship were in jeopardy, but they also inflated once again the magnitude of the cause for which the Army was asked to fight. In turn, this transcendent appeal motivated sustained commitment to the expanded purpose, even despite how the initial pragmatic argument that success was inevitable had lost its appeal. If those who came to Washington could see the suppression of the Army’s protest as the first step in a slippery downward slope that would lead to the erosion of

all other rights guaranteed to citizens of American democracy, then the reasons to continue their fight were clear. In a similar way, Coxey's rhetoric of civil liberties incorporated notions of religion which, as I argued earlier, exhibited intense motivational power. As opposed to any of the other verbs Coxey could have used, he instead argued that the Commonwealth needed to "rescue" and "resurrect" Americans' civil liberties from a system in peril. This rhetoric constituted the protestors as the rescuers or saviors of the people's dying liberties, which therefore equated doing the work of the protest to doing the work of God. In this way, "Coxey at the Capitol" motivated sustained commitment to the Army's expanded cause by weaving together several different appeals, rather than by crafting these appeals in isolation from one another.

With the protest thus established as a fight to uphold the people's liberties, "Coxey at the Capitol" invited the Commonwealthers to become defenders of liberty by constituting them as liberty lovers. At the conclusion of Coxey's speech, he declared, "We appeal to every peace-loving citizen, every *liberty-loving* man or woman, every one [sic] in whose breast the fires of patriotism and love of country have not died out, to assist us in our efforts toward better laws and general benefits" (73-76; emphasis mine). Because the Commonwealthers had already been told that they could defend the more discrete right to petition, this passage expanded the importance of the protestors' role by presuming their love for liberty. This rhetoric expanded on that presumption by framing the protestors as lovers of peace, lovers of patriotism and lovers of their country. If they truly loved liberty and peace and patriotism—values that few would outwardly reject—then the Commonwealthers would be willing to accept the importance of protecting those

values. Not only did this rhetorical move further shift the emphasis to the people's democratic rights, but it also built on Coxe's earlier use of antithesis to separate the moral virtuousness of the marchers from the moral unscrupulousness of those unwilling "to assist us in our efforts."

With the centrality of justice and liberty thus established, Coxe clinched his argument by crafting a rhetoric of place that emphasized the symbols of those values within the physical space occupied by the protestors. In recent years, a range of scholars have examined what they call the rhetoric of place, seeking to show how place and space can influence the ways people make sense of and remember key moments that define our social lives. Rhetorical scholars Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook noted in their examination of the rhetoric of place in social movements that calling on one's attachment to a place or staging a protest within a particular space is a common tactic of movements seeking to advance their agendas for social change.¹⁴ In their discussion of another famous march on Washington—the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom—Endres and Senda-Cook argued that the National Mall was chosen for its proximity to the Lincoln Memorial because of Lincoln's role in emancipating slaves, and for its proximity to the center of the U.S. government. They concluded that the place itself, along with the ways that place was altered by the

¹⁴ Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook, "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 257-282.

presence of hundreds of thousands of protestors, helped to constitute the goals of the civil rights movement.¹⁵

I argue that in a similar way, the Army's decision to protest at the Capitol Building—at the seat of the federal government and in front of the officials who Coxey indicted for failing to represent the people who elected them—was one of the means by which the petition in boots constituted its purpose. But “Coxey at the Capitol” could not take for granted the significance that people would attach to the place of the Army's protest because the precedent for using the Capitol to protest had not yet been established. Rather, Coxey made repeated allusions to the place of the protest to both assert the publicness of that space, and to establish a shared vision of what citizenship in American democracy should entail.

To assert the publicness of the space in front of the Capitol, Coxey argued that the Capitol was the people's property. “We chose this place of assemblage because it is the property of the people” (5-6), Coxey declared, and it is “the right of the people [to] peacefully assemble upon their own premises” (6-7). If Coxey's idea that the Capitol was the property of the people were widely shared, such a declaration might not have been considered so important. But even today, we have not necessarily reached consensus regarding the publicness of government buildings. Coxey's argument essentially amounted to the Capitol being public property because it housed those we appoint to govern us, but this logic cannot be applied universally. We would not consider the Department of Agriculture or the Federal Bureau of Investigation

¹⁵ Ibid., 257-258.

buildings, for example, as ideal places to stage public protests. Given how the public/private distinction remains blurred even today, there was something profound about Coxey's declaration that the Capitol was the property of the people and available for their use, given the historical context of the time. Because Coxey challenged the public/private distinction in property ownership, his rhetoric ultimately invited audiences to reconsider which of our national spaces are to be regarded as public spaces.

With the publicness of the space thus established, Coxey referred back to the central values of justice and liberty to warrant the use of the Capitol Building as the appropriate venue for the Army's protest. Returning to a passage I referenced above, Coxey declared, "Here, rather than at any spot upon the continent," Coxey declared, "it is fitting that we should come to mourn over our dead liberties" (11-12). Powerful about this rhetoric was that it warranted the location of the Army's protest by establishing the broader *purpose* of the Capitol Building—the place where liberty is to be upheld. Because the Capitol is where laws designed to protect civil liberties are made, Coxey reasoned, there was a fundamental problem with those liberties being violated, especially at that particular place.

Elsewhere in the speech, Coxey's efforts to justify the place of the Army's protest called upon the symbols present in that place and what those symbols represented. Toward the end of the speech, for example, Coxey called upon the Capitol dome: "We are under the shadow of the Capitol of this great nation, and in the presence of our national legislators are refused that dearly-bought privilege" of democratic citizenship (57-58). As I see it, Coxey's reference to the shadow of the Capitol can be

read in both literal and figurative terms. In literal terms, referring to the shadow that the Capitol would have cast over the protestors called attention to the structure and its imposing presence. Read in figurative terms, however, this passage called attention to the darkness that had been cast over the people as a result of their trying and seemingly hopeless situation. This notion of darkness in the figurative sense was expanded upon in the latter part of the passage, in which Coxey implied that there was something significant about the rights of the people being denied in the presence of their national legislators. Here again, Coxey characterized the endangerment of the people's civil liberties as especially problematic given that these infringements of the people's rights were authorized by those who were tasked with protecting the rights of the American people.

It is also worth noting here that although I am emphasizing the power of Coxey's rhetoric of place, this rhetoric also worked to reinforce the theme of revolution. The "dearly-bought privilege" to which Coxey referred was the privilege of American citizenship, and the price paid for that privilege was the American Revolution. In other words, by encasing his rhetoric of place in revolutionary terms, Coxey once again motivated his audiences to see the need to sustain the protest because doing so was a means of carrying out the unfinished work of the Revolution. Because the Revolution was too grave a sacrifice to allow the hard-earned privileges of American citizenship to be carelessly tossed aside, it was critical that the petition in boots protect the legacy of our forefathers by protecting the people's civil liberties.

In all, the ways Coxey located justice and liberty as central to the protest and then clinched his argument by emphasizing the symbols of the physical space of the

protest contributed to an ideology that defined the requirements of democratic citizenship. Coxey evoked this otherwise implicit ideology by evoking the more explicit ideographs of justice and liberty, which gave him a vocabulary with which he could show that the government was failing to meet the requirements of democratic citizenship. The remedy to this problem, of course, was the expansion of the purpose of the protest to include the people's right to protest. This was an essential rhetorical move because amidst signs that the protest's failure may be imminent, those who marched to the Capitol needed reasons to stay in Washington to continue the protest. The rhetoric analyzed here gave the protestors sufficient reason to remain committed because it invited them to see themselves engaged in an effort to protect the democratic rights that our revolutionary forefathers had fought so hard to establish.

Perhaps this rhetoric would have been a powerful source of motivation on its own, but "Coxey at the Capitol" brought these themes together with the others I have probed in this section, including rhetorics of sacrifice, classism and revolution. Together, these themes strengthened the motivational framework on which Army rhetors would rely as the protest expanded in duration during its time in Washington. In that third and final stage of the protest, Army rhetors would exploit these themes, building on and transforming them to overcome the new challenges that characterized life in the Commonwealth. Chapter Five thus explores these exploitations. But before turning my attention to the rhetoric of the Army's final weeks, I fulfill my remaining task in this chapter, which is to offer a global view of what I see as the significance of Coxey's pivotal speech.

Reading “Coxey at the Capitol” as the Army’s Representative Anecdote

In *A Grammar of Motives*, Kenneth Burke defined representative anecdote as “a *summation*, containing implicitly what the system that is developed from it contains explicitly.”¹⁶ Considering representative anecdote as a critical method, rhetorical scholar Bryan McCann added, “The anecdotal critic reconstructs a discourse within a specific narrative form that illuminates its underlying strategies and motives.”¹⁷ In a sense, this is the critical approach I have taken in this chapter, rearranging the themes of “Coxey at the Capitol” to understand what and how Coxey sought to do with the remarks he dropped on the ground in front of the Capitol. This critical act of rearranging has helped me to realize the speech’s two important achievements, one of which relates to the speech itself as a pivotal moment in the lifespan of Coxey’s Army, and the other of which relates to how the speech expanded its rhetorical arsenal to effectively pivot the protest as it entered its third and final stage.

First, my analysis in this chapter has shown how “Coxey at the Capitol” marked the arrests of the Army leaders as a key turning point in the trajectory of the protest. Until the moment Coxey was detained, the story of the Commonweal was largely a story of how rhetoric motivated people to advocate for a discrete set of legislative

¹⁶ Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945), 60.

¹⁷ Bryan J. McCann, “Genocide as Representative Anecdote: Crack Cocaine, the CIA and the Nation of Islam in Gary Webb’s ‘Dark Alliance,’” *Western Journal of Communication* 74, no. 4 (2010): 399.

reforms that would alleviate the unemployment problem that left millions of families in economic turmoil following the Panic of 1893. As I have described here, that storyline still remained an important part of the Army's broader narrative. But once the arrests of Coxey, Browne and Jones altered the Army's controlling exigence and neutralized the pragmatic argument that the success of the protest was inevitable, it was all but necessary that the purpose of the petition in boots expanded to include and emphasize the rights of citizens in a democracy to petition at the seat of their government. Whereas the Army's earlier rhetoric emphasized the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills as means of putting people back to work, this emphasis would prove insufficient in light of signs that those bills would not pass in Congress. Understanding the gravity of this turning point, the remarks Coxey prepared ahead of the May 1 demonstration and fed to the press emphasized the right of the people to engage in peaceful protest on the doorstep of their national legislature. This shift in emphasis was part and parcel of a broader shift in the Army's purpose. The need to create jobs, though still exigent, took a back seat once the guarantees of the Constitution were tested and had failed.

Second, my analysis in this chapter reveals that as important as Coxey's arrest was in its moment, it was perhaps even more significant for the influence it had on the rhetoric of the Army in the days and weeks that followed. While the Army had tested a series of rhetorical themes that served its objectives well in the first two stages, those themes needed to evolve when it became clear to the marchers and their observers that Congress would not take quick action on the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills. As I have shown in this chapter, Coxey catalyzed this evolution in the

Army's rhetorical motivation by bringing together the rhetoric that had motivated participation in earlier stages and adapted it within the now-evolved context of the Army's expanded purpose. By the conclusion of Chapter Five, my reader will have a deep understanding of how these themes became the foundation of a discourse that sustained the protest for several weeks in Washington, even as Coxey and Browne served their jail sentences. But in many ways, my readers would have been unable to appreciate the full depth of the discourse analyzed in that chapter without a deep understanding of how "Coxey at the Capitol" began to recast the very purpose of the protest.

Before turning to my analysis of the Army's rhetoric in its third and final stage, however, I should note here that as important as the shift in the substance of Coxey's rhetoric was the shift in his style. In the Army's first two stages, Coxey spoke in rather concrete terms, tying marchers' activism to clear and finite outcomes. However, in the speech he prepared ahead of the Army's May 1 demonstration at the Capitol, Coxey began casting the reasons for the protest in far more abstract and value-laden terms—terms like justice and liberty, democracy and citizenship. Stylistically, I read this rhetorical shift as both a move from simple to complex *and* from specific to general. Although these interpretations may seem at odds with one another, both relate to the way in which Coxey imagined his audience. From the earliest days of the inception stage up until April 30, Coxey's primary audience was comprised mostly of working-class Americans who might consider marching or who already committed to the journey. But from the moment when he attempted to ascend the Capitol steps onward, the general public—once a secondary audience for Coxey—was now part of his primary

audience, for they too had to buy into the notion that marching on Washington was a viable means of petitioning the government.

With an expanded audience, Coxey had the opportunity (or perhaps the obligation) to craft rhetoric that was somewhat more intellectual or grandiloquent. In turn, his rhetoric was no longer confined to the simplicity that his audience of working-class supporters demanded, nor did the protest need to be cast in purely instrumental terms regarding what the marchers would accomplish if the protest were successful. Instead, Coxey had license to theorize about deeper ideas on a public stage. At the same time, because his audience was so much more general by the time of his arrest in Washington, Coxey no longer had the luxury of speaking about his policy proposals in such specific terms, if for no other reason than for the fact that the general public had not yet bought into or even gained familiarity with his ideas the way that the marchers had. Thus, whereas in Massillon and on the road to Washington, Coxey could and often did detail the specifics of the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills, he needed to paint his vision for social and economic reform with much broader brushstrokes once the eyes of the nation had been drawn. Hence, although Coxey's rhetoric became more complex, it simultaneously became less specific. The level of care that striking such a balance required points me to another reason why I consider Coxey to have been a rhetorically gifted leader. This rhetorical gift is revealed in Chapter Five, which illustrates that the shift in emphasis in "Coxey at the Capitol" carried with the Army for the remainder of its protest.

I point out this shift precisely because I believe it reveals something about Coxey's rhetorical prowess. That the speech analyzed in this chapter or Coxey's

broader body of rhetoric has never received the in-depth treatment that I offer in this dissertation suggests that most scholars do not see Coxe as an adept rhetorical leader, and in fact, some scholars have even lamented his uninspiring rhetorical style.

Rhetorical scholar Malcolm Sillars, for example, said “Coxe’s speeches were dull. His plain style was more like that of the local businessman [sic] speaking on a local cleanup campaign before the Chamber of Commerce than like the utterances of a radical.”¹⁸

Perhaps this characterization describes Coxe’s speeches on the road to Washington, but once there, his discourse came to life, and my analysis of “Coxe at the Capitol” shows that there is much to appreciate in terms of both style and substance. Between his ability to weave together such seemingly disparate themes, his ability to shift emphases without losing sight of some of the tertiary issues facing the Army, and his ability to walk the razor’s edge between simplicity and complexity, I find that Coxe’s rhetorical acumen deserves celebration.

Though he may never be considered among the Lincolns, the Kings or the Cady Stantons of the world, “dull” and “plain” can hardly be considered appropriate adjectives to describe Jacob Coxe’s rhetorical style. His rhetorical adeptness only becomes clearer in the next chapter, in which I explore the rhetoric of the Commonwealth in its third and final stage, which began with the arrest of the Army’s leaders and lasted several weeks as advocates tried to expand the duration of the movement for as long as it possibly could.

¹⁸ Malcolm O. Sillars, “The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots,” *Speech Monographs* 39, no. 2 (1972): 101.

CHAPTER FIVE

Motivating Commitment to a Purpose Transformed: The Rhetoric of Coxey's Army in Washington

A reform must always pass through several stages of public sentiment on its approach to attainment. The ridicule stage is one of them [...] and the people are now thinking with a seriousness with which they have never before approached such a great public question.

—*Jacob S. Coxey, Washington Evening Star, May 14, 1894*¹

Throughout the Army's entire lifespan, much of the marchers' commitment to the protest relied on the credibility and authority of its leaders. From the very earliest days when he was seeking recruits for his movement, Jacob Coxey asked potential marchers to trust him as their leader, even though he had not yet been able to prove that he could bring his vision for social change to fruition. Carl Browne would eventually do the same, asking committed and would-be Commonwealers to heed the leaders' calls to action because they were ordained by God to lead the protest. Although these were lofty propositions, marchers and potential marchers in the Army could be motivated by their leaders' appeals in large part because the events that transpired played out quite similarly to how Coxey and Browne said they would. Coxey—cognizant of the potential this strategy had to build his supporters' faith in him as their leader—issued a statement on the day he was to report to the D.C. jail:

Some newspapers said we would never leave Massillon Ohio [sic]. We left. They said we would never cross the Pennsylvania line. We crossed. Next that we would never pass through Pittsburgh. We passed. Next that we were too lazy

¹ “Still Another Camp: The Commonweal Moves Down and Occupies Bladensburg,” *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), May 14, 1894.

to climb the Allegheny Mountains. We climbed. Next that we would go to pieces in the sparsely supplied surroundings of the capital. The pieces did not go. Next that we would never have the courage to go on the steps of our nation's home. We went and were arrested.²

Browne articulated a similar message. In light of speculations that the Army would not actually carry out its planned demonstration on May 1, Browne responded snappily to a reporter, "We are going to carry this thing through to the end. *Haven't we done everything I said we would?*"³ To be sure, these statements made some generalizations. After all, Coxe and Browne had made plenty of promises—such as the tens or hundreds of thousands they promised would march—on which they did not quite deliver. But by and large, Coxe and Browne's projections of how things would play out were not all that far from reality, and as a result, members and potential members of Coxe's Army found it easy to place their trust in the Commonwealth's leaders.

All of that changed, however, when Coxe and Browne were arrested. From that moment forward and for a host of reasons, putting faith in Coxe and Browne was no longer such a simple proposition for the Commonwealthers. For starters, the arrests of the leaders made clear that Coxe and Browne could not deliver on one of the most significant promises they had made: their promise that Congress would take swift action to pass the Army's bills once pressured by popular demand. Furthermore, Coxe and

² "The Commonwealth's Woe," *The Evening Independent* (Massillon, OH), May 21, 1894, as quoted in Jerry Prout, "Coxe's Challenge in the Populist Moment," (Ph.D. dissertation, George Mason University, 2012), 373.

³ "Coxe at the Capital," *Somerset Herald* (Somerset, PA), May 2, 1894; emphasis mine.

Browne had earned the trust of their supporters during their fiery speeches and daily orders, their weekly reincarnation sermons and the like. However, the arrests left Coxey and Browne attending to legal matters and eventually landed them in jail, meaning they did not have the opportunity to motivate the marchers with their colorful and sometimes boisterous rhetoric. Thus, the moment of the leaders' arrests marked yet another transformation in the Army's rhetorical environment. But this time, that transformation was abrupt, not gradual.

Luckily, as I argued in Chapter Four, the Army leaders understood that if their protest were to prevail, their purpose would have to expand. "Coxey at the Capitol" initiated the expansion of purpose to include the assertion of the people's right to petition, but on its own, that speech could not fully transform the protest. Moreover, once transformed, Army rhetoric needed to motivate commitment to the newly expanded purpose, which they did in part by building on the themes of Coxey's speech and in part by transforming those themes and others that had served the Army well in its earlier stages. If the Army's rhetors could adapt the motivational power of earlier themes to meet the context of the Commonwealth's crisis and the expanded purpose created to respond to that crisis, then the protest would press forth, rather than succumbing to entropy.

Hence, in this chapter, I intend to show how within the context of the transformed rhetorical environment triggered by Coxey and Browne's arrests, Army rhetoric transformed earlier motivational themes to garner commitment to the newly transformed purpose. To do so, this chapter proceeds in two main sections. The first section unpacks the challenge that arose from the transformed rhetorical environment.

Their leaders' arrests left the Army grappling with the potential for diminished faith in Coxe and Browne. The second section therefore explains how the Army's rhetoric met this challenge during this third and final stage, building upon and transforming earlier themes to expand and garner commitment to the reconceived purpose. These arguments culminate in this chapter's brief conclusion, in which I assess the Army's success or failure in this final stage.

Coxe and Browne Under Arrest: Existential Crisis and a Rhetorical Environment Transformed

The arrests of Coxe and Browne in front of the Capitol on May 1 marked yet another transformation in the Army's rhetorical environment. Although the Army was by now used to adapting to the challenges associated with evolutions in its rhetorical environment, what set this transformation apart was its abruptness. Whereas the inception stage was spent preparing for the challenges of life on the road—many of which had been predicted—Coxe and Browne spent the five-week march to Washington assuring committed and potential members of the Army that they would be able to stage their demonstration in front of the Capitol without hindrance. As the marchers' trust in their leaders built over time, the rank and file had every reason to believe that they would be welcomed in Washington by supporters who were eager for the Army's social reform program. Thus, when greeted by hostility and the arrests of their leaders, members of the petition in boots were forced to confront a harsh new reality: their success was now in doubt.

It is not hard to imagine how this abrupt transformation in the rhetorical environment gave rise to a series of rhetorical challenges. The most immediate of these

challenges was the absent voices. Although Coxey was an adept enough rhetorical leader to prepare an alternate version of his speech to feed to the media, he was prohibited from addressing his supporters, which in turn neutralized the enthusiasm of those who gathered at the Capitol. Further complicating this rhetorical challenge was the fact that reading Coxey's speech in the evening paper was a markedly different experience than hearing directly from the Commonwealth leader as he delivered a booming address in front of other boisterous supporters who were fired up about the Army's cause. Moreover, even though Army rhetors would later draw on the speech's themes, those themes may not have resonated the same as they might have if Coxey were given the opportunity to discuss the unemployment problem and the people's right to petition with those who were most enthusiastic about these issues. Thus, Coxey's arrest and his subsequent inability to speak from the steps of the Capitol constrained the motivational force of his speech and complicated his ability to sustain the commitment of his supporters.

This particular problem was compounded by Coxey and Browne's legal battles, which unfolded over the course of several weeks. Even if Coxey had been able to speak from the Capitol steps, he and Browne would still have needed to sustain their supporters' commitment to the protest in the days and weeks that followed to ensure Congress saw the Army's policy proposals through to the finish. Attending to legal matters left less time for the work of keeping the petition in boots organized and engaged—delivering daily orders, making speeches to attract new supporters, reinforcing key messages and the like. Day in and day out, Coxey and Browne appeared in court, first subjected to deliberation about the laws they broke and later to delays in

their sentencing.⁴ Over time, this logistical challenge transformed into a rhetorical one. Because the marchers had by then become accustomed to hearing from Coxe and Browne throughout the day about the reasons for the Army's protest, the absence of these leaders' rhetoric was palpable. Without constant reminders about why sacrificing in the name of the cause was so critical, there was a significant risk that the marchers' motivation would quickly wane.

The absence of rhetoric to justify the marchers' sacrifices was compounded by the fact that the marchers' faith in their leaders—once essential to their motivation—was now in jeopardy. In order for the marchers to heed their leaders' calls to action, they needed to have faith that those courses of action would produce the results they desired. However, maintaining that trust required that Coxe and Browne (a) communicate with their supporters, and (b) be judged credible by their supporters. Both of these requirements became significantly more complicated once Coxe and Browne were confined to the D.C. jail. To be sure, the leaders communicated with the petition in boots by delegating authority to various marshals who were tasked with spreading their

⁴ On at least three occasions, Carl Browne noted in his daily orders that their sentencing had been delayed, and ultimately, twenty-two days passed between their arrest and their imprisonment. See "Coxe Must Answer Also: He is Arrested at the Police Court Upon an Affidavit," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 3, 1894; "Prosecution is Finished: The Coxe Side Will Have Its Inning of Witnesses Tomorrow," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 6, 1894; and "Yesterday in Coxe-land," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 16, 1894.

messages to the masses. Browne, for example, still issued orders to the marchers on a daily basis.⁵ But those orders had to be delivered by people like Coxey's eldest son, Jesse, who had re-joined the Army as deputy chief marshal.⁶ The problem with using the younger Coxey as a surrogate, of course, was that the Commonwealers' faith was in Browne and the elder Coxey; they had no reason for faith in Jesse Coxey, or anyone else for that matter. Thus, Coxey and Browne's jail sentences limited their ability to control their messages and to communicate those messages directly to their supporters.

Of course, access to the marchers was only one side of the coin; as I mentioned, Coxey and Browne also needed to be judged credible by their supporters. Continuing to command that credibility was complicated by the fact that, having promised all along that the Army's protest would succeed, Coxey and Browne's arrests signaled to the rank and file that success was far from inevitable. For example, Coxey and Browne told the marchers throughout the lifespan of the protest that Congress would take action to pass the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills as soon as they saw that doing so

⁵ We know Browne's orders continued to be issued on a daily basis because they appeared in the *Washington Times*, which remained supportive the Army cause and touted its exclusive access to Browne's transcripts.

⁶ Recall from Chapter Three that Jesse Coxey was once part of the rank and file but was dismissed from the Army following an altercation with Carl Browne. Anticipating the Army leaders may be sentenced to jail, the elder Coxey appointed his son to serve in the role of chief marshal for the duration of Browne's absence. See "Still Another Camp," 3.

was the will of the people. However, the use of the “keep off the grass” laws to halt the protest showed that the will of the people was largely irrelevant to the powers in Washington. Similarly, Coxey and Browne told the marchers for several weeks that all of society was behind the Commonwealth’s movement, a claim I argued in Chapter Three helped the marchers feel as though they were fighting on behalf of the politically powerless. Yet, once in Washington, public officials alleged that the marchers were contributing to public health epidemics to drive them out of the city,⁷ while citizens of the surrounding suburbs used physical force to push the Commonwealthers out of their towns.⁸ These moves signaled that far from a warm welcome in Washington, the opposite was happening: the marchers were actually being driven away. Thus, in addition to taking a toll on the Army leaders’ credibility, events in Washington neutralized the pragmatic claim on which the protest had been built—that the march would be an effective way of achieving social change.

Thus, despite how the Army had become accustomed to adapting to changes in its rhetorical environment, the context of the evolution triggered by Coxey and Browne’s arrests left the petition in boots grappling with a series of rhetorical challenges. The inability of the leaders to speak directly to the rank and file with messages they controlled, the erosion of their credibility when the events that transpired departed from what they had promised all along, and signs that legislative success was

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “Coxey’s Army Moves Again,” *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), May 15, 1894.

far from inevitable all threatened to diminish the Commonwealers' motivation. Because so much of the marchers' commitment to the cause was premised on their ability to trust Coxey and Browne, the erosion of the leaders' authority and credibility neutralized their persuasive appeals. In light of this array of challenges, the future of the movement would ultimately depend on the extent to which the petition in boots adapted to this new rhetorical environment.

I argue that in order to adapt successfully, Army rhetoric needed to catalyze two significant accomplishments. First, it needed to complete the transformation of the protest's purpose that was initiated by "Coxey at the Capitol." Given that the original pragmatic reason for participating in the protest had been neutralized, members of the Commonwealth needed to perceive their efforts as an effective way of achieving some other outcome; indeed, the previous moral reasons for activism, though still important, would not be sufficient to sustain the marchers' commitment in the face of the new pragmatic failures. Second, Army rhetoric needed to employ earlier themes with proven potential to motivate commitment to the protest, but also to transform those themes such that they would resonate in the context of the now-expanded purpose. In the next main section, I analyze the rhetoric of the Army's third and final stage to illustrate the extent to which that rhetoric catalyzed these achievements and what these achievements meant for the viability of the petition in boots.

Rhetorical Strategies to Complete the Transformation of the Army's Purpose & Secure Commitment for the Newly Evolved Cause

As I discussed in Chapter Four, the expansion of the Army's purpose began with the speech Coxey fed to the media upon his arrest. Because that speech brought together

many of the earlier themes of the Army's rhetoric but transformed them to adapt to the context of Coxe and Browne's arrests, "Coxe at the Capitol" laid the groundwork for how the Army adapted to its new rhetorical environment. At the same time, there were a host of other themes—some from "Coxe at the Capitol" but some from even earlier in the Army's lifespan—that remained ripe for transformation. In this section, I argue that the rhetoric of the Army's final stage expanded on or transformed three earlier themes in particular, and that doing so enabled the Army to complete its broader transformation in purpose and glean renewed commitment from those who came to protest in Washington. The three subsections that follow each address one of these themes, and I should note that although all three helped make possible both of the key achievements that defined the final stage, some contributed more clearly to one of these achievements than the other. Thus, my reader will note that when discussing certain themes, I place greater emphasis on how the rhetoric transformed the purpose than on how it motivated commitment to the cause, or vice versa. However, this is not meant to suggest that these rhetorical adaptations only contributed to one key achievement and not the other.

Transforming the Army's Theory of Democracy

For the entire duration of the Army's protest leading up to the arrests of its leaders, the petition in boots was premised on a theory of democracy. Because members of Congress were elected by the people to represent their interests, Army rhetoric reasoned, the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills would pass Congress once the Commonwealth demonstrated that these job-creation measures were the will of the people. Notable about this theory of democracy in earlier stages was its abstract

form—Army rhetors did not enumerate particular rights that justified their march on Washington, nor did they question whether their Senators and Representatives would adhere to or depart from the people’s will. Rather, in the abstract, the Commonwealth’s theory of democracy was stated as a matter of fact: Congress *will* act once presented with popular demand for Coxey’s proposed reforms.

However, the arrests of Coxey and Browne made clear that Congress would not pass the Army’s legislation, even if the people wanted those bills to become law. Thus, Army rhetoric needed to transform its theory of democracy in order for the success of their cause to have any chance of survival. That transformation was made possible by the Army’s rhetoric of constitutionality that characterized the final stage of its protest. In the weeks following Coxey and Browne’s arrests, the rhetoric of the petition in boots substituted a much more concrete theory rooted in constitutionality for the abstract theory of democracy that was prominently featured in earlier stages. This new theory built on the argument advanced in “Coxey at the Capitol” that the U.S. Constitution was the nation’s supreme law. Because that law expressly protected particular liberties—including the freedom of speech, the freedom to assemble and the freedom to petition—it was inevitable that the people would be permitted to petition at the seat of their government. After all, Congress had an obligation to uphold the rights afforded to the people by the Constitution.

This transformation enabled Army rhetors to frame the impingement of the protestors’ constitutional liberties as an injustice, which became a powerful source of motivation. Those who marched to Washington could be motivated by the moral appeal that it was their obligation to stand up against this injustice. At the same time, they

could be motivated by the pragmatic appeal that standing up against this injustice would lead to the successful achievement of the Army's newly expanded purpose.

The constitutional theory of democracy was first articulated in "Coxey at the Capitol," which pointed to three First Amendment rights—freedom of speech, the right to assemble and the right to petition—as justifications for the Army's protest. During their time in Washington, Army rhetoric built on the speech's allusions to the First Amendment to transform its theory of democracy into something more concrete. On the morning of May 1, Coxey was asked by a reporter what the Army would do if their protest was blocked, to which he responded, "They can't stop us. The constitution [sic] does not permit them. There'll be no interference. We shall not transgress any law that is constitutional."⁹ Carl Browne echoed this sentiment when he was asked how the Army would justify its demonstration despite authorities' warnings, to which he responded, "[The First Amendment] is the ground on which we will make our stand for liberty as our forefathers did in '76."¹⁰ These passages framed the Constitution as the grounds on which the Commonweal's demonstration was justified, and in both instances, Coxey and Browne opted for a more generic statement about the reasons why the Army's protest would not be stopped. Thus, in a general sense, these statements substituted the Constitution for the Army's earlier theory of democracy to justify their protest.

⁹ "Coxey at the Capital," 1.

¹⁰ "Carl Browne to His Men: General Orders of the Marshal as Given Exclusively to The Times," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 1, 1894.

The constitutional justification for the Army's planned demonstration became even more concrete in Coxe's exchange with another reporter on that same morning. In that exchange, Coxe was asked a similar set of questions, but in each of his responses, he offered more specificity about the marchers' constitutional rights:

REPORTER: "What do you intend to do when the police prevent you from holding your meeting in the Capitol grounds?"
COXEY: "No one will prevent us. Does not the constitution [sic] guarantee the right to peaceably assemble and petition congress [sic]?"
REPORTER: "But there is a police regulation passed by congress [sic], which forbids processions and assemblages on the Capitol grounds, and the police will stop your army if it attempts to trespass."
COXEY: "The constitution [sic] was written before any police regulations. If they come in conflict with the constitution [sic] they are void. We stand squarely upon the constitution [sic]; that is our platform."
REPORTER: "How do you intend to enforce your rights?"
COXEY: "There is but one way, by an appeal to the courts. We will go before the highest court in the land, if necessary. Meanwhile we will wait here in Washington if it takes all summer. If the court refuses us our rights there will be a revolution."¹¹

Here, we glean a sense of the deep nuance found in Coxe's constitutionality argument. Immediately, his reference to the "right to peaceably assemble and petition congress [sic]" reinforced the First Amendment justification he laid out in the speech he fed to the media upon his arrest. Then, when the reporter pointed out that the laws governing the situation may conflict with one another, Coxe asserted the supremacy of the Constitution to insist that any laws that contradicted the rights guaranteed by that

¹¹ "Coxe at Washington: His Weary Walkers Encamped in the Suburbs,"

Frederick Examiner (Frederick, MD), May 2, 1894.

document should be deemed void. Coxey then alluded to the Commonwealers' rights to due process, arguing that if the Army needed to enforce its constitutional rights, it would do so by appealing to the courts or else stay in Washington all summer. Finally, by suggesting that the remedy for the infringement of the Commonwealers' constitutional rights was either to grant those rights or let revolution ensue, Coxey associated the constitutionality argument with the rhetoric of revolution which, as I discuss later in this section, marked a transformation of the revolution theme. In all, each of Coxey's rejoinders in his exchange with the *Frederick Examiner* substituted the Constitution for the Army's more abstract theory of democracy.

After authorities made good on their promise to arrest the Army leaders for failing to abide by local ordinances, Carl Browne adapted Coxey's constitutionality rhetoric to deem the authorities as the ones whose actions lacked justification. Speaking to his decision to knowingly break the law, Browne declared, "I am certain that the [keep off the grass] law is unconstitutional and I wanted to test it."¹² Weeks later, after being deemed guilty and sentenced to jail, Browne revisited this framing by arguing in one of his daily orders that Congress' "obnoxious cobweb 'law' [...] virtually sets aside the Constitution of the United States."¹³ These indictments of the laws used to prevent the demonstration and justify the arrests of the Army leaders both served to expand on

¹² "Coxey Like a Leech: Persists in His Purpose to Stick to Washington," *Uniontown News Standard* (Uniontown, PA), May 3, 1894.

¹³ "Wealers Will Celebrate: On Decoration Day They Will Honor the Peace Monument," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 17, 1894.

the supremacy of the Constitution. In the first instance, Browne declared quite explicitly that the “keep of the grass” law was unconstitutional. And, by choosing to “test” that law, Browne implied that the law should be rendered null and void. In the second instance, Browne’s declaration that the “obnoxious cobweb ‘law’ [...] set aside the Constitution” worked to delegitimize the local ordinances used to silence the Army’s protest. Because the Constitution superseded all other laws, then any effort to impede upon the people’s rights should be deemed unconstitutional and unlawful.

Having transformed its theory of democracy into a concrete reason why their expanded protest was justified, Army rhetoric could reasonably frame the arrests of its leaders and the silencing of its protest as injustices. Browne’s rhetoric most often tended to frame the situation in this way. Reflecting on what happened on May 1, for example, he remarked that, “Free speech has been suppressed, and policeman’s clubs have taken the scales of justice.”¹⁴ Later in those same remarks, Browne insisted, “the scales of justice will again be equally poised” once the Commonwealth achieved victory.¹⁵ Both of these statements evoked the scales metaphor to situate the stripping of the protestors’ rights as an injustice demanding response. On the first occasion, it was the First Amendment right to free speech that demanded redress, as the scales of justice had been replaced by “policemen’s clubs.” On the second occasion, Browne was less explicit

¹⁴ “Browne’s Manifesto: He Issues One Immediately After Being Released on Bond,” *Columbus Daily News* (Columbus, IN), May 3, 1894.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

about which constitutional right had been abridged, but noted that the scales of justice would only be rebalanced if the Commonweal were permitted to engage in their protest.

Whereas both of these instances identified the stripping of the Commonwealers' rights as an injustice, Browne's rhetoric elsewhere made comparisons to other situations that he framed as wrongdoings, seemingly in an effort to magnify the injustice committed against the Army vis-à-vis the silencing of their protest. In his daily orders on May 17, for example, he likened the Commonweal cause to the French Revolution, saying, "As Madame Roland exclaimed when going to the block: 'Oh, Liberty! What crimes are committed in thy name,' so might we exclaim, 'Oh, Justice!'"¹⁶ Elsewhere, Browne drew a comparison to the injustice of the D.C. statehood issue. In announcing that the Army's new camp would be named after Emily Briggs and E.C. Haines, two Washingtonian women who took care of him and Coxey upon their release from police custody, Browne remarked that the name was "in honor of that class of our citizens who are taxed without representation in legislation contrary to the Constitution of the United States."¹⁷ Browne's argument implied that because Briggs and Haines "came forward when man was lacking and when liberty lay manacled" to stand up against the injustice committed against the Army, the Army was obliged to stand up and fight against the

¹⁶ "Wealers Will Celebrate," 1.

¹⁷ More than 120 years later, residents of the District of Columbia continue to pay taxes but lack representation in Congress, a point which has fueled debates over whether the District should be permitted to pursue statehood. Browne identified this, too, as an injustice.

injustice committed against these two women who lacked representation despite paying their taxes.¹⁸

The first of these comparisons—Browne’s allusion to Madame Roland—constituted the silencing of the Army’s protest by likening it to the ultimate injustice committed against the famed French revolutionary. Just as Madame Roland’s appointment with the guillotine for helping to incite revolution was a grave injustice, so too was the silencing of a protest staged by a peaceful, democratic people. In this way, Browne’s framing of the situation as an injustice also built upon the rhetoric of revolution I analyzed in the previous chapter. Then, in the second of these passages, Browne’s comparison between Briggs’ and Hanes’ “taxation without representation” and the silencing of the Army’s protest constituted the situation in terms of a social contract violated. For Briggs and Hanes, their lack of representation in Congress as residents of the District of Columbia signaled that the government’s failure to fulfill its obligation to represent all taxpayers was an injustice. In comparison, so too was the government’s failure to uphold the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to citizens who uphold their socially contracted obligations.

The strategic value of framing the silencing of the Army’s protest as a grave injustice was that it facilitated a rhetoric of moral imperative, motivating commitment

¹⁸ “Coxey Must Answer Also,” 1. Ironically, Browne took issue with the fact that as D.C. residents, Briggs and Haines lacked representation in Congress, but seemed unconcerned with the fact that as women in 1894, they would have lacked representation regardless of where they lived.

to the expanded cause as a fight against obstructions of liberty. Because appeals to moral imperatives had already proven to resonate with members of the petition in boots, their motivation could be enhanced if they saw their now-expanded cause as a moral imperative to protect liberty. Furthermore, this rhetoric had the potential to resonate because as Smith and Windes remind us, efforts for social change mobilize advocates by combining moral and pragmatic reasons for activism. With the cause portrayed as a moral imperative, this rhetoric offered a pragmatic appeal as well: remaining committed to the Army would be the effective method of fighting against obstructions of liberty. In other words, the rhetoric of moral imperative had the potential to resonate both because it was familiar, but also because it presented a pragmatic action in response to a moral dilemma.

The Army's visual representations of liberty further enhanced this motivation. During the May 1 demonstration, for example, the Army's "Goddess of Liberty"—a woman who marched with the Army to the Capitol Building dressed as the statue atop the Capitol dome—stood at Coxey and Browne's sides as they were arrested, symbolizing that the arrests of the leaders amounted to the obstruction of the people's liberties.¹⁹ To punctuate the visual representation of liberty, Browne insisted that May 1 would mark "the birth of a new and fuller and freer liberty for the now down-trodden masses of the American common people."²⁰ A month later while Coxey and Browne

¹⁹ "Carl Browne to His Men," 1.

²⁰ "Coxey's March Ends," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), May 1, 1894.

were in jail, the Commonwealers marched to the Capitol for a demonstration on Decoration Day, an early precursor to Memorial Day that honored the lives of our fallen armed forces. In that parade, a Goddess of Liberty marched immediately to the left of interim chief marshal Jesse Coxe, as if to symbolize that they were mourning the death of liberty.²¹

Each of these visual and verbal representations of liberty helped to enhance motivation by constituting the Army's fight against the obstruction of liberty as a moral imperative. For marchers whose enthusiasm for the protest might have waned in light of the arrests of Coxe and Browne, this rhetoric invited them to uphold that moral imperative. By bringing the "Goddess of Liberty" to life on May 1—and then by constituting her death on May 30—marchers had a metaphor that helped them see their efforts as an attempt to avenge the death of the people's liberties. And, despite the death of those liberties, all hope was not lost; that the Army was on the precipice of birthing a new "fuller and freer liberty" gave the Commonwealers hope that their efforts would resurrect the people's dying liberties.

To be sure, the moral tint to these motivational appeals did not come at the exclusion of a more pragmatic argument which also enhanced motivation: that the success of the protest was still within reach. Because the Army transformed its theory of democracy, success could still be portrayed within the realm of possibility, although it would require a different pathway. To advance this argument, Army rhetoric maintained

²¹ "Coxeyites Will Celebrate: Programme of Exercises for the Day as Prepared by Marshal Browne," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), May 30, 1894.

that because the Constitution guaranteed particular rights to the citizenry, those rights would ultimately be upheld if the petition in boots insisted on it. For example, Browne argued after his arrest, “We shall insist for the right to free speech in [sic] the grounds of the Capitol and on its very steps, and we shall fight this matter until victory perches on our banners and we have swept this iniquitous statute from the books.”²² Given that the transformation of the theory of democracy positioned “the right to free speech” as a codified guarantee, Browne harkened back to the rhetoric of constitutionality to show that the Army’s protest could not legitimately be abridged. Then, by proclaiming that the protest would continue fighting until “victory perches on our banners,” Browne signaled to his listeners that although they may have to advocate for their rights, their freedom of speech would inevitably prevail.

Considered together, the rhetoric highlighted in the preceding pages illustrates the first of three transformations that enabled the Army to complete its expansion of purpose and motivate marchers’ commitment to its new cause. By substituting the specific rights enumerated by the U.S. Constitution for the more abstract theory of democracy which maintained earlier that Congress would act when presented with the will of its constituents, Army rhetors could frame the silencing of the protest as a grave injustice. For the marchers who needed reasons to stay the course despite signs that victory might not be imminent, they could see a moral imperative to fight against injustice, as well as the pragmatic argument for why victory could still be achieved. The

²² “Miserable Men: Coxey’s Followers Herded Like Cattle at the New Camp,” *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), May 2, 1894.

strengths of this rhetoric thus help to explain how, in light of its existential crisis, the petition in boots carried on, rather than succumbing to entropy.

Transforming Classism: Constituting the Money Powers as a Corrupt Economic Force

In Chapter Two, I argued that one of the ways Coxey motivated participation in the Army was by evoking classism to create rhetorical distance between his eventual supporters and the lower classes of society who would be prohibited from joining the Army. Coxey's classist rhetoric during the inception stage constituted his marchers as middle class and established the moral virtuousness of that class. This rhetoric enhanced would-be marchers' motivation because contrary to the narrative of lazy and unemployable tramps, this classist discourse invited future Commonwealers to see their decision to march as an opportunity to assert that they represented the American middle class: good, honest people who would work hard if given the chance. However, when the Army's protest was effectively silenced on May 1, those who marched on Washington could see that no matter how hard they worked to bring their protest to fruition, those who observed the Commonwealth's journey would not necessarily see these downtrodden marchers as hard-working, virtuous people.

To address this challenge, Coxey and Browne completed the transformation of the classist rhetoric initiated in "Coxey at the Capitol" but which carried with the Army since the inception stage. In the earliest days of the protest, classist rhetoric differentiated the middle-class marchers from the lower classes to accentuate the moral virtue of eventual members of the Army, but starting with "Coxey at the Capitol," classist rhetoric shifted focus to denigrate the elite classes, who were framed as the

economic oppressors of the common people. This anti-elite rhetoric was powerful because it constituted the upper class as the enemy, which in turn gave the marchers a target at which they could direct their feelings of frustration. This transformation of classist rhetoric—from anti-poor to anti-wealthy—had the potential to enhance the marchers’ motivation to stay the course because the protest, no longer couched narrowly as an effort to advance job-creation policies, could be seen more broadly as an effort to defeat economic oppression.

To achieve this transformation, Army rhetors constituted what they called the “money powers” as the enemy that needed to be defeated. Often, Coxey and Browne were vague in their depictions of whom or what they were referring to when they talked about the money powers, and most of the time, their strategy for denigrating the money powers relied on identifying some more specific problem in the status quo and associating it with the money powers to denounce the corrupting influence of wealth. The utility of this strategy was that it enabled Army rhetoric to identify a rhetorically flexible enemy—any person or thing could be cast as part of the system that silenced the Army’s protest, as long as it could be tied back to the so-called money powers.

On several occasions, Army rhetoric referred to the money powers explicitly, and in these instances, corruption was situated as a defining feature of these powers. For example, responding to reports of Commonwealers who abandoned the cause in early June while he and Coxey served their jail sentences, Browne argued that the defectors were not bad people, but rather were simply “misguided brothers drawn away from us

by [what was, to them] invisible strings of the money power.”²³ He later went on to clarify how the money powers were working against the protest. “Exigencies may occur that will sweep you away from this beautiful camp [...] and circumstances may arise, by the money power so showering aid upon your brothers,” Browne argued, suggesting that Commonwealers were being bribed with “substantials” to abandon the cause.²⁴

Both of these passages framed the money powers as inherently corrupt by situating them as part of a conspiracy designed to lure the marchers away to neutralize the Army’s protest. The “invisible strings of the money power,” for example, was a metaphor that likened those drawn away from the Army to puppets. The conclusion we are to draw, then, is that the Commonwealers who abandoned the protest did so not on their own volition, but rather were being controlled by a master puppeteer. Furthermore, that the money powers were “showering aid upon” the Commonwealers implied that anyone who abandoned the protest did so because they were bribed, and not because they had made a coherent decision that doing so was in their own best interests. Thus, Browne’s rhetoric constituted the money powers as invisible forces that were bribing people and preventing them from acting on their own accord.

Highlighting how the money powers were corrupting the Commonwealers who were being lured away from the Army had another benefit: it framed events that might have otherwise displaced the marchers’ trust in their leaders as the result of the

²³ “No Habeas Corpus Issued: Coxey, Browne and Jones Will Have to Pass Another Sunday in Jail,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Jun. 3, 1894.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

corrupting influence of the money powers. For example, Browne referred to the D.C. jail on one occasion as the “bastile of the money power” to associate those who prosecuted the Army leaders with the corrupt forces keeping the protest at bay.²⁵ This move suggested that the arrests of Coxey and Browne were not a function of their personal deficiencies or their lack of trustworthiness, but rather of local authorities being corrupted by the money power. Similarly, Browne evoked the “invisible strings” notion on a separate occasion to indict the media for being corrupted by the money powers.²⁶ The media was part of “a plot,” Browne argued, which laid the foundation “for the *subsidized* press to scatter broadcast over the land [...] that there is a split in the commonweal [sic] where none exist.”²⁷ Here, Browne argued that there was no reason to believe allegations that support for the movement was waning; it was simply the corrupt media at the control of a conniving puppet master spinning lies to break the protest apart. Considered together, Browne in both of these instances replaced the so-called money powers with its surrogates—the local authorities and the press—to illustrate how the Army leaders could still be trusted. By calling the once-invisible corrupting influence of the money powers out into the open, this rhetoric strengthened opposition to the enemy while also restoring the Commonwealers’ faith in their leaders.

²⁵ “Will Be Released To-day,” *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Jun. 10, 1894.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*; emphasis mine.

Implicit in the argument that the money powers were a corrupting force was the claim that money itself was also corrupting, and much of the Army's rhetoric advanced this notion by denouncing money itself. One strategy for denouncing money as a corrupting force was to expand upon the anti-wealth rhetoric of "Coxey at the Capitol." For example, after being released by the police following his arrest, Browne issued what newspapers referred to as his "manifesto":

Brothers, we have enlisted upon the beginning of the end. The wounds of liberty will be healed and the scales of justice will again be poised as in the days of our illustrious sires, for we have come here to stay until there is a greater gathering here of men than confronted Lee on the banks of the Potomac years ago. And then the real traitors, the Rothschilds, who used the men of the south to bring on that war to the profit of King Gold, will be overturned like Belshazar [sic] of old, and then every producer will get the products of labor, for the passage of Brother Coxey's good roads bill would be the entering wage to such a condition.²⁸

In Chapter Four, I argued that the anti-wealth rhetoric in Coxey's speech initiated a transformation in the classist rhetoric that earlier constituted the moral virtuousness of the marchers by drawing comparisons between the so-called lower classes. Building on that theme, this passage further transformed the rhetoric of classism by indicting the excessive accumulation of wealth, which made another key comparison, this time between the middle classes and the wealthy elites. By evoking the Rothschilds—a famous family often indicted by conspiracy theories for having amassed the largest private fortune in modern history—Browne insisted that "the real traitors" were the uber-wealthy. The problems of the day could thus be attributed directly to those uber-wealthy forces. In turn, this rhetoric enhanced the Commonwealers' motivation by

²⁸ "Browne's Manifesto," 1.

identifying a series of problems in the status quo and laying blame for those problems at the feet of the Rothschilds, the symbolic representation of the wealthiest class of citizens.

Another point is worth making about this particular passage, which is the way that it constituted gold as a byproduct of the so-called money powers, but to be clear, this passage was one of several in which Browne indicted gold. As another example, Browne told the marchers they would be relocating to the George Washington House Hotel, and on that occasion, he described their new campsite as “once the headquarters of the man in whose honor it was named when he was fighting the British, as the Commonweal is now fighting the English gold ring.”²⁹ Notable about these references to “King Gold” and the “gold ring” is how they both located gold as a corrupt byproduct of the money powers. In the first passage, blaming the uber-wealthy for sending the country to war “to the profit of King Gold” implied that the people were being manipulated because of the influence of gold. In the second passage, Browne both implied that the Commonweal’s cause was similar to that of George Washington when he fought the British, but he also asserted quite explicitly that “the Commonweal is now fighting the English gold ring.”

As I see it, there are at least two reasons why this anti-gold rhetoric had the potential to motivate members of the petition in boots to stay the course. The first is that it built on the revolutionary rhetoric of “Coxey at the Capitol” to inflate the magnitude of the cause. If Coxey’s speech situated the Army’s protest as the undone work of their

²⁹ “Coxey’s Army Moves Again,” 1.

fathers' Civil War, and their forefathers' American Revolution, then continuing to press forth in light of the silencing of their protest meant committing to carry the undone work of earlier generations forward. The second reason this rhetoric had the potential to motivate commitment to the Army's cause was because it harnessed an issue that motivated the populists. In Chapter Three, I highlighted the currency issue as highly salient among populists because of agrarians' general disdain for gold. As the Gold Standard inhibited farmers' ability to repay their debts to the bankers who made loans for the purchase of modernized farm equipment, Americans in the heartland found themselves in financial shackles, which they attributed to the currency system's reliance on gold. Therefore, situating gold as a byproduct of the corrupt money powers had the potential to rally support for the Army's cause among populists, who may not have otherwise identified with their issues. Given the number of populists who considered gold to be a highly salient issue, weaving disdain for gold into the Army's broader narrative about money and corruption had the potential to expand the tent of supporters who would stand up for the Army's cause, which could in turn motivate Commonwealers to renew their commitment to the cause because increased support meant a higher potential for success.

Taken together, the anti-gold, anti-wealth and anti-corruption themes I have explored here comprised a rhetoric of classism in which the money powers, inherently corrupt, characterized the wealthiest class of citizens. These characterizations reveal a transformation in the classist rhetoric common during the Army's inception stage. In that stage, Army rhetors developed a rhetorical strategy to strenuously parse class, using it to separate would-be members of the petition in boots from the lower classes. They

used labels like “thieves,” “anarchists” and “criminals” to differentiate between the middle and lower classes. At the same time, Army rhetors referred to the lower classes as people who expected to find “immunity from their personal responsibility” to separate those who would be welcomed into the Army from those who would be prohibited from joining. The impact of this rhetoric was that the marchers and their observers could see those who marched as common, hard-working people seeking to get ahead. But this classist rhetoric took on a new form once the arrests of Coxey and Browne signaled the need to rally supporters in opposition to a new enemy. By constituting the so-called money powers as that enemy, Army rhetoric posited a fundamental theory about wealth and the wealthy, thus rhetorically separating the middle-class marchers from those above them in the class hierarchy. The middle class was therefore distinguished not only from the lower classes, but also from the upper classes.

As a result, those who came to Washington could see reasons why their activism was essential: even if the job-creation measures that initially inspired them to action were no longer likely to pass, fighting against the corrupting power of wealth meant representing their class. Therefore, in a sense, the transformation of classist rhetoric also marked a transformation in the rhetoric of representation. Whereas that rhetoric in earlier stages reminded the marchers that they could not give up because millions of other downtrodden Americans were relying on them to be their voice in Washington, the rhetoric of representation here expanded on Coxey’s claim in his speech that the middle class was engaged in nothing short of a struggle for existence. To ensure that the

middle class prevailed, those who came to Washington needed to protect their class by renewing their commitment to the Army in the context of its now-expanded purpose.

Toward a Greater Social Good: Transforming Transcendent Rhetoric to Enhance Commitment to the Cause

In the two previous chapters, I argued that Army rhetors motivated activism toward their cause by crafting a transcendent rhetoric. I defined that transcendent rhetoric as “rising above”—rising above the individual marchers to emphasize the Army as a collective, rising above the sometimes fractured audiences to disseminate a unified set of messages, and rising above the Army’s own protest to situate their efforts as contributing to the greater social good. Following Coxey and Browne’s arrests, each of the Army’s transcendent appeals still exhibited potential to strengthen advocates’ motivation. However, the expansion of the Commonwealth’s broader purpose to include and emphasize the assertion of the people’s right to petition at the seat of their government meant that its rhetoric needed to rise above once more, this time transcending the original purpose of justifying the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills to provide reasons why the exercise of the right to petition was critical.

In this subsection, I argue that Coxey’s Army expanded on and transformed its transcendent rhetoric once again, this time to increase the likelihood that those who marched on Washington would stay there to continue fighting on behalf of their reinvigorated purpose. There was a range of ways in which the Army transformed its transcendent rhetoric, but perhaps the clearest demonstration of this transformation can be seen in its rhetoric of sacrifice. In earlier chapters, I analyzed how the Army

contextualized the ratio between sacrifice and payoff, noting how it tended to enhance the significance of the marchers' sacrifices as a way of enhancing the magnitude of the cause. Although that was sometimes the approach taken in the Army's final stage, its rhetoric of sacrifice often took on another form—it enhanced the leaders' sacrifices. This had the power to motivate because it showed members of the petition in boots that whatever sacrifice they would make was a small price compared to what their leaders would pay to preserve Americans' civil liberties. Thus, for members of the Army, their own sacrifices seemed diminished. With the rhetoric of sacrifice transformed in this way, Army rhetors could then adapt some of their other transcendent appeals—such as their appeals to religion—to the Commonweal's newly evolved purpose.

To transform the rhetoric of sacrifice, Army leaders emphasized the great lengths to which they would go to ensure the success of the protest, a strategy which we saw emerge in “Coxey at the Capitol.” Building on that speech, Colonel Redstone, who became a more vocal rhetor for the Army once Coxey and Browne were removed from the scene, asserted that “Coxey will spend the rest of his days in confinement before he will pay a fine for exercising his privileges as an American citizen.”³⁰ Browne made a similar remark following his own arrest, saying, “This is not the first time I have been in jail. I have been making these fights for the people all my life.”³¹ Immediately, we can

³⁰ “To-day's Telegraphic News: Coxey and His Men,” *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), May 15, 1894.

³¹ “Coxey Suppressed: His Speech on the Capitol Steps Nipped in the Bud,” *Shenandoah Evening Herald* (Shenandoah, PA), May 2, 1894.

see the expanded purpose—how Redstone’s statement was oriented toward the people’s ability to exercise their “privileges as an American citizen,” rather than toward the Army’s legislation as earlier rhetoric often was. But a closer look reveals that beyond a mere reorientation of purpose, Browne and Redstone’s rhetoric transformed the sacrifice-payoff ratio. By indicating Coxey and Browne’s willingness to spend the rest of their lives in jail if it meant winning their fight for the people’s right to exercise their democratic privileges, these passages amplified the magnitude of the cause. In turn, marchers could see that if it was worth having, it was worth fighting for. Moreover, enhancing the significance of the leaders’ sacrifices implied that by comparison, the sacrifices of the rank and file would be tolerable. As such, this rhetoric had the potential to motivate because a marcher could see that if Coxey and Browne could sacrifice so much, staying in Washington was a small price to pay given all that was at stake.

Whereas the rhetoric above attended to the sacrifice side of the ratio, Army rhetoric also transformed the ratio by attending to the payoff side. To be sure, Coxey and Browne argued all along that the marchers’ advocacy efforts would be rewarded with the benefits they would reap once the protest was successful. However, success no longer seemed inevitable once the protest was silenced on May 1, meaning the Army’s leaders needed to find ways of making it seem as though a clear pathway to victory still remained. Browne did this in the daily orders he offered following his release from jail on May 1: “I don’t blame you, boys, for feeling hot, but as Shakespeare says, ‘All’s well that ends well,’ and the great army of the Commonweal is still before the eyes of

the nation.”³² As had been the case throughout the Army’s lifespan, this rhetoric promised the eventual success of the protest. But in this new context, the key levers for the protest’s success took on a new form. Whereas the initial theory of democracy insisted that drawing the eyes of members of Congress would lead to victory, this rhetoric argued that success remained within reach because “the great army of the Commonwealth is still before the eyes of the nation.” In other words, this rhetoric marked an adaptation of the transformed theory of democracy I described earlier in this chapter because it positioned the public’s attention—not Congress’ willingness to act—as the linchpin for ensuring that the Commonwealth’s sacrifices would be rewarded with victory.

This appeal marked yet another way in which the Army’s transcendent rhetoric took on a new form. Whereas the rhetoric of representation in earlier stages motivated commitment by showing how many downtrodden people were relying on the marchers, the rhetoric in this stage showed how many related protests were being inspired by the petition in boots. For example, following his release from jail on the day of his arrest, Coxey insisted that the failure of the Army’s demonstration would herald a broader groundswell of support: it was simply “the beginning of the movement. That is all. The people are with us—the common people.”³³ Along similar lines, Browne remarked, “This country is like a big bunch of straw, and all that is necessary to start it into a

³² “General Coxey Arrested: Locked Up for Attempting to Speak on the Capitol Steps,” *Uniontown News Standard* (Uniontown, PA), May 1, 1894.

³³ “Coxey in Washington,” *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), May 2, 1894.

roaring flame is the torch.”³⁴ These passages signaled that the Army was on the precipice of a movement that would spread like wildfire. Then, the next day, Browne reinforced this message, saying the Army would “inspire the formation of new armies, and thousands of men will be following it in the course of the month.”³⁵ This passage framed the marchers’ sacrifices as essential to inspiring new armies to form, which would in turn ensure the success of the cause. Taken together, all three of these passages motivated commitment by showing the marchers that a pathway to victory still remained, but only if they stayed in Washington. Whereas the failure of the May 1 *demonstration* may have suggested that the end of the protest was imminent, Coxey and Browne’s insistence that the Commonweal was on the brink of a movement that would spread like wildfire reassured supporters that the failure of the demonstration did not spell the failure of the broader movement.

The Army leaders’ propensity to shift the focus of their audiences was further illustrated by their rhetoric which built on the key themes of “Coxey at the Capitol,” such as the speech’s framing of the protest not as an effort to create jobs, but rather as an effort to assert the march as an act of petitioning. A couple days after the Army leaders’ arrests, for instance, Coxey issued a statement to the press: “We are simply here to show Congress the result of the legislation of the past twenty-five years and to demand that our wrongs be redressed. Washington is a charming city, and if the

³⁴ “Coxey Has the Blues,” *Frederick Citizen* (Frederick, MD), May 11, 1894.

³⁵ “Coxey is to Strike Tents,” *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), May 12, 1894.

laboring men of this country must starve, they might as well starve here.”³⁶ On this occasion, Coxey’s decision to cast the protest as an effort “to demand that our wrongs be redressed” shifted his audience’s focus away from the job-creation measures that initially defined the Army’s rhetoric and directed it toward righting the wrongs committed against the American people. Not only did this move help to complete the transformation of the Army’s purpose initiated in “Coxey at the Capitol,” but it also harkened back to Coxey’s claim in that speech that the Commonwealers would do whatever necessary—even making the ultimate sacrifice—to ensure that the wrongs of the past twenty-five years were redressed. In this way, Coxey built on the motivational power of earlier appeals that amplified the magnitude of the cause, but did so in a way that spoke to the people’s rights as citizens in a democracy, rather than attending more narrowly to the economic woes that originally commanded the Commonwealers’ attention.

In all, each of the transcendent appeals I have analyzed in this subsection show one of the ways the Army adapted to its new rhetorical environment. The crisis brought about by the arrests of the Army leaders demanded that the marchers still see a pathway to victory, even if that victory was not achieved under the dome of the Capitol. In response, the Army transformed its rhetoric of sacrifice by contextualizing the significance of the Commonwealers’ sacrifices in comparison to those of their leaders, by arguing that those sacrifices were worthwhile given the gravity of the situation, and by inviting the marchers to see before them an opportunity to grow a movement for

³⁶ “Miserable Men,” 1-2.

sweeping social reforms. All of these rhetorical transformations had the power to motivate because the marchers, needing reasons to preserve or restore their trust in their leaders, could see heeding Coxe and Browne's calls to action as significant but worthwhile sacrifices that would bring about a better economic world.

Considered as part of the broader tapestry of discourse that defined its third and final stage, the Army's transcendent rhetoric worked alongside its classist and democratic rhetorics to complete the transformation of the Army's purpose and strengthen the motivation of those who marched to Washington to remain committed to the protest. The significance of this accomplishment demands to be underscored given the existential crisis the Army faced upon the arrests of its leaders. Because those arrests left marchers (1) questioning whether victory was still possible and (2) unable to put their full faith in their leaders, the petition in boots found itself at a turning point: it could succumb to entropy and fade into dissolution, or it could find a renewed purpose and motivate supporters to advocate on behalf of that purpose. The fact that the Army stayed in Washington for several weeks—banding together in opposition to a common set of enemies despite the physical absence of Coxe and Browne—suggests that its efforts to adapt to this abruptly transformed rhetorical environment were successful. At its core, this achievement was made possible because of the Army's propensity for identifying and transforming the themes and tropes that had exhibited motivational power and adapting them in the context of their new purpose. Because this interpretation of the Army's success stands in stark contrast to the assessments of several other scholars who have either ignored or downplayed the significance of the Army's achievements, the final concluding section of this chapter focuses on the

disparity between my assessment of the Army's rhetorical accomplishments and those of other scholars who have been less positive in their treatments of the petition in boots.

Degrees of Success and Failure: Complicating Traditional Assessments of Coxey's Army

By way of conclusion, this section answers one particular question: how do we make sense of the Army's efforts in its final stage? The answer is more complicated than the question. If we read Coxey's Army exclusively in the context of how it defined its ultimate goal when Coxey announced his plans to assemble a march on Washington in January, then indeed it was a failure. However, even that assessment overlooks a great deal of the Army's achievements that I highlighted in previous chapters. Against all odds, hundreds and eventually thousands of downtrodden jobless workers were motivated to give up their search for work to march to Washington to stage an unprecedented protest. More importantly, were we to accept that metric for success in the context of the Army's final stage, our assessment would be even less complete than if we thought only of the Army's short-term victories. As I argued in this chapter, from the moment of the leaders' arrests onward, getting Congress to pass the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills was not the Army's only purpose, nor was it the purpose that Army rhetoric emphasized. Rather, starting with "Coxey at the Capitol" and continuing over the days that followed, the Army's purpose transformed to emphasize their declaration in boots—that petitioning at the seat of democracy is a key thread in the fabric of the American experience. Thus, to make sense of the Army's efforts in its final stage, we must set aside questions about legislative action and instead

ask how the Army's rhetoric justified a practice that has since become common in our national capital.

Whether Army rhetors knew it or not, so many of their strategies for adapting to their constantly evolving rhetorical environment became arguments justifying the right to directly petition the national legislature. For example, I cannot talk about the Army's articulation of its theory of democracy without acknowledging that they may have only theorized about democracy unintentionally. However, by using the Constitution to cast their style of protest as a form of petitioning, the Commonwealers did not just respond to charges that they were disobeying the law; they penned a justification for seeing marching on Washington as a form of petitioning. Most would deem these perspectives legitimate still today. Similarly, when Jacob Coxey first awoke from his dream about the need for good roads, he probably did not intend to be the architect for an ideological viewpoint and rhetorical style that historians would ultimately name after him. And yet, as I discuss in the next chapter, the rhetoric of Coxeyism was a clear response to the tension between the middle class and the rest of society that is as significant in public discourse today as it has ever been.

Especially notable about these achievements is that even though members of Congress may not have deemed them legitimate, thousands and perhaps millions of other Americans did. Alongside the Army's need to craft theoretical justifications for their protest was an important practical reality: in order to keep the protest alive, the Army needed to convince those who marched to Washington to continually reaffirm their support while simultaneously garnering the commitments of sympathizers who might bolster the effort. A number of signs I have pointed to in this chapter suggest that

Army rhetors were remarkably adept at managing the ways in which this need complicated the overall mission. Their transformations in transcendent and economic rhetoric induced among supporters the feeling that they were contributing to a cause greater than themselves. In effect, the protest carried on for several weeks following the arrests of the Army's leaders, rather than fizzling out after the failure of their May 1 demonstration gave rise to an existential crisis. Of course, let's not forget that all of this was accomplished while the Army's leaders were either in and out of court focusing on their legal battles, or locked up within the confines of a D.C. jail.

Indeed, the effort eventually dissipated and those who marched finally succumbed to entropy, but not without leaving an indelible mark on the history of petitioning in America. Where it failed legislatively, Coxey's Army contributed to a precedent about the style and substance of Americans' efforts to seek redress for their grievances from their elected officials. Given this achievement, my last remaining task is to return to my original claims about the significance of Coxey's Army and to probe what these claims tell us about Coxeyism and the historical moment in which it came to fruition.

CHAPTER SIX

Economic Policy Justifications, Styles of Petitioning and the Rhetoric of Coxeyism: Assessing the Contributions of Coxey's Army to American Political Traditions

It is quite possible to manage [the coming of Coxey's Army] gently and firmly, and have it pass away, and it is quite possible to so manage it that it may become a habit to make pilgrimages annually to Congress, and endeavor to dominate Congress by the physical presence of the people.

—*Senator Joseph Hawley of Connecticut, April 20, 1894*¹

Although I explained that Jacob Coxey's May 1 arrest prevented him from delivering his capstone oration, it would be misleading to say that he never got to speak from the steps of the U.S. Capitol. In fact, he spoke from that spot twice—once twenty years after his famed arrest and again thirty years later. In 1914, Coxey led another band of marchers from Ohio to Washington to fight for legislation that would alleviate the nation's then-reemerging unemployment problem.² Then, in 1944, even though unemployment rates at that time were near historic lows, Coxey returned to Washington once more, this time without a band of marchers in tow.³ On both occasions, Coxey delivered the speech he fed to the media back in 1894, finally getting the chance to

¹ Manny Fernandez, "A Protest March or an Invasion?" *New York Times* (New York, NY), Oct. 2, 2010.

² An estimated twelve percent of the non-farm-employee workforce was unemployed in 1914. See *The Measurement and Behavior of Unemployment* (Washington, DC: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1957), 215.

³ *Ibid.*, 216.

speak the words he wrote from the stage he envisioned himself occupying when the idea to lead a band of jobless workers to the nation's capital first came to him in his dream.

Despite the fact that the speech Coxey delivered in 1944 was the same that Americans had read in the newspapers fifty years prior, the context by then was dramatically different. In 1944, there was no question that the Capitol was the property of the people. With the commissioning of the National Mall—now widely considered America's front lawn—protests at and around the Capitol Building had become commonplace, as had marches on Washington from points far and away. Also commonplace by 1944 were interventions into economic policymaking justified on the basis that the federal government had an obligation to ensure the “full employment” of the American people. As a result, the speech Coxey delivered in 1944 likely seemed mundane, despite how radical it would have seemed if he had gotten the chance to read it in front of the Capitol fifty years earlier as he initially planned.

This dissertation has argued that the evolutions that took place between 1894 and 1944 were not accidental, but rather were made possible in part because Coxey's Army crafted rhetoric that gave voice to new ideas about our political traditions. By framing joblessness as a function of a political economy in peril, Coxey's Army contributed to our nation's ability to accept the idea that the government should take proactive measures to ensure the full employment of the people, a notion which ultimately transformed into the law of the land by 1946. Furthermore, by establishing marching on Washington as an exercise of the right to petition, Coxey's Army contributed to yet another in a series of evolutions in the way we as citizens in a democracy approach our elected officials to seek redress for our grievances. As I have

argued throughout this dissertation, these contributions can be attributed to the rhetorical acumen of Coxeys himself, but also to the Coxeyist rhetoric that motivated those heroic Commonwealers to march their way into history books.

To chronicle and celebrate these accomplishments, this concluding chapter is comprised of three main sections. The first argues that Coxeys deserves to be celebrated as a rhetorical leader. Then, in the second main section, I argue that this leadership contributed significantly to rhetoric that made key ideas about petitioning and about economics palatable to the public. To be sure, these evolutions cannot be attributed to Coxeys alone, and instead, a diverse range of activists gave voice to what I describe as the rhetoric of Coxeyism. Therefore, in the third and final main section, I define what I see to be the markers of Coxeyism. These three analyses enable me to make some parting observations at the end of this chapter about what this dissertation has contributed to our understanding of the Army's remarkable rhetorical moment.

Celebrating Jacob Coxeys's Rhetorical Leadership

Although this dissertation has been much more than a leader-centered study of social change, it is undeniable that Coxeys himself left an indelible mark on the protest he led and the historical moment in which it came to fruition. Throughout the preceding chapters, I have mentioned some of the reasons why I believe Coxeys's rhetorical acumen deserves admiration, but it is worth again calling attention to the accomplishments of the Army for what they tell us about Coxeys's rhetorical leadership. From my perspective, there are two key reasons revealed by the findings of this study why Coxeys's rhetoric deserves admiration.

I first celebrate Coxey's rhetorical acumen in weaving moral and pragmatic appeals into a unified, motivating rhetoric. Rhetorical scholars Ralph Smith and Russell Windes argued in their treatise on mobilizing social movements that moral and pragmatic appeals—those that induce belief in the legitimacy and in the effectiveness of the rhetor's call for action—are woven together in successful movements to convert belief in a cause into action.⁴ During every stage of the petition in boots, Coxey wove the moral and the pragmatic into coherent reasons why the unemployed should join or renew their commitment to the protest.

Drawing on his theory of democracy, Coxey maintained that when citizens approach their government to seek redress for their grievances, the government must respond. There is certainly a morality of democratic government in Coxey's theory; the government was *obligated* to carry out the will of the people. But because this notion was encapsulated in a rhetorical environment in which the people believed in this obligation, there was also a pragmatic tint to Coxey's theory of democracy. Congress *would* act because those assembled at the Capitol would demonstrate that Coxey's policies were the will of the people. Thus, Coxey's theory of democracy also conveyed a pragmatic faith in success to motivate participation in the Army: marching would effectively lead to the passage of Coxey's policies because Congress had an obligation to carry out the people's will.

⁴ Ralph R. Smith and Russell R. Windes, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 42, no. 1 (1976): 18.

Coxey deepened the motivational power of the moral and pragmatic appeals by supplementing his theory of democracy with a quantitative enhancement. In Chapter Three, I examined two types of quantitative appeals that were common within Army rhetoric. The first of these quantified the number of people who would be present in Washington when the Army arrived; the second pointed to the number of people who would benefit from the march. The former appeal sought to enhance the pragmatic justification by establishing the protest's growing momentum. If the Army's efficacy hinged on whether or not enough people showed up in Washington to demonstrate support for Coxey's policies, then claiming that 150,000 people would turn out signaled that the protest would effectively catalyze the passage of Coxey's job-creation policies. The latter appeal enhanced the moral justification by conveying the need to march because four million unemployed workers and twenty million more starving Americans were relying on the Commonwealers. The numbers, even if they were rhetorical hyperbole, intensified the motivation of the marchers.

Finally, in his use of a rhetoric of religion, Coxey wove together elements of the moral and the pragmatic to motivate activism in the name of the Commonwealth's cause. In ways that evolved over time, Army rhetoric insisted that the protest was ordained by God, who called upon Coxey and Browne to lead the "Commonweal of Christ" to advocate on behalf of the downtrodden. For example, in Chapter Two, I argued that references to the start of the march as "the day of salvation"—a moral calling—and claims that "God would provide" when food and supplies were insufficient—a pragmatic promise—contributed to the notion that the protest was ordained from on high. Such claims called upon late-nineteenth-century religious fervor to enhance the

moral justification for marching: heeding Coxey's calls carried out God's will. But at the same time, this rhetoric built the pragmatic case for participating in the Army by alluding to the mantra of the Book of Romans: "If God is for us, who can be against us?"⁵ The attractiveness of evoking this mantra was that it built confidence that the Commonwealth effort would be effective, no matter the tribulations the Army encountered, because God would always ensure that His disciples prevailed in the face of adversity.

Although moral and pragmatic appeals to mobilize activists were by their very nature different from one another, the rhetoric analyzed in this dissertation and highlighted in the preceding pages reveals Coxey's adeptness at weaving these appeals together into a coherent motivational narrative. As a result, Coxey created a rhetorical framework for motivating whichever of his audiences he addressed, hence the first key reason I believe Coxey's rhetorical leadership deserves to be celebrated. Whether he was targeting potential marchers who needed to see the moral legitimacy of what they were being asked to do, or if he was targeting already-committed Commonwealthers whose motivation needed to be sustained in order to overcome the threat of entropy, these three rhetorical choices enhanced his rhetoric's motivational power. As Smith and Windes remind us, the ability to build confidence in the legitimacy and effectiveness of social activism is a key marker of strong rhetorical leadership in movements for social change.

⁵ Romans 8:31.

The second reason I celebrate Coxey's rhetorical acumen is for his ability to transform key themes to adapt to significant material and rhetorical challenges. Indeed, what Coxey set out to do was pretty outlandish given the limitations he faced. Assembling a group of downtrodden workers to give up any hope of finding work for several weeks so they could walk hundreds of miles through harsh weather and over tough terrain—all to stage a protest that lacked any real precedent or evidence that success was inevitable—was a lofty proposition. Layer on top of those challenges a hostile media that ridiculed anyone who joined and a group of unfriendly public officials who often went to great lengths to prevent the success of the protest, and we can understand why Coxey's success would have seemed unlikely, no matter how resourceful he might have been.

But where the material and rhetorical conditions limited the likelihood that his protest would come to fruition, Coxey's adaptability helped the Army overcome the sequence of trying circumstances that threatened to dissolve the effort. Coxey's adaptability is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the speech he fed to the media upon his arrest in front of the Capitol on May 1. I reasoned in Chapter Four that Coxey actually prepared two versions of his speech—one that he would read if given the opportunity, and one that could be dropped on the ground for an entrepreneurial journalist to publish in the evening paper in the event that the Army's protest was thwarted. This decision suggests that Coxey was prepared for two wildly different sets of circumstances: one in which he would affirm the people's support for the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills in front of thousands of boisterous supporters, and the other in which he would be denied the opportunity to do so. In the

latter case, he would lay the foundation for an expansion of the Army's purpose to include the assertion of the people's right to petition at the seat of their government. When he and his co-conspirators were placed under arrest for stepping on the grass in front of the Capitol, Coxey turned on a dime, leaving behind a piece of paper that contained a series of themes the Army could exploit in the days and weeks ahead.

Of course, *that* Coxey adapted to the silencing of the Army's protest is only one side of the coin; *how* he adapted reveals something else remarkable about his rhetorical acumen. As I argued in the previous two chapters, the arrests of the Army's leaders could very well have spelled the end of the petition in boots. Now leaderless and without signs that the success of their protest was inevitable, those who marched on Washington needed to be motivated to stay the course, lest the protest succumb to entropy. Ultimately, Commonweal rhetoric did indeed sustain the commitment of the marchers, but not by simply repurposing the motivational themes that defined earlier stages or by crafting an entirely new set of themes and tropes altogether. Rather, "Coxey at the Capitol" built upon earlier themes that had proven to be powerful motivators, but transformed them to expand the purpose of the protest and garner renewed commitment to the cause. For example, in Chapter Five I argued that Army rhetors transformed the Commonweal's initial theory of democracy—the abstract idea that Congress would enact the will of the people—into the more concrete proposition that Congress would act because the U.S. Constitution guaranteed particular liberties to the American citizenry. This rhetoric of constitutionality was essential given evidence that Congress would not spring to action once presented with popular demand for Coxey's policies. By instilling in the Commonwealers a sense that Congress needed to

be held accountable to their obligation to uphold the people's constitutional liberties, those who initially came to Washington to protest for job-creation measures could instead see the importance of remaining in the nation's capital to advocate on behalf of the people's democratically protected rights.

Coxey's transformation of the Army's theory of democracy to expand the purpose of the protest is just one example among many that reveals not only that he could adapt, but that he could do so masterfully, despite hindrances that seemed likely to stop the Commonweal in its tracks. Time and again, material conditions and rhetorical challenges arose that could have put a quick end to the Army's famed journey. But instead, Coxey adapted, crafting and transforming themes that other rhetors throughout the ranks could draw upon to advance the Army's evolving purposes. That, along with the argument I made earlier in this section about Coxey's propensity for weaving together seemingly disparate themes into a rhetoric that united and motivated potential and committed participants, illustrates the Army leader's rhetorical acumen. Of course, we know that Coxey's rhetorical acumen does not on its own account for the entirety of the Army's future impact. Therefore, I consider that impact in the next section.

The Lasting Impact of Coxey's Army: Bending the Trajectory of Economic Policymaking and Petitioning

In the earliest pages of this dissertation, I argued that an in-depth study of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army was warranted because this rhetoric contributed to precedents about how we justify governmental interventions in the economy and how we engage in social protest. There, I argued that by looking at the history of justifications for

economic policymaking and at the history of petitioning, we can see that the petition in boots contributed to precedents that future rhetors would call upon to justify job-creation measures and marches on Washington. Indeed, the four intervening chapters of this dissertation support these significance arguments. In this section, I posit two arguments about the legacy of the Army's rhetoric. First, by transforming economic frustration and conventional notions about unemployment into reasons why the government should proactively create jobs, Coxey and his Army established an argumentative frame that was transformed over time until "full employment" became the law of the land. Second, by constituting the unprecedented act of marching on Washington as a natural response of the aggrieved unemployed, going directly to the federal government to seek redress for grievances became another innovation in our long and evolving history of petitioning in the United States.

Enacting Policies to Ensure the Full Employment of the American People

In Chapter One, I traced some of the key milestones in economic policymaking in the US, starting with the Hamilton Plan in 1789 and working my way through 1894. In this time, economic advocates enjoyed the presumption that economic policymaking was well-warranted, despite the fact that at the time of our nation's founding, our forefathers were still feeling their way through debates about the federal government's role in cultivating a strong economy. But even in 1894, the types of economic policies and the reasons we accepted for those policies were much different than today. Whereas we now fully expect the government to enact policies that permit as many people as possible to work, Americans in 1894 saw the government's purview in passing

economic policies primarily in relation to the stimulation of economic growth. For these reasons, policies like Henry Clay's American Plan and funding for the Transcontinental Railroad were palatable to the people because they subsidized economic activity that would help improve performance in key markets, such as agriculture. However, justifications for these policies were not premised on the need to help individual workers achieve prosperity.

To be sure, this dissertation has not sought to argue that Americans before Coxe's Army did not believe that the government should work to lower unemployment rates. However, because of philosophical predispositions at the time toward those without work, voicing favor for policies that would help a group of people who were considered lower-class citizens was a risky political proposition. Narratives about those without work being unemployable circulated widely in 1894, and these narratives reflected the predominant attitude that being without work was a function of individual failure, rather than of a political economy in peril.⁶ Thus, if a policy aimed at stimulating economic growth by investing in a particular industry happened to create jobs, then those job-creation measures warranted celebration. But, spending federal dollars to create work for those who were somehow deficient ran counter to Americans' fundamental beliefs about the economy.

⁶ In Chapter Two, I cited an example of an editorial column that attributed growing joblessness to the growing proportion of the population who lacked the skill or will to work. See "Unemployed or Unemployable," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), Mar. 26, 1894.

It is within this context that we see the first key accomplishment of the rhetoric of Coxey and his Army. For Coxey, the economic frustration born of industrialization and of the Panic of 1893 was palpable, and he gave voice to the argument that the federal government should take action to stem the tide of growing joblessness. Moreover, Coxey gave voice to the argument that those without work—despite being economically downtrodden and disempowered by their financial situations—could take matters into their own hands by advocating for these policies. To give voice to both of these arguments, Coxey constituted an audience out of those without work. This demanded that he uproot the stigma about idle laborers, showing that far from lazy tramps, those who lacked employment were hard-working Americans eager to find jobs and change their economic situations. To prove this argument, Coxey reasoned that those without work would march on Washington to show their willingness to go to great lengths to take control of their trying situations. Then, to motivate his newly constituted audience of potential marchers, Coxey established a rhetoric that wove together the moral and the pragmatic, signaling to jobless workers that joining the Army was not only the right thing to do, but also the effective way to alleviate their economic difficulties.

As I have spent the preceding chapters of this dissertation explaining, this argumentative framework was remarkable on its own for what it enabled Coxey's Army to achieve in its moment. However, equally as important was the fact that Coxey and his Army left this argumentative framework for future rhetors to take and adapt for their own purposes. Proof for this claim can be seen in how, despite facing a decent amount of backlash for his approach to advancing his policies, Coxey's ideas did not fade from

the national dialogue. Rather, in 1894 and in a series of key moments over the fifty years that followed, discussions about the federal government's methods for spurring job creation permeated our national discourse. These conversations especially gained prominence at times when the country emerged from sharp periods of economic downturn, and by the end of World War II, ideas about the role of the government in creating jobs transformed into codified law with the passage of the Employment Act of 1946. The Act gave the responsibility to the federal government to "promote maximum employment," and still today, political conversations often hinge on the extent to which the government is adequately fulfilling this responsibility.

Hence, Coxey's Army left its mark on federal interventions into economic policymaking. Although one cannot look back and say that Americans today see job creation as the responsibility of the federal government solely because of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, we can look to Coxey's Army both as an early articulation of that argument and as a moment when that argument gained rhetorical viability. By developing the appeal of the argument that unemployment can be a function of a weak economy, and by motivating an audience of jobless workers to become advocates for federal employment policy, Jacob Coxey leveraged his rhetorical acumen to create an argumentative framework that would later be transformed by a range of rhetors.

Assembling Bodies to Demonstrate Popular Demand for Social Reform: An Evolution in the Form of Petitioning

The contribution the rhetoric of Coxey's Army made to the ways we justify economic policy interventions had much to do with the Army's original purpose of getting Congress to pass the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills. But I

argued in Chapters Four and Five that after they had committed their bodies to the petition in boots by marching to Washington, Coxey initiated and the Army completed a transformation in its purpose to include the democratic right of the people to petition at the seat of their government. Indeed, by emphasizing this right in the last stage of the Commonwealth's lifespan, Coxey's Army cemented another key contribution to our nation's political history, which had to do with the style of its protest.

Amidst the ever-evolving trajectory of the history of petitioning, Coxey's Army offered yet another modification to the ways American citizens can approach their representatives to seek redress for their grievances. In Chapter One, I traced evolutions in citizens' ways of petitioning, noting how centuries before the founding of our nation, the right to petition was codified into law by the Magna Carta. There, I argued that until the eighteenth century, petitioning happened through discussions in the public sphere, in which those who sought redress for their grievances would come together to determine the best reasons for social reform and then affix those reasons to their petitions, which were filed by a designated clerk. Later, petitioning would evolve into a more individualized act in which the grieved would file their own petitions to Congress in writing, and this system would carry into the infancy of our nation's founding. Over time, petitioning continued to evolve, and by the days of Coxey's Army, the reasons affixed to petitions to justify social reform were replaced by signatures. In this system, social reforms were justified not by the validity of the reasoning provided, but by the presence of popular demand for the reform—more signatures indicated higher popularity.

Coxey's Army marked another turning point in the approaches Americans take to petitioning their elected officials. Whereas those who came before the Army affixed the signatures of supporters to their petitions to demonstrate public will for the prescribed social reform, Coxey's Army justified its reform program by collecting bodies. Those who assembled in front of the Capitol represented the aggregate demand for their reform program, their boots on the ground living signatories. The petition in boots thus reasoned that if enough people came to Washington to show Congress that Coxey's bills were the will of the people, and if members of Congress were elected to carry out the will of the people, then Congress would pass Coxey's bills once they saw—quite literally in front of them—just how much support those bills commanded.

That Congress did not pass Coxey's bills proved that Coxey's theory of change was flawed, but it does not prove that the Army's impact on history was of little significance. To the contrary, one of the other key contributions of this dissertation has been to show how the rhetoric of Coxey's Army enabled this evolution in the tradition of petitioning. Coxey gave voice to the belief that when the status quo works against the best interests of the people, it is the right of the people to go directly to their federal lawmakers *in person* to propose a program for reform that would ameliorate the woes of the extant situation. To make this argument rhetorically viable, the petition in boots declared the U.S. Capitol to be the property of the people. The occupants of that building, the elected representatives of the people, had an obligation to carry out the people's will. In addition, Coxey contributed to the rhetorical viability of this argument by transforming authorities' decision to abridge the Army's protest as a denial of the people's constitutional right to petition. Thus, Coxey's Army contributed to this rich

political tradition by framing their act of protest simply as a modified form of petitioning, thereby funneling the democratic energy around petitioning into motivation to fight for the cause that expanded at the moment when the Army's leaders stepped on the Capitol lawn and were arrested.

The impact of this contribution can be seen in how members of the Commonwealth continued to advocate despite signs that their initial cause would fail. But as important as this contribution was in its moment, it was perhaps more important for the impact it had on future protests. Mary Harris "Mother" Jones named Coxey's Army as the inspiration for her march for child labor reforms in 1903,⁷ while Alice Paul named the Army as the inspiration for her women's suffrage march in 1913.⁸ Both of these examples illustrate that other rhetors adapted Coxey's framework for petitioning and transformed it to address the context of their own causes. The Bonus Army in 1932, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, the Million Man March in 1995 and the hundreds of other marches on Washington that take place each year all prove that Coxey's Army left an indelible mark on the history of petitioning in the United States.

⁷ Mari Boor Tonn, "Radical Labor in a Feminine Voice: The Rhetoric of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn," in *The Rhetoric of Nineteenth-Century Reform*, edited by Martha S. Watson and Thomas R. Burkholder, vol. 5 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008), 223-253.

⁸ Lucy G. Barber, *Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 46-48.

While this revelation was made clear by scholars before me, the contribution of this dissertation has been its illustration of the ways in which the petition in boots made its evolved form of petitioning rhetorically viable. By constituting the U.S. Capitol as the property of the people, by constituting the bodies of those who marched as signatories that demonstrated popular demand for Coxey's policies, and by motivating those who originally marched because of the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills to sustain their commitment to a cause that now included the assertion of the right to petition, Coxey's Army developed the appeal of a viewpoint that saw marching on Washington as the next in a series of evolutions in how Americans seek redress for their grievances. Along with the contribution the Army made to the argumentative framework with which we justify economic policies, this dissertation has unearthed two important ways by which Coxey's Army bent the trajectory of American political history. Together, these contributions help us understand more deeply the moment in which Coxey's Army was motivated to act. Therefore, in the next section, I use this deeper understanding as a foundation for examining what several scholars have referred to as "Coxeyism," the characteristics of which bring the Army's remarkable rhetorical moment into sharper focus.

Understanding 1890s Populism through the Lens of Coxeyist Rhetoric

At their core, the rhetorical contributions the Army made to the ways we justify economic policies and to the tradition of petitioning were achieved because of how Coxey and the Army's other rhetors motivated action. I argue that the appeals that transformed Coxey's initial dream into a policy platform and later into a march on

Washington comprised a distinct rhetoric which I refer to as Coxeyism. Although Coxeyism is not my own term, I depart from other scholars who have used this term in that I treat Coxeyism as a motivational rhetoric, and not as a social movement or political ideology. Seeing Coxeyism in this way is advantageous for a host of reasons, the foremost of which is that the deep understanding of Coxeyist rhetoric laid forth in this dissertation can help us understand what spurred people to action in the Army's historical moment. Therefore, I begin this section by defining Coxeyist rhetoric, including what I see to be its characteristic dimensions. From there, I proffer an argument about what Coxeyism can tell us about populism in the 1890s more generally.

Defining "Coxeyist" Rhetoric

Scholars who have taken to the task of defining Coxeyism have done so in a variety of ways. Perhaps the earliest scholar to write about Coxeyism was Donald McMurry, who argued in 1929 that Coxeyism "was, for the most part, populism," but something more specific than populism.⁹ McMurry's assessment is hard to dispute given the generality with which he argued, and as historian Jerry Prout rightly pointed out in his 2012 dissertation, McMurry never explained what he saw to be the chief differences between Coxeyism and populism. Prout picked up where McMurry left off by positing his own definition, arguing that Coxeyism was similar to (although not the same as) the agrarian emphasis on "addressing the needs of the *entire* community,

⁹ Donald McMurry, *Coxey's Army: A Study of the Industrial Army Movement of 1894* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Co., 1929), 260.

rather than aggrandizing individual wealth.”¹⁰ Reading Prout, we get the sense that he saw Coxeyism as a belief system. Meanwhile, historian Carlos Schwantes called Coxeyism, “a democratic movement that called into question the underlying values of the new industrial society.”¹¹ If Coxeyism represented a set of beliefs, as Prout maintained, then perhaps the movement to which Schwantes referred was simply the outward expression of those beliefs. However, despite moving our understanding of Coxeyism beyond McMurry’s vague comparison to populism, these interpretations seem incomplete at best and contradictory at worst.

To rectify the limitations of and contradictions in our extant understandings of Coxeyism, I offer an alternative definition, one which treats Coxeyism as a rhetoric. From my vantage point, Coxeyist rhetoric motivates social action by:

1. Emphasizing society’s obligation to the middle class.
2. Constituting a range of system actors as enemies of the middle class.
3. Promising the inevitability of revolutionary confrontation between the middle class and the system.

Before explaining these three characteristics of Coxeyist rhetoric, I should first point out an assumption inherent in my definition, which is that Coxeyism is a rhetoric, rather than an ideology or a movement or something else. Relatedly, this means that I do not

¹⁰ Jerry Prout, “Coxey’s Challenge in the Populist Moment,” (Ph.D. dissertation, George Mason University, 2012), 19; emphasis mine.

¹¹ Carlos Schwantes, *Coxey’s Army: An American Odyssey* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 278.

see “the Coxeyists” as a stable or fixed group of people. To understand this argument, I remind my readers of the analysis I provided in Chapter One about populism. There, I argued that “the populists” did not necessarily refer to a specific group—there was not a set of people who identified as populists, save for those affiliated with the formal People’s Party. But whereas populism was loosely affiliated with the formal political party formed in 1888 which nominated and endorsed candidates and issued policy priorities, no such formal body was affiliated with so-called Coxeyism. Thus, in the same way I treated populism in Chapter One as a rhetoric and argued that populist rhetoric has some discernible characteristics that distinguish it from other discourses, so too do I see Coxeyism as a rhetoric that is marked by particular characteristics or features.

The advantage of understanding Coxeyism as a rhetoric is that it helps to bridge the divide between scholars who see it as an ideology versus those who see it as a movement versus those who see it as something else entirely. For example, the utility of seeing Coxeyism as a movement for Schwantes is that it helps him to explain why those disaffected by rapid industrialization in the last quarter of the nineteenth century resorted to an act of social protest, rather than some other means of coming to terms with their economic strife. Similarly, the utility of seeing Coxeyism as a set of beliefs for Prout is that it helps move our understanding beyond McMurry’s rather elementary claim that Coxeyism was similar to but not the same as populism. Although both of these approaches contributed to our understanding of Coxeyism, their shared weakness is that they see Coxeyist rhetoric merely as a means to an end. For these scholars, Coxeyist rhetoric—not that they refer to any such thing—would merely be the rhetoric

used to express the ideas of Coxeyism. But if the present study has taught us anything, it is that the Army's rhetoric in some instances shaped the ideas Coxeyism and in other instances called those very ideas into being. Thus, understanding Coxeyism as anything other than a rhetoric points us to the ideas Coxey's Army talked about, but says nothing of what motivated those who ultimately decided to join the march on Washington and advocate for those ideas.

Hence, the three characteristics of Coxeyist rhetoric I offer in my definition reveal three core principles that motivated members of Coxey's Army and their many sympathizers at the time. The first characteristic of Coxeyist rhetoric identified by my definition maintains that Coxeyism emphasizes society's obligation toward the middle class. Throughout this dissertation, I have illustrated how the rhetoric of Coxey's Army held the middle class in high regard and asserted society's obligation to ensure the needs of the middle class are fulfilled. In Chapter Two, for example, I argued that Coxey constituted those without jobs as inherently hard-working, only hindered by the political economy and not by their own laziness.¹² Similarly, in Chapter Four I highlighted how "Coxey at the Capitol" emphasized the commonness of the people and how they were fighting to solve significant problems, despite how they themselves had

¹² In the second Good Roads Bulletin, for example, Coxey referred to the Army as "a procession of the enforced idle men of the country" to emphasize unemployed workers' lack of choice in the matter. See *Bulletin No. 2* (Massillon, OH: J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the US, January 31, 1894), in the Ray Stannard Baker papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.

done nothing to “bring the blush of shame to any.”¹³ Notable about these features of the Army’s rhetoric is that beyond simply asserting that those who would march were good people, these and other expressions opined that the goodness of the people derived from their middle-class status.

The Army’s reverence for the middle class seems to have held some utility for the petition in boots. By publicly establishing the criteria dictating whether someone would be permitted to participate in the Army in terms of whether they were hard-working citizens seeking to make an honest living, this rhetoric helped to refute the counter-rhetoric of the media. As I argued in Chapter Two, the media went to great lengths to portray potential marchers as lawless criminals, while in Chapter Three I argued that the media reported on violent conflicts between Commonwealers even when there was no evidence that these events took place. In response, the Army’s reverence for the middle class helped to neutralize the media’s counter-narratives about the petition in boots. Furthermore, constituting the moral virtuousness of the middle class helped to justify Coxey’s policies. Passing the Good Roads and Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bills would be palatable—even if they did not stimulate overall economic growth—as long as the people who stood to benefit from those policies were good people.

Of course, there was another benefit to constituting the moral virtuousness of the middle class: doing so otherized the lower classes who did not meet the established

¹³ “The Protest Coxey Didn’t Read,” *New York Times* (New York, NY), May 2, 1894.

criteria for what it meant to be middle class. The “lower classes” who were prohibited from joining the Army because they were too untrustworthy and of flawed character were the same “thieves” and “anarchists” characterized by the media. Such “undesirables” would not be allowed to mingle with the virtuous marchers, and by reinforcing the media’s denigration of the lower classes, Army rhetors made their own differentiation between the middle and lower classes more pronounced. Far from Prout’s assertion that Coxeyism addressed the needs of all people and not just the needs of the agrarian community, the Coxeyist emphasis on the virtuousness of the middle class was built by accepting negative portrayals of the lower classes, which in turn propped up the interests of middle-class Americans.

Despite the usefulness of separating the Commonwealers from the lower classes by accepting and amplifying the media’s negative portrayals, this rhetorical distancing was insufficient on its own for constituting the marchers as representatives of middle class. In addition, they needed to be differentiated from the upper class. Thus, Coxeyist rhetoric identified the so-called “money powers” as the enemy against which members of the petition in boots could unite, which created rhetorical distance between the marchers and the wealthy elite and solidified the Commonwealers’ middle-class status. The utility of this strategy was that it enabled Army rhetoric to position the money powers as a corrupting influence that controlled a range of systemic actors. Because these actors—bankers, local authorities, the press and more—were under the control of the corrupt money powers, they were cast as accomplices in a system stacked against the middle class to keep them from getting ahead.

For example, in Chapter Five I highlighted several of Browne's conspiracy theories. Some of these theories argued that members of the press were being influenced by the money powers to fabricate stories about public health to drive the marchers out of Washington,¹⁴ while others insisted that the local authorities were being influenced by the money powers to draw out the sentencing phase of Coxey and Browne's trials and prevent Commonwealers from visiting their leaders in jail.¹⁵ In still other instances, Browne insisted that the money powers were bribing marchers with the "promise of substantials" in a "plot" to "lure them away" from Washington while their leaders sat in jail.¹⁶ Each of these conspiracy theories and the range of other instances in which Army rhetoric indicted the system for being stacked against the middle class were infused with a certain level of ambiguity about the enemy. Typically, no single individual was named or blamed for creating the dubious economic situation to which the Army found itself responding, but instead, the middle class was situated in opposition to things like hunger and despair, corruption or injustice. This strategy enabled Army rhetors to constitute whomever or whatever as an enemy at whichever point doing so was convenient. In turn, those who comprised Coxey's Army were motivated by the fear

¹⁴ "Still Another Camp: The Commonweal Moves Down and Occupies Bladensburg," *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, DC), May 14, 1894.

¹⁵ "More of Browne's Orders," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Jun. 4, 1894.

¹⁶ "No Habeas Corpus Issued: Coxey, Browne and Jones Will Have to Pass Another Sunday in Jail," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), Jun. 3, 1894.

that a set of people or institutions, acting on the corrupting influence of the money powers rather than on their own volition, would detract from the well-being of the middle class. The looming threats of those conspiring against the Army and against the middle class at large thus justified individuals' decision to band together to defeat their common enemy, despite the fact that they may not have even known who the enemy was. As a result, those who came together were motivated by, if nothing else, an underlying fear of an undefined other.

Given that the first two tenets of Coxeyist rhetoric constitute a virtuous middle class and a nebulous systemic enemy, the third defining feature of Coxeyist rhetoric places these two classes in opposition to one another by promising revolutionary confrontation. Although references to revolution were peppered throughout the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, these references came into sharp focus in "Coxey at the Capitol." In Chapter Four, I argued that Coxey crafted his revolutionary rhetoric in that speech by evoking a sense of the undone work of the American Revolution. His allusions to our forefathers' declarations of independence from the throne in 1776 and to the emancipation of slavery during the Civil War, for example, cast the work of the Army as revolutionary acts designed to free the nation from "financial bondage."¹⁷ In this way, Coxey's rhetoric worked to intensify the situation at hand. But important to note about Coxey's allusions to revolutionary confrontation was that he never guaranteed the middle class would prevail over their opponents. Likewise, although Coxey insisted that the Commonwealth would ultimately succeed in achieving their mission, he did so by

¹⁷ "The Protest Coxey Didn't Read," 2.

identifying the potential that the marchers may actually have to make the ultimate sacrifice before victory was achieved. In Chapter Three, for instance, I highlighted how Coxey told reporters that if Congress did not heed the marchers' calls to action, the marchers might starve to death, perishing in the streets of Washington while "the stench from their ashes" forced congressional relief.¹⁸ In other words, Coxeyist rhetoric promised confrontation between the virtuous middle class and their opponents, but the inevitable result of that confrontation was revolution, and not necessarily an immediate-term victory.

Of course, the potential that marching might require the ultimate sacrifice would have been unnerving to say the least. Therefore, as part and parcel of the acknowledgment that confrontation did not necessarily guarantee victory, Coxeyism also needed to rectify the inherent potential for failure revealed by its rhetoric. To rectify this potential, Coxeyism attended to the ratio between sacrifice and reward to show that even if fighting the Coxeyist crusade meant sacrificing one's own life, such a sacrifice would be worthwhile because it would guarantee the preservation of the middle class. When I introduced the notion of the sacrifice-payoff ratio in Chapter Three, I noted that Army rhetoric attended to sacrifice sometimes by downplaying what would be required of marchers, but more often by amplifying the magnitude of the reward associated with the success of the protest. Returning to "Coxey at the Capitol," we see in that speech how he characterized the existential crisis facing the middle class.

¹⁸ "The Coxey Movement," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Apr. 23, 1894.

Its “struggle for existence” was what led the Commonwealers to “throw up their defenseless hands,” for without help, “our loved ones must perish.”¹⁹ By framing the fight between the middle class and the system as a matter of life or death, Coxey signaled to his audience that no matter how dire the situation might become, the Commonwealers’ sacrifices would serve to protect the middle class from extinction. In other words, although the revolutionary trope was a distinct feature of Coxeyist rhetoric, it was closely related to the first tenet of Coxeyism I discussed in this section, in which society’s obligations toward the middle class were a central focus.

In all, the preceding pages have drawn on examples of rhetoric from throughout this dissertation to define the central characteristics of Coxeyist rhetoric. At its core, Coxeyist rhetoric situated a virtuous middle class in opposition to the system and projected that these two sides were engaged in a confrontation that would ultimately catalyze revolution. Understanding these key features of Coxeyist rhetoric serves several important functions, some of which I have already pointed to in this section. For example, seeing Coxeyist rhetoric in this way helps us to understand how Coxeyism was motivated not by opposition to a stable and fixed enemy, but rather by a much more general concern for corruption within the system, the threat of which was always nebulous but ever-present. But this understanding of Coxeyist rhetoric also sheds light on populism in the 1890s more generally. Therefore, I turn my attention in the next subsection to what Coxeyist rhetoric tells us about the moment at which populism reached its apex.

¹⁹ “The Protest Coxey Didn’t Read,” 2.

Situating Coxeyism within Scholarly Debates about Populism in the 1890s

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I made two claims about populism and argued that both can be illuminated by a deeper understanding of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army. One of these claims was that populism is best understood as a rhetoric, rather than as an ideology, a set of individuals, a movement or something else. Having now defined Coxeyism as a rhetoric, my reader can see why Coxey's Army illustrates the utility of reading populism as a rhetoric: like Coxeyism, populism was not motivated by one single issue or set of issues, nor can we point to a particular group of people and label them as "populists" and expect to discern anything useful about them. Relatedly, the second claim I made about populism in Chapter One was that scholars disagree about what motivated populism as it reached its apex in the last decade of the nineteenth century. There, I highlighted the debate between scholars like John Hicks, who saw populism as a natural expression of the frustration downtrodden people felt in the midst of widespread economic unrest, and scholars like Richard Hofstadter, who argued that populists transformed their so-called economic frustrations into justifications for pronounced individualism that promoted racist, nativist and anti-Semitic values. In the pages that follow, I revisit both of these claims to highlight what the current study has unearthed about them.

Returning to my first claim about populism as a rhetoric, I pointed out at multiple points throughout this dissertation that other scholars have treated populism as a rhetoric, the results of which have been enlightening. One scholar whose work I appreciate deeply is Michael Lee, who offered a four-pronged typology for what he calls the "populist argumentative frame." For Lee, "populism begins with the

constitution of a virtuous ‘people,’ then envisions a robust ‘enemy,’ decries the current ‘system,’ and finally finds the promise of reform in ‘apocalyptic confrontation.’”²⁰

Although scholars may quibble over what populism is and how it is expressed in social discourse, Lee’s framework is, at the very least, a helpful heuristic we can exploit to understand what we can expect to find when we encounter “populist rhetoric.”

Having just read my own definition of Coxeyism, my reader will immediately note that it shares much in common with Lee’s definition of the populist argumentative frame. This is not accidental. Like McMurry and Prout and Schwantes and so many others have pointed out, Coxeyism and populism shared much in common—so much in common, in fact, that it is worth calling out the nuanced differences between these rhetorics explicitly. The first difference I see has to do with how each of these rhetorics constitute “the people.” Lee puts “the people” to work for him in an ideographic sense, meaning that “the people” can celebrate anyone who is “ordinary, simple, honest, hard-working, God-fearing and patriotic.”²¹ In this way, Lee’s use of “the people” does not sort between one group and another, but instead can be more broadly applied to whomever is being constituted.

To the contrary, Coxeyist rhetoric does not celebrate just anyone who embodies these virtues. Rather, it constitutes these virtues as inherent characteristics of *middle-*

²⁰ Michael C. Lee, “The Populist Chameleon: The People’s Party, Huey Long, George Wallace and the Populist Argumentative Frame,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 4 (2006): 358.

²¹ *Ibid.*

class Americans, and anyone whose social location finds themselves outside the middle class is essentially disqualified from being deemed virtuous. Put another way, Coxeyist rhetoric would not celebrate a wealthy person or a poor person, even if they were honest, simple, hard-working and the like. This point is revealed by much of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army, which actually denounced these groups on the basis of their position within the class hierarchy, regardless of what they had done to help or hinder the plight of the middle class. In Chapter Two, for example, I explained how Coxey vilified reporters because they "never felt the pangs of hunger," suggesting that the experience of struggling financially made someone more authentic or credible.²² Simultaneously, the lowest classes were excluded from the Coxeyist celebration of the virtues of the common people. Coxey spent much of the inception stage, for instance, making public statements to distance his supporters from the lower classes, insisting that "No criminals and anarchists will be allowed to mingle with [the Army]."²³ Hence, whereas populist rhetoric emphasized the virtues of "the people" in an ideographic sense, Coxeyist rhetoric applied a specific filter to sort between people worthy of economic justice and the rhetorically constructed other.

A second way of discerning the nuances between Coxeyist and populist rhetoric is to examine who is constituted by both discourses as the enemy of the people. For Lee,

²² "March of the Crank's Army," *Scranton Tribune* (Scranton, PA), Mar. 26, 1894.

²³ "To be Carried into Execution," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, VA), Jan. 27, 1894.

the populist argumentative frame tends to identify a specific enemy, and at the same time tends to demonize “the system.” But within populist discourse, the system is not necessarily the enemy; the system may just be another actor in the constellation of rhetorical forces in a given situation. More importantly, Lee reminded us, “The ‘system’ is an amalgamation of numerous sites within the national political economic order in which power is distributed, governed and managed.”²⁴ For example, the rhetoric of agrarian populists tended to name the bankers as the enemy while simultaneously decrying a system in which farmers had become reliant on—and eventually indebted to—the bankers for loans that would subsidize agrarian businesses. In this sense, the system is problematic, but agrarian rhetors directed their audiences’ attention toward the individual bankers and blamed them for contributing to the corrupt system.

Coxeyist rhetoric took on a similar bend, but for Coxeyism, the system and the enemy were not distinct—the system *was* the enemy. While the bankers may well have been constituted as a byproduct of the corrupt system, Coxeyist rhetoric explicitly reminded advocates that they were engaged in bitter wars with byproducts of the system like “hunger and despair,” and not with the specific people who caused those problems. As I argued earlier, the utility of this strategy was that it maintained a level of ambiguity about who the enemy was, which enabled Coxeyist rhetors to invoke the enemy whenever doing so would advance their purposes. Thus, Coxeyist and populist rhetoric both find roots in disdain for the system, but Coxeyism more often identifies an ambiguous enemy, whereas populism more often places blame on a specific actor.

²⁴ Lee, “The Populist Chameleon,” 360.

Third and finally, populist and Coxeyist rhetoric can be discerned from one another by examining what they locate as the inevitable outcome of the confrontation envisioned by the rhetoric. Lee argued in his discussion of the populist argumentative frame that populist constructions of “apocalyptic confrontation” promise the virtuous people that they will prevail over their enemies.²⁵ There are two important factors to note about this element of populist discourse. First, the confrontation between the virtuous people and their enemies is nothing short of *apocalyptic*, and this modifier points to one of the ways populist and Coxeyist rhetoric are similar. Although Coxeyist rhetoric does not promise apocalypse, it does promise revolution, and the revolution promised by the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army took on many forms. In other words, revolution might mean the overthrow of a particular component of the system, or it might spell the extinction of the middle class. In the latter instance, the Coxeyist revolution and the populist apocalypse might be indistinguishable.

On the other hand, the second feature of populist constructions of confrontation worth noting is that for populism, the virtuous people always prevail over their enemies. In this way, populist rhetoric is fundamentally a rhetoric of hope. However, Coxeyism does not necessarily promise that the virtuous middle class will emerge victorious. It may be the case that future generations will achieve the progress envisioned, but the Army’s rhetoric of starvation and extinction—their constructions of the people’s “struggle for existence”—suggests that the individuals fighting for social reform may not live to see the fruits of their labor. Thus, when considering the tone of these

²⁵ Ibid., 358.

rhetorics, we can see how populist discourse tends to be hopeful at its core, while Coxeyism is notably less so.

Taken together, my analysis so far in this subsection has used Lee's notion of the populist argumentative frame to illustrate the ways in which Coxeyism and populism, though similar, differ in nuanced and meaningful ways. But of course, the utility of understanding these differences is not simply our ability to sort rhetorics of the 1890s into either Coxeyist or populist categories. More importantly, these distinctions help us move beyond the basic claims scholars before me have posited about the relationship between Coxeyism and populism. Indeed, Coxeyism and populism are similar and different, but one of the key contributions this dissertation has made to our understanding of the 1890s is that whereas populism celebrated "the people" to situate them in opposition to a discernible enemy, Coxeyism is simultaneously more specific in its construction of "the people" but less specific in its construction to the enemy. And, by celebrating the middle class while simultaneously accepting or creating narratives to denounce the upper and lower classes, we see the Coxeyist worldview begin to emerge in a way that prior studies of Coxey's Army have not unearthed.

This particular argument relates to the other key claim I identified at the beginning of this subsection, which is that understanding the rhetoric of Coxey's Army can help us grapple with the debate about what motivated populism in the 1890s—a debate that has played out over the decades between scholars like Hicks and Hofstadter. To be sure, the literature about populism at the end of the nineteenth century is robust, and historians have offered a number of perspectives from which we can view populism, many of which I discussed in Chapter One. That review of literature shed

light on a debate over whether populism was merely the expression of economic frustration born of rapid industrialization, or whether populism was motivated by something much deeper. Historian Richard Hofstadter's articulation of this critique of 1890s populism has gained perhaps the most attention. In 1955, he argued that populist rhetoric is indeed a rhetoric of individualism, but where individualist rhetorics emphasize "self-discipline and a strong work ethic," they also prioritize the self at the expense of collective well-being in a way that "has been used to justify racist, nativist and anti-Semitic values."²⁶ Far from being a rhetoric voiced by good people just trying to get ahead, Hofstadter argued that populism had, at best, "an ambiguous character."²⁷

Revisiting Hofstadter's critique of populism after having read the current study on Coxeyism, my reader will note the commonalities between Hofstadter's assessment of populism and my own assessment of the rhetoric of Coxey's Army. First and foremost, the otherizing Hofstadter points to as evidence for his claim is clearly reflected in the Coxeyist tendency to demonize anyone who does not fit squarely within the middle class. It is no coincidence that the influx of immigrants who were eventually blamed for the unemployment crisis in the industrialized city centers in the 1890s were the same immigrants who comprised the "lower classes" that Coxey often denounced in his rhetoric. Coxey never did fully articulate why these lower classes would consider themselves to be immune from personal responsibility, but what became clear from

²⁶ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), 18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

these remarks was that something other than employment status distinguished those who would be welcomed into the Army from those who would be turned away. Thus, “lower classes” became code for anyone who was non-white, lacked the means to contribute meaningfully to society, or might otherwise bring down the image of the petition in boots.

In a related way, my exploration of Coxeyist rhetoric in this dissertation is reminiscent of the tension between individualism and collectivism that Hofstadter located at the heart of populist discourse. My analysis in the preceding chapters has shown how Coxeyism was hyper-individualistic in nature. Coxey’s earliest efforts to constitute those without work as individual victims of a broken political economy ultimately laid the foundation for this individualism, which then justified the argument that economic policies should be passed if they helped particular individuals, even if they did not boost the economy at large. The individualist strand of Coxey’s rhetoric was thus woven through some of the Army’s most common motivational appeals. After all, joining the Army was sold to potential activists on the grounds that marching on Washington was an effective way by which an individual could take control of their own circumstances.

But at the same time, the rhetoric of Coxeyism placed significant emphasis on serving the collective good. Much of the Army’s transcendent rhetoric illustrates this point. From stump speeches that exaggerated how many people stood to benefit from the Army’s protest to Coxey’s rhetoric of representation which justified marchers’ sacrifices on the grounds that millions of downtrodden Americans were relying on the petition in boots, a great deal of the motivational force of the Army’s rhetoric grew out

of the notion that participating served the greater good. Thus, the rhetoric of Coxeyism is an ideal lens through which we can understand the tension between individualism and collectivism that Hofstadter argued gave rise to the populist moment in the first place.

Ultimately, exploiting debates about populism and populist rhetoric as I have done here can help us understand the rhetoric of Coxeyism more clearly. We may never be able to completely delineate the bounds of Coxeyism within the broader context of populism in the 1890s, and indeed, attempting to do so may be an exercise in futility. But situating Coxeyism alongside populism has done much to elevate our understanding of Coxey's Army. For example, Lee's discussion of the populist argumentative frame helps us to more clearly understand that Coxey's Army did not rise to prominence merely as the industrial counterpart to populist discontent, nor did Coxey's Army seek to be a movement for all the people. Likewise, Hofstadter's discussion of the undercurrents in the rhetoric of the 1890s helps us to see how those who would go on to comprise Coxey's Army were constantly grappling with much more than their limited prospects at finding work. These observations are important because they push us beyond conventional assessments about why Coxey's Army gained traction.

At the same time scholarship on populism can be exploited to illuminate Coxeyism, so too can my discussion of Coxeyism be exploited to illuminate populism. My analysis in the preceding pages has yielded a series of observations that amplify our understanding of populist discourse. For example, although Coxeyism may not have identified the same enemies as populism, the Army's conspiracy theories about how the system was stacked against the common people—however loosely defined—reminds us that populism was only superficially about disdain for the railroads or for the bankers

and was more deeply rooted in a critique of institutions that worked to keep the people from getting ahead. Of course, my discussion of Coxeyism also accentuates the ideographic nature of populist constructions of “the people.” Whereas the rhetoric of Coxey’s Army was explicit in defining who it celebrated (and therefore denigrated), the rhetoric of populism was much more abstract, which explains, perhaps, why scholars have yet to come to consensus on the nature of what motivated the populist moment to reach its apex. Thus, in addition to highlighting the Army’s key contributions to our traditions of petitioning and of justifying economic policy interventions, another important accomplishment of this dissertation is that it has illuminated the central tenets of Coxeyist rhetoric.

Coxey’s Army: A Remarkable Rhetorical Moment

About six months after leaving Washington, Jacob Coxey said, “History could contain no more heroic picture than those footsore, weary and ragged men, idle through no fault of their own, plodding over the mountains through ice and snow, sleet and rain, many leaving their tracks stained with their own blood.”²⁸ Those forty-one words so brilliantly capture the reason why the current study was undertaken: to unearth what motivated the small but mighty group of men who marched on Washington and into their place in history. Far from an anarchy-loving band of tramps, those who comprised

²⁸ Jacob S. Coxey, *The Coxey Plan* (Massillon, OH: Jacob S. Coxey, Publisher, 1914), as quoted in Jerry Prout, “Coxey’s Challenge in the Populist Moment,” (Ph.D. dissertation, George Mason University, 2012), 374.

Coxey's Army were indeed heroic, for against all odds, they committed to an unprecedented cause, stuck with that cause when signs of failure surrounded them, and contributed to a tradition that is now a common feature of the American political experience.

As part of a small but robust literature on Coxey's Army, this study has highlighted the ways in which rhetoric can shape and transform challenges in ways that motivate activists and advance social change. In so doing, it is the first study of Coxey's Army to appreciate the power of rhetoric to alter the trajectory of American history—an accomplishment revealed by the Commonwealth's influence on justifications for economic policymaking and on the tradition of petitioning in the United States. In the end, it is my hope that this dissertation can be part of future scholars' justification for taking the rhetoric of Coxey's Army more seriously. As the pages of this dissertation have only begun to grapple with the complexity of the discourse of economic unrest in America, future scholars can benefit by exploiting Coxey's Army as an entry point into their examinations of the Gilded Age. Of course, the emergence of new studies will hopefully only add further support to a claim I made in the earliest pages of this study: that Coxey's Army is much more significant, rhetorically and historically speaking, than the scholarly community has realized.

APPENDIX A

Full Text of the Good Roads & Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds Bills

53rd Congress, 2nd Session, HR 7463, June 15, 1894¹

A BILL to provide for public improvements and employment of the citizens of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That whenever any State, Territory, county, township, municipality, or incorporated town or village deem it necessary to make any public improvements they shall deposit with the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States a non-interest-bearing twenty-five year bond, not to exceed one-half of the assessed valuation of the property in said State, Territory, county, township, municipality, or incorporated town or village, and said bond to be retired at the rate of four per centum per annum.

Sec. 2. That whenever the foregoing section of this act has been complied with it shall be mandatory upon the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States to have engraved and printed Treasury notes in the denominations of one, two, five and ten dollars each, which shall be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, to the face value of the said bond and deliver to said State, Territory, county, township, municipality, or incorporated town or village ninety-nine per centum of said notes, and retain one per centum for expense of engraving and printing same.

Sec. 3. That after the passage of the his act it shall be compulsory upon every incorporated town or village, municipality, township, county, State or Territory to give employment to any idle man applying for work, and that the rate be not less than one dollar and fifty cents per day for common labor and three dollars and fifty cents per day for team and labor, and that eight hours per day shall constitute a day's labor under the provision of this act.

¹ Jacob S. Coxey, *His Own Story of the Commonweal* (Massillon, OH: Jacob S. Coxey, Publisher, 1914), 19-20.

53rd Congress, 2nd Session, HR 7438, June 12, 1894²

A BILL to provide for the improvement of public roads, and for other purposes. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States is hereby authorized and instructed to have engraved and have printed, immediately after the passage of this bill, five hundred millions of dollars of Treasury notes, a legal tender for all debts, public and private, said notes to be in denominations of one, two, five, and ten dollars, and to be placed in a fund to be known as the "general county-road fund system of the United States," and to be expended solely for said purpose.

Sec. 2. That it shall be the duty of the Secretary of War to take charge of the construction of the said general county-road system of the United States, and said construction to commence as soon as the Secretary of the Treasury shall inform the Secretary of War that the said fund is available, which shall not be later than sixty days from and after the passage of this bill, when it shall be the duty of the Secretary of War to inaugurate the work and expend the sum of twenty millions of dollars per month pro rata with the number of mile of roads in each State and Territory in the United States.

Sec. 3. That all labor other than that of the office of the Secretary of War, "whose compensations are already fixed by law," shall be paid by the day, and that the rate be not less than one dollar and fifty cents per day for common labor and three dollars and fifty cents for team and labor, and that eight hours per day shall constitute a day's labor under the provisions of this bill, and that all citizens of the United States making application to labor shall be employed.

1

² Ibid.

APPENDIX B

“Coxey at the Capitol”

1 The Constitution of the United States guarantees to all citizens the right to peacefully
2 assemble and petition for redress of grievances, and, furthermore, declares that the right
3 of free speech shall not be abridged.

4

5 We stand here to-day to test these guarantees of our Constitution. We chose this place
6 of assemblage because it is the property of the people, and if it be true that the right of
7 the people peacefully assemble upon their own premises, and with their petitions has
8 been abridged by the passage of laws in direct violation of the Constitution, we are here
9 to draw the eyes of the Nation to this shameful fact.

10

11 Here, rather than at any spot upon the continent, it is fitting that we should come to
12 mourn over our dead liberties, and by our protest arouse the imperiled nation to such
13 action as shall rescue the Constitution and resurrect our liberties. Upon these steps,
14 where we stand, has been spread a carpet for the royal feet of a foreign Princess, the
15 cost of whose lavish entertainment was taken from the Public Treasury without the
16 consent or the approval of the people.

17

18 Up these steps the lobbyists of trusts and corporations have passed unchallenged on
19 their way to committee rooms, to which we, the representatives of the toiling wealth
20 producers, have been denied. We stand here to-day in behalf of millions of toilers,
21 whose petitions have been unresponded to, and whose opportunities for honest,

22 remunerative, productive labor have been taken from them by unjust legislation, which
23 protects idlers, speculators and gamblers.

24

25 We come to remind Congress here assembled of the declarations of a United States
26 Senator, "That for a quarter of a century the rich have been growing richer, the poor
27 poorer, and that by the close of the present century the middle class will have
28 disappeared, as the struggle for existence becomes fierce and relentless." We stand here
29 to remind Congress of its promise of returning prosperity should the Sherman act be
30 repealed.

31

32 We stand here to declare by our march of over 500 miles through difficulties and
33 distress, a march unstained by even the slightest act which will bring the blush of shame
34 to any, that we are law-abiding citizens, and, as such, our actions speak louder than
35 words. We are here to petition for legislation which will furnish employment for every
36 man able and willing to work, for legislation which will bring universal prosperity and
37 emancipate our beloved country from financial bondage to the descendants of King
38 George.

39

40 We have come to the only source which is competent to aid the people in their day of
41 dire distress. We are here to tell our Representatives, who hold their seats by the grace
42 of our ballots, that the struggle for existence has become too fierce and too relentless.
43 We come and throw up our defenseless hands, and say: "Help, or we and our loved ones
44 must perish." We are engaged in a bitter and cruel war with the enemies of all mankind,

45 a war with hunger, wretchedness, and despair, and we ask Congress to heed our
46 petitions, and issue for the Nation's good a sufficient volume of the same kind of money
47 which carried the country through one awful war and saved the life of the Nation.

48

49 In the name of justice, through whose impartial administration only the present
50 civilization can be maintained and perpetuated; by the powers of the Constitution of our
51 country, upon which the liberties of the people must depend, and in the name of the
52 Commonwealth of Christ, whose representatives we are, we enter a most solemn and
53 earnest protest against this unnecessary and cruel act of usurpation and tyranny and this
54 enforced subjugation of the rights and privileges of American citizenship. We have
55 assembled here, in violation of no just laws, to enjoy the privileges of every American
56 citizen.

57

58 We are under the shadow of the Capitol of this great nation, and in the presence of our
59 national legislators are refused that dearly-bought privilege, and by the force of
60 arbitrary power prevented from carrying out the desire of our hearts, which is plainly
61 granted under the great Magna Charta of our national liberties.

62

63 We have come here, through toil and weary marches, through storms and tempest, over
64 mountains, and amid the trials of poverty and distress, to lay our grievances at the doors
65 of our national legislators, and ask them, in the name of Him whose banners we bear, in
66 the name of Him who pleads for the poor and the oppressed, that they should heed the
67 voice of despair and distress that is now coming up from every section of our country;

68 that they should consider the conditions of the starving unemployed of our land, and
69 enact such laws as will give them employment, bring happier conditions to the people,
70 and the smile of contentment to our citizens.

71

72 Coming, as we do, with peace and good-will to men, we shall have to submit to these
73 laws, unjust as they are, and obey this mandate of authority of might which overrides
74 and outrages the law of right. In doing so, we appeal to every peace-loving citizen,
75 every liberty-loving man or woman, every one in whose breast the fires of patriotism
76 and love of country have not died out, to assist us in our efforts toward better laws and
77 general benefits.

APPENDIX C

Rhetoric Consulted

This appendix includes reproductions of the direct quotations of leaders and rank-and-file members of Coxey's Army as these quotations appeared in speeches, the Good Roads Association bulletins, correspondence, brochures, periodicals of the day and more. Unless indicated by the use of brackets, all quotations have been reproduced exactly as they appeared in their original primary documents. Because it was typical for multiple newspapers to publish the same quotations or stories from a news aggregator, I have only included one instance of that rhetoric, except where differences appeared between versions of the same passage.

Good Roads Association Bulletins

Bulletin No. 2 (excerpt, as published by the *Washington Evening Star*, January 27, 1894)

Excerpt from *Washington Evening Star*, 01/27/1894: "We propose only the peaceable plan now. When that fails it will be time enough to talk about force. The line of march will be given in bulletin No. 3 in about three weeks. We want 100 old officers, Union and confederate, to volunteer as marshals of divisions. Horses will be furnished to most of them. It is expected that the farmers of Pennsylvania will furnish supplies for the procession in its patriotic mission of the salvation of the republic."

Bulletin No. 3

Prologue: "Reformers and Theosophists" (published February 20, 1894)

The official standard of the "Commonweal" is on exhibition today in J.C. Haring's window. It is likely to shock some people's religious sensibilities, although its designer is far from desiring to even suggest the sacrilegious. It is to be carried at the head of the army of peace, alongside the American flag, as were the Roman eagles of old. Wm. Yost has presented the army with the flag which will accompany the official standard. The standard is the work of Carl Browne, seer and prophet. It is a large oil painting of Christ, surrounded by these words: "Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men, but Death to Interest on Bonds."

Mr. Coxey modestly compares his movement with that of the simple Nazarene. Being asked why he used the figure of Christ upon his banner, he replied: "He was simply a great reformer. He went about like Browne, here, doing all the good he could, and as he preached against those who live upon interest and profit, they controlled the masses as they do now, and so they encompassed His death on the cross."

Mr. Browne, it turns out, is not only a reformer and an organizer, but a theosophist. "Do you not see anything singular in the coming together of Brother Coxey and myself,"

said he. "I believe that a part of the soul of Christ happened to come into my being by re-incarnation." I believe also that another part of Christ's soul is in Brother Coxey, by the same process, and that is what has brought us together, closer than two brothers. That prevents all jealousies between us; that strikes down all rivalry. That permits of each according to the other the full measure of credit due, and the establishment of an equilibrium of justice between us and mankind that must prevail all over this land, eventually, as this principle grows. I also believe that the remainder of the soul of Christ has been fully re-incarnated in thousands of people throughout the United States today, and that accounts for the tremendous response to this call of ours, to try to bring about peace and plenty, to take the place of panic and poverty.

"To accomplish it means the second coming of Christ, and I believe in the prophecy that He is to come, not in any one single form, but in the whole people. Now you have the reason for the banner of peace with His figure as a central painting, and that is why we start out on this mission on Easter Sunday, for 'He hath risen.'"

As all the chemical elements of a human being, as science proves, go back into their various reservoirs of nature at the death of a person, and thus are used over again in the birth of other persons, why may not the *soul matter* be used over again? This is on the line of reason, and not superstition.—C.B.

Bulletin No. 3 of the J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association (published February 28, 1894)

To the Public:

Space will not permit any reference in this Bulletin to the many, many words of cheer that have come to us from all parts of this unhappy country to-day, in response to this non-partisan call to march to Washington to protest against National Bankruptcy and the total annihilation of Equal Rights to all, by the issuance of interest bearing bonds, without due act of Congress, and in the interest of the favored few at the expense of the many; and also to exercise that guaranteed power of this republican form of government, that has never yet been put into practice, of the sovereign people making manifest to their public servants their wishes in a specific matter, and thus try to prevent what will inevitably ensue in these United States (if something is not done) to the descendants of Revolutionary sires, and all good people of other countries of the globe, who have, by virtue of our constitution, become our brothers in government, for they will find themselves under a more galling yoke than that George the Third failed to make binding over a century ago—by the time \$200,000,000 more interest bonds are issued by Carlisle.

We propose, by the non-interest bearing bond plan, to substitute four thousand millions of actual money, issued direct from the government, without interest, said money being a full legal tender for all debts, public and private by the states, counties, townships, municipalities, towns and villages depositing with the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States their non-interest twenty-five year bonds, said bonds to be retired at the

rate of four percent per annum, which will allow said states, counties, townships, municipalities, towns and villages to pay all their now existing interest bonding indebtedness, and to make all further needed improvements, such as public buildings, water works, electric light plants, street improvements, etc., and to own all street railroads without paying one cent of tribute in the shape of interest to any person. This four thousand millions of actual money will take the place of the four thousand millions of confidence money—four dollars of confidence money to every dollar of actual money having been created prior to May 1, 1893, by our banking institutions, through their system of discounting notes, bank books, etc.—and which confidence money made the exchanges of the business of the country the same as the actual money did, but which confidence money has almost vanished since the panic of 1893, and will result in bankrupting the majority of business men of this country if this actual money is not put in circulation through this system of non-interest bearing bonds plan, which the Good Roads plan of \$500,000,000, to provide the machinery whereby all the unemployed—skilled and unskilled, may be put to work, and the “bugaboo” of the “Tariff” would vanish as the mist would vanish as the mist before the morning sun, and peace and prosperity take the place of the prevalent panic and poverty.

The responses have been so hearty and the ideas advanced by our correspondents breathe so much of the spirit of brotherly love and co-operation, that it has caused Brother Coxe and myself to believe that the people are really ready to overthrow the mountain of usury if possible, or at least do all in their power to peaceably aid in the passage of these two bills of Brother Coxe’s, given elsewhere in this bulletin, and which, if passed, would mean death to usury, and then would come to the realization of the vision of St. John, of a “new Heaven and a new Earth”—a realization of what the carpenter of Nazareth taught by the sea of Galilee eighteen centuries ago, that the “Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;” that He meant that it would come, or could come whenever the people so will it; that if the principles of christianity [sic] were applied to affairs here on this earth it would bring heaven here as He wished, “on earth, as it is done in Heaven,” and not as now applied, that believers must die, like by life insurance, to win it.”

We firmly believe now, in view of the surrounding circumstances, that the time of fulfillment of prophecy is near at hand, and that all those who go in this procession to Washington will be the humble instruments through which the second Babylon—the MONEY POWER OF USURY—is to fall, and, that the second coming of Christ is now here; that his coming is not in the flesh of any one being, but reincarnated in the souls of all those who wish to establish a co-operative government through such legislation as this proposes, to take the place of the cut-throat competitive system that keeps alive the crucifixion—“for the crucifixion of Jesus is the spiritual correspondence of the crucifixion of the people” through usury. What emotions it must create in the breasts of all who have intelligence and brotherly love, to realize that we are really living in the era of a great cataclysm in human affairs; and how plain it must seem to them, as it does to us, when they look about them and think a moment, that the “world (old custom) is coming to an end.”

Many letters are received saying that it is no use to get up petitions; that Congress will disregard them. But we urge all to do so who can, for, remember, these petitions will be taken to Congress differently than any heretofore: they will be “petitions with boots on,” as recommended by the late L. L. Polk when president of the Farmers’ Alliance.

Some of the gold bug papers, in fear and trembling, are saying “if one hundred and fifty thousand ‘cranks’ should even get to Washington, what would that signify—there are 65,000,000 people in the United States?” In reply to this, we say truthfully to Congress, that we not only represent ourselves who go, but we speak for the millions of workers comprising the American Federation of Labor, through their official convention at Chicago, December 15, 1893; also, the Farmers’ Alliance of the United States, and the Knights of Labor, and other organizations, besides the thousands of signatures of professional mercantile and other citizens of the United States—in fact, we can safely say we represent two-thirds of the producing and useful citizens of the Union with Wall street and England, as in ’76 against us.

We send herewith other petitions. Please get them signed as soon as possible, and after the procession starts send to care of Hon. A. E. Redstone, 317 4½ street, Washington, and they will reach us for use on May 1st.

It is not expected that any large number will ... us all the way, but that there will be, by the time we reach Washington, many thousands. More may get there [by] other conveyance—the meeting in Washington is the objective point of this programme. “Get there!” some how.

We hope no one will join the Commonweal who is in ... and as much as possible only those who are able themselves. We want no thieves or anarchists—boodlers or bankers—to join us. We want patriots, not bummers; [not firearms], but manhood. All who do so are expected to bring blankets and be prepared to “rough it,” and no ... with true American grit to grin and bear it. It will be no picnic, but a trying ordeal. Brother Coxe has borne all expense thus far alone in this matter, and will up to when the procession starts, and do all he can after, and I ... devoted my whole time for five months, for I receive ... from Brother Coxe as many suppose, wrongfully, so the time has come when others should give their mite. Let every ... and townsman along our line of march, when they come to meetings, bring with them something they can spare; butter, bacon, ham, fruit, grain and hay for our horses ... put into our commissary wagons, and they will not regret ... all who choose, write their names on their contributions ... they will be published on the roll of honor to be issued ... Our commissary wagons will call at the stores ... we pass through; have your contributions ready for us ... of the procession will be measured by our commissary ... if this experiment is a failure the failure will rest with the ... people and not with us. “God helps those who help themselves.”

People libing west and elsewhere off our line of ... send to any railroad station, freight prepaid, near ... march, or before we start from Massillon, about ... they choose, addressed Salon C. Thayer, Commissary ... Clothing and boots will doubtless be useful

also. What a sublime spectacle it will be of a band of brothers who ... sending to another band of brothers who can go, to [ensure] a siege that will bring benefit to all. The seasons of ... chosen for this, at a time when the roads of the country make people realize the necessity of the bill being passed ... than at any other time, and Congress should be flooded with telegrams and resolutions from mass meetings then.

In addition to these expected sources of supplies ... had drawn and copyrighted two large cartoons, one ... "The Prayer," or organized society as it is, after Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," and "The Prayer Angel," or organized society as it should be, and would be if ... Co-operation in money, industry and government was ... as these bills of Brother Coxey's would be entering. Will will sell the two for 25 cents, or send them post paid ... address on receipt of that amount. I have also copyrighted a photograph, upon the suggestion of many, of Brother Coxey and one of myself, which we will send for 25 cents ... autographs for 50 cents; also a photograph of the ... Peace"—Christ's picture, painted by myself, will be ... cents, or the whole set for one dollar—in advance—the

Bulletin No. 4 (excerpt, as published in Osman C. Hooper's "The Coxey Movement in Ohio," originally published May 1, 1894)¹

We want no thieves or anarchists—boodlers and bankers—to join us. We want patriots, not bummers. No firearms, but manhood.

Bulletin No. 4 (excerpt, as published by the *Washington Times*, May 1, 1894)

Having faith in the rectitude of our intentions and believing that we are acting from inspiration from on high, we believe that the liberty loving people comprising this indivisible American Union will respond in such numbers to this call of duty, that no Hessian Pinkerton thugs, much less state militia or United States troops can be hired for gold to fire upon such a myriad of human beings, unarmed and defenseless, assembling under the aegis of the Constitution, upon the steps of the nation's Capitol, to assert their prerogative, shielded as they would be by right and justice, and guided by Him in the interest of good and higher government, and thus will take place that final battle, long foretold; for it will be as noble Lester Hubbard once wrote: 'That plain of Armageddon, dimly seen by ancient seer when the brute nature and immortal soul of man close in final contest, which shall herald the dawning of the era of love and tenderness, when nations shall know the fatherhood of God and live the brotherhood of man. This was the prayer of Him on Calvary's cross, and at last it shall come true, for the Everlasting God hath so ordained it.'

¹ Osman C. Hooper, "The Coxey Movement in Ohio," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1900): 169.

Bulletin No. 5 (excerpt, as published by the *Washington Times*, May 22, 1894)

“The principle involved in the bills, if practically applied to all governments, would overthrow thrones, unseat prejudiced Presidents and prevent the future growth of potentates, purse-proud plutocrats, and other parasites and cause the ‘old earth’ to pass away and usher in a new heaven and a new earth. The not startling statement that two Senators have been approached with bribes surely proves that this move is timely. Society has reached a stage when the whole people must act or else our form of government will become a melancholy wreck.”

Bulletin No. 6 (published January 26, 1895)

TO THE MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC—On December 7th 1893 was issued Bulletin No. 1 of this Association giving the full text of the Coxe Good Roads Bill it was proposed to present to Congress, and on December 15th of that year Carl Browne attended the National Convention of the American Federation of Labor at Chicago, Illinois, and succeeded in getting it unanimously endorsed by that great organization, mainly through the aid of its recently elected president, Mr. John McBride, and Mr. Penna, of the United Mine Workers Union.

As heretofore reported, on January 1st 1894, Mr. J.S. Coxe, his mind having been much engrossed, studying [sic] how to make the principle of his Good Roads Bill apply to all public improvements, thought out his Non-Interest bearing Bond Bill. (both of these bills are now before Congress.)

On January 31st 1894, was issued Bulletin No. 2 of this Association containing cartoon petitions calling for signatures to the same, for the purpose of presenting them to Congress by means of a procession of the enforced idle men of the country to reach Washington, D.C., May 1st, 1894. Thousands and thousands of signatures came to us in response to this call, and on February 28th, 1894, we issued Bulletin No. 3 of this Association giving plan of organization of the proposed procession, or, Commonweal as we had determined to call it, as it was for the Commonweal of all the people. It also contained a map of the proposed march, designs for badges, notices of meetings to be held enroute [sic], etc.

On March 24th 1894, we issued Bulletin No. 4 of this Association, giving General order No. 1 of the movement of the Commonweal, songs, etc., and on Easter Sunday, promptly on time, the Commonweal started on that ever memorable march that has taken its niche in history as the initial step in a mighty peaceable revolution that will, despite the machinations of money monopolists, and muddle-headed and selfish would be reformers, certainly overthrow the present robber system of Bank issue of money, as the sun shines during the day, and the stars at night.

The Commonweal was accompanied by a half hundred newspaper correspondents, and the “civilized” world apprised of its movement each day. All that mean ingenuity could invent, and cultured cunning could connive, was attempting to disrupt its ranks and

prevent the Commonweal from reaching Washington on time but failed, and the pages of history contains no more heroic picture than those footsore, weary and ragged men, idle, through no fault of their own, plodding over the mountains, through ice and snow, sleet and rain, many leaving their tracks stained with their own blood, like their forefathers at Valley Forge, Trenton and Princeton in the war of the Revolution, and like those forefathers of ours who were sneered and jeered at by “Tories,” their descendants were called “Hobos” and “Tramps”— by whom? Charity forbids naming.

On Sunday, April 29th in the Commonweal reached Brightwood Park inside the District of Columbia although the District Commissioners had previously issued a proclamation forbidding it to enter or to march on Pennsylvania Avenue. Seeing the absurdity of their position they rescinded the order, and Major Moore, issued a line of march for it to pass over on May 1st, and at 10 a.m. the column moved toward the capital for the purpose of allowing each member of it, all being citizens of the United States to exercise their constitutional right to peaceably assemble in a public place, the Capitol steps to discuss their grievances (as per constitution of the U.S.). Promptly on time the Commonweal reached the Capitol, being greeted on the line of the march, and at the Capitol by the largest concourse of people ever known to have assembled there, and which constantly cheered Mr. Coxe and others in the line, especially the Goddess of Peace (Miss Mamie Coxe) and little legal tender (Mr. Coxe’s younger child). On reaching New Jersey avenue entrance to the Capitol grounds off of “B” street, the Commonweal halted, as Major Moore had absolutely refused to allow the men to go on to the Capitol grounds in marching order, and as it was thought best not to disband or attempt to force our way to the Capitol steps, the Commonwealers were told to keep their places until further orders, and, to their credit, this they did, under the most trying ordeal shortly afterwards, for it was well known that the money power hoped that they would break the peace that day so as to have excuse to mow them down with Gatling guns, as being cheaper than sustaining the “soup houses,” besides, the main idea of the march was to call attention to the whole people of the United States to the Coxe bills, which could best be done by his speaking from the Capitol steps. But for him to reach those steps with a cordon of mounted police across the New Jersey avenue required generalship, that was solved by police forcing Carl Browne over the coping on the Capitol grass, and as he did so the policemen on guard at the New Jersey avenue thinking Mr. Coxe had done so too, dashed off through the shrubbery, and left the entrance way open to him, and he was not apprehended until he had reached the Capitol steps, but here, a Lieutenant of the Washington police, informed him that Vice President Stevenson had given no orders to allow him to speak, as Mr. Coxe firmly believed he would, from the nature of the interview he had held with that official and Speaker Crisp in the evening previous on their power in the matter under the terms of the unconstitutional law that the police were acting under. Anticipating, however, such a possibility, Mr. Coxe had prepared a protest which he handed to the press and which thus practically served the same purpose as if he had spoken. This so discomfited [sic] the “Powers that be,” that they determined to punish him in some way, and, as they had arrested Carl Browne on the petty charge of “getting on the grass” after a vain attempt by the police to create a riot by furious onslaught, in which a colored man who had come to aid Carl Browne had been shamelessly clubbed, all that was necessary—controlling the courts of the District

of Columbia as they do—was to arrest him as principal in a colossal “conspiracy” to get on the “grass” and with a stock Judge and jury, send him and Browne to jail in the hope that it would cure him and the agitation cease, but on the contrary it had the opposite effect, the people of his district in Ohio, (18th Con.) nominated him for Congress, and as soon as he was released from jail he entered upon the most original and phenomenal campaign ever made. Purchasing a mammoth 3 pole tent, requiring 40 horses and 25 men to move, he canvassed the District, drawing immense crowds to hear him and speaking twice a day including Sundays. In the meantime, the force of public opinion had caused the introduction of his two bills in the both branches of Congress, and the Senate Committee on Education and Labor allowed both him and Carl Browne to come before it and discuss the merits of the two Bills.

The only cause of disappointment in the whole Commonweal movement, was the half-heartedness of many “labor leaders,” peoples [sic] party officials, newspapers, Senators and Congressmen in giving it their support. Had they come out boldly for it, instead of the halting, shuffling, “waiting to see how the cat would jump,” policy many adopted, sufficient supplies would have been sent on to the camp at Washington, and no doubt,” a more satisfactory showing than here made might have been given, but it is more in sorrow than in anger that this truth is told. Had every State even done as well as Missouri, quite a different condition would exist today. The good people of Springfield in that state, sent on to the Commonweal Camp at Washington through Bro. A. Harrington, \$400 in flour, but this only lasted while its leaders were in jail, and realizing that Mr. [illegible] thought best for Carl Browne to pick out a number of men, as suggested in the 20th Century Magazine, and go forth on a Missionary tour ostensible to Wall street, but in reality to rouse the people to the necessity of sustaining the Commonweal, which in the start was fairly successful, but just about the time he got the camp selfsustaining [sic] another diabolical plot against human rights that ought to bring the blush of shame to every man born on American soil, was concocted by the money power and carried out by a willing tool in the person of the Governor of Maryland; and that was a raid upon the camp in the night, by fifty heavily armed policemen from Baltimore, surprising each of the men and taking them before a “Jeffries” justice of the peace in the plot, who shamelessly ordered them confined to the Maryland workhouse for no other crime than not having any work to do, the justice expressing sorrow that Mr. Coxe was not of the number, and showed great chagrin that the young man with the blue and gray uniform on was not Jesse Coxe—he having eluded the vigilance of the officers. And though busy with his campaign in Ohio, Mr. Coxe went to the scene of the outrage and employed a lawyer—Mr. Ralston—and applied for a Habeas Corpus and put the Governor of Maryland in such a dilemma that he was compelled to pardon the men out to save himself from the ignominy that would surely have followed his high handed proceedings ventilated in a court of record. But by some oversight, three Commonwealers were not let out until the last week in October, and the hardships that they underwent has been put in form of affidavits that has caused the Governor of Maryland to abandon the contest for reelection. One of these three men is so broken by hardships endured, that he is only existing on charity. Another one is in his bed in a public hospital in Washington, probably never to leave it alive. While the third came out stone blind, and all this in a land where the news papers [sic] are filling

their columns of outrages in Armenia and Siberia but fail to see such as this under their very noses.

In the meantime the Commonweal was kept up, and at Vineland, New Jersey, on the 15th of August 1894, it was re-organized by the addition of other ideas by the progressive men and women of that place. The word Christ was dropped out of deference to the miss-understanding existing in the minds of many good people in regard to its use and the words United States of America put in place. While Mr. Coxe proceeded with his campaign, Carl Browne went on to Wall street with the Commonwealers, the horses undergoing hardships as well as the men. At Princeton college the high toned pupils of monopoly to the number of 1400, mobbed Carl Browne and instead of punishing any one for the outrage, the authorities arrested and sentenced Carl Browne to thirty days in jail at Trenton, N.J. and he was only saved from it by, the intervention of a brave, liberty loving correspondent of the press by the name of Johnson, who was present, by a huge “bluff” on the authorities of a “roasting” in all the Newspapers of the land, and, they knew he represented the N.Y. Tribune.

On October 26th, finding it impossible to get a permit to parade the Commonwealers on Wall street were as sacred to the money power as the grass around the capitol [sic], and he was immediately arrested and put in jail, but was bailed out in a short time by people’s party men and he made three speeches the same evening in different parts of New York. The next day he appeared in the Tombs court, but they had their hands so full of “Lexow” and Parkhurst, that he was allowed to go free. He then returned to Washington, and established headquarters there under Marshal Primrose where the Commonweal now rests for future usefulness if it is ever again required. The day after the election it was found that Mr. Coxe had polled a very large vote which struck terror to those who had ridiculed his bills. (NOTE—it is worthy of mentioning here that Mr. Coxe’s vote was 24 per cent of the total cast, increasing the people’s party vote in his District from 1700 in 1894 to 8990; he also carried his home precinct by a vote of 78 to 32 Republican and 8 Democratic votes.)

Shortly after the election, Mr. Taubeneck, National chairman of the people’s party called a conference of the people’s party men at St. Louis, Mo., to consult with the National committee. At this conference as the editor of Vox Populi put it in a recent letter, “Mr. Coxe was the lion,” which shows the popularity of his plan to increase the currency, with the mass of the people’s partyites who attended it. The conference passed a resolution that the Coxe non-interest bond idea be the issue of the campaign of ’96, which fact the National committee strangely ignored in their address to the people, although he was accorded the honor of a mass meeting the evening previous to the conference by the local committee of St. Louis of the people’s party and at the conference the next day, was allowed the longest time to address it given to any speaker, as the St. Louis Daily Republic printed it the next day “the sentiment of the conference was that it {Coxe non-interest bond} should be the platform of the peoples party at the next national convention.

To that end Mr. Coxey has leased a suite of offices in the Clay block, Massillon, Ohio, for the campaign of '96, to be known as the Bureau of the Coxey non-interest bearing bond club National Organization and the Initiative Referendum. Carl Browne will be in charge, and from this bureau, literature on these subjects will be sent out all over the United States and clubs organized to carry into practical operation the platform of peoples party adopted at Omaha, that says: "We demand a national currency, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts public and private and that without the use of banking corporations, also by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

On the 8th of January this year the Sub-committee of the Ways and Means committee of the House, consisting of Hon. Wm. Bryan, Hons. Justin R. Whiting, Benton McMillin, John Dalzell and Julis Burrows gave Mr. Coxey a hearing of one hour and it showed the impression he made upon their minds by ordering the statement printed at the Government printing office in, pamphlet form for the information to congress [sic]. Persons desiring copies of this Public Document can obtain them by writing the members of congress [sic] in their district—free, or if wanted in lots of a hundred will be furnished at \$1.00 post paid by addressing us at Massillon, Ohio. This action was quite a contrast with the senate Finance committee, the chairman of which Senator Vorhees, had promised him a hearing previous to the holidays and then peremptorily [sic] refused at the last visit of Mr. Coxey to Washington.

We are now installed in our comfortable, comodious [sic] quarters above referred to, and the Bureau is in active operation and we would be pleased to have you call and see us. Believing that the people now want some specific, well defined financial plan, this step has been taken and the active co operation of all practical men and women is asked. We have prepared a Constitution and By-laws for club organization, which will be mailed to any address sent to this Bureau with or without stamps to pre-pay postage. Mr. Coxey holds himself to readiness to visit any locality to speak upon his bills and to organize clubs. Other organizers will be arranged for in each State as soon as possible. Information as to how to organize will be sent upon application. As soon as a non-interest bearing bond club is organized the secretary should forward immediately to this Bureau the names of the officers of the same and its members and post office addresses as it is intended to publish an illustrated semi occasional Bulletin of the progress of the movement to be mailed to each member.

A large Library History of the Commonweal is in preparation written conjointly by S. Coxey [sic] and Carl Browne and illustrated by numerous photographs and sketches taken enroute [sic]. As the first edition of this the only full and faithful history of the Commonweal will be published on subscription solely, all persons desiring the same should fill out the blanks accompanying this Bulletin and send to us soon as possible.

CARL BROWNE
Secretary

J.S. COXEY
President

J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the U.S.

Written Correspondence

Letter from Senator William Stewart of Nevada to Jacob Coxey, March 24, 1894

Dear Sir:

The preservation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was entrusted to the people under the Constitution of the United States. A free ballot was the means by which the sovereign people could retain the rights acquired by the patriots who gained the independence and established the government of the United States. There was a time when the ballot placed the control of the government in Washingtons, Jeffersons, Jacksons and Lincolns. Such use of the ballots sent terror and dismay to tyrants, despots, and plundering oligarchies throughout the world. The enemies of justice and human rights predicted that the success of the ballot was temporary; that man was not capable of self-government. The destruction of the ancient republics and the repeated failures of the people to govern themselves was cited in proof of their contention that despotism, oppression and slavery were the fate of the human race. There have been no Washingtons, Jeffersons, Jacksons or Lincolns elected President of the United States in two decades. The soulless despot of alien origin is monarch of the commercial world. His name is money. His servants are administrative and legislative bodies. The army you are collecting used the ballot to put the army [sic], the navy [sic], and the treasury department [sic] under the control of banks and bondholders and place in the halls of Congress representatives to do the bidding of the money-changers.

The ides of November are approaching. An opportunity for the people to strike for Liberty will again be presented. The old parties, which have surrendered the rights of the people to the rule of the contracted Capital, will ask for a renewal of their lease of power at the ballot box. Every movement of the people to obtain relief outside of the form of law will be denounced as anarchy. The purse strings of the nation are held by Congress under the dictation of the administration, and the President is commander in chief of the army [sic] and navy [sic] of the United States. The attempt of a starving multitude to march to Washington will furnish an excuse for using the power of the government of the states, and of the United States to put down anarchy and insurrection. The vigor with which the laws will be executed against starving people will be an argument in the next election for continuing in power concentrated capital as necessary for the maintenance of law and order. The sufferings of the people are the result of electing them into office to do the bidding of the money powers, which by legislation and administration have destroyed more than one-half the metallic money of the world and cornered the other half. Twenty years of uninterrupted rule of banks and bondholders have concentrated wealth of the world in the hands of the few, and enabled them to seize the telegraph, the press, and nearly every other avenue through which the people can obtain information of the cunning devices by which the parasites absorb what the masses produce. There is but one battlefield where the forces of liberty and equality can meet and overthrow the enemy of human rights. There is no law now in the statute books authorizing the President of the United States to march an army against the people at the ballot box. Every attempt to place the ballot under the control of

federal authority has thus far been successfully resisted. Let your army be reinforced by the millions of the unemployed and by the wealth producers of the nation, and be thoroughly mobilized for the battle in November, when a victory for the rights of the man against the despotism of the banks and bonds is possible.

Abandon the folly of marching an unarmed multitude of starving laborers against the modern appliances of war under the control of a soulless money trust. Such folly will augment the power of the oppressor and endanger the safety of the ballot itself. Disorder is all that is required to insure the supremacy of the armed forces of the money power is at the polls. The Constitution of the United States is our charter of liberty. It has been subverted by an oligarchy of concentrated wealth. False agents of the people have betrayed their trust and brought misery and want when abundance and prosperity seemed assured. Traitors to human rights have usurped the power of the government through the machinery of party and the arts of demagogues. Hurl them from power. Trust no man who has once deceived you. Let the government of the United States be administered for and not against the people. Use the ballot to protect liberty, justice and equal rights, and not to elevate to power the agents of banks and bonds to perpetuate the rule of an oligarchy of wealth.

Yours very truly,
William M. Stewart

Letter from Jacob Coxey to Senator William Stewart of Nevada, March 28, 1894

Dear Sir:

I have seen your letter in the newspapers addressed "General Coxey." Allow me to inform you that I am not a general. I am simply the president of the J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the United States and ex-officio of the Commonwealth of Christ. I am not heading an Army, no matter how much a subsidized press, at the dictation of the money power, tries to make this appear, and all the epithets hurled at us for as being anarchists or a mob get more weight from the ill-advised admissions of our friends than all else besides. The warfare of the silver man against gold and bonds under your leadership in the United States Senate was magnificent. The morning dispatches state that even the President of the United States is engaged to deal with Wall street [sic] to veto the Bland seigniorage bill in the sole interest of gold. So the die is cast. We shall march on peaceably and depend on the outpouring of a peaceful public to defend us from Pinkerton's policeman, military, soldiers of petty party politicians. This is a non-partisan movement and he who is not with us is against us; there is not room for neutral ground, and that a house divided against itself cannot stand is as true today as when originally uttered and used in the dark days of the Civil War by Abraham Lincoln, the father of the legal tender. Following in his footsteps we seek to dethrone gold, as our forefathers did King George in 1776, and once more have legal tender money such as would be if the two Coxey bills are passed. Now we have followed your leadership, advocating the bill for unlimited coinage of silver as money, and if we are to judge of the silver men by you, looked upon as you are as their mouthpiece, your attitude in

citing this movement as folly places you and the silver men you represent in the unenviable position as the ally of our common enemy—gold. Thus the rubicon has been crossed by the silver horses and we cannot falter. The fiat must now go forth—demonetization [sic] of gold as well as silver.

Yours,
J.S. Coxe

Letter from Jacob Coxe to Mr. F. L. Baldwin, May 24, 1894

My Dear Sir

I was in hopes that when I accepted the Hospitality of Uncle Sam's Summer Resort that I would get some Rest from the Arduous duties of the last two months, but find that am just as busy in Jail as outside of it! Overwhelmed with Sympathetic Letters and Telegrams, a Delegation of eight Washington Ladies today brought us Bouquets and were organized in the Auditorium of the Jail into a Commonweal Commune, so you see we are not idle although imprisoned for an Idea, not an Offence Committed! busy from daylight until Dark, we have quite comfortable quarters now! Mrs. Coxe bought each of us a good single mattress and Feather Pillows, with Sheets and Blankets so we are in Clover in spite of Philadelphia Clubdom! You can arrange for the trial of Everson case anytime after June 13th.

Yours truly,
J. S. Coxe.

P.S. advise me.

Letter from George Ward (Coxeyite) to Editor of Washington Times, June 10, 1894

To the Editor of *The Times*:

Allow me to say through your pages, please, that we are just simply ever so thankful to the people of Washington for all they have done for us. Their noble kindness and generosity will never be forgotten. We appreciate it the more because of the fact that we were called revolvers, traitors, and rebels, which we are not. We are only a band of men working for one specific object, identically as another band is, the same as two or more families of one neighborhood might be working for the accomplishment of some public purpose of benefit to all, retaining their separate organizations, of course.

Our first demand is for the employment of all idle men by the nation, states, counties, cities, and towns on public works of every kind, and that money be furnished by the general government for that purpose.

We desire to especially thank the public comfort committee for the fair and impartial stand they have assumed and maintain of knowing no faction in their work of glorious benevolence.

It is their desire and intention to apportion out the provisions which they may have anything to do with pro rata after this to both camps, each captain or marshal drawing according to the number of men he has. The committee think that all supplies now in or that shall come to either camp should be dealt out in the same manner, and a committee or commission of at least two from each camp should so distribute them. It is certainly a fact that all donations from any general source were and are intended to be for the use of all the commonwealers and industrials who may be here near Washington, or who shall yet come, and not for any one camp, nor for any one, two, or three men by any manner of means.

I went to the jail to-day (Saturday) in company with Mr. Carter, of the public comfort committee, for the purpose, among others, of asking Messrs. Coxe and Browne to do their part for establishing a common commissary, as above indicated. They refused to thus co-operate with us. I sincerely hope they will change their minds, and that soon, 'Wise men change their opinions often.'

Our mutual friends request us to harmonize and combine as much as possible. It seems impossible for the commonwealers to give up their name and organization, and it is the same with the industrials; but it appears to the writer that in view of the fact that we all have a common purpose and practically a common plan and method of accomplishing it, we could and should have a common commissary.

With fraternal love to all, I remain solidly for the cause of humanity.

George E. Ward

Written Petition

Petition of the Commonweal (as published by the Alexandria Gazette, May 9, 1894)

"We the undersigned, citizens of the United States of America now sojourning in the District of Columbia, which is not only the asylum of oppressed by all nations, but our national home, do hereby respectfully petition your honorable body to allow brother J. S. Coxe, of Massillon, O., and Carl Brown, of Calistoga, California, to appear before you to voice our wishes in regard to the proposed legislation for which we made the march to Washington, namely, the J. S. Coxe good roads and non-interest bearing bond bills, and which, we believe, if passed by Congress, would not only solve the present prevalent depression, give employment to us, representing as we do all branches of industry of many millions more like us all over the Union, but would effectually, we believe, provide against any possible recurrence of the extraordinary condition now existing in the industrial and business arteries of the nation which, it seems plain to us if

not remedied, will bring death to republican institutions or revolution to maintain them by force of arms which all must deplore.”

Speech Transcripts

Jacob Coxey at Camp Yorktown, Hagerstown, MD (April 21, 1894)

Comrades. –The drenching rain to-night prevented our meeting and at the primary invitation of the populace of this lovely place, of which, every citizen is a part of a continuously exciting picture, which, if on canvass, would charm the eye of the most critical connoisseur of the picturesque. I have concluded to remain over until Sunday morning at least, in as much as the general supt. of the – Western Maryland Railroad freight ware house – Mr. H.C. Kohler, has kindly tendered us to the use of the said warehouse during our stay. Bugle call will not be blown until 8 am. Breakfast at 9 am. I desire it distinctly understood, that Jesse Coxey in my absense [sic] from camp has full command and all marshals and others connected with the Commonweal should obey him as myself for the reason that we must have no confusion. In the absense [sic] of both myself and Chief of Staff Jesse Coxey, Community Marshal, Broderick has full charge, I deem it extremely necessary to make this clear to you all. The name of the Camp Saturday will be as stated in general order previously issued & for the reason given – Camp Medhurst.

Jacob Coxey at Camp California, Williamsport, MD (April 18, 1894)

The aim and object of this march to Washington has been to awaken the attention of the whole people to a sense of their duty and impressing upon Congress the necessity of for giving immediate relief to the four million of unemployed people, and their immediate families, consisting of twelve million to fifteen million more. The idea of the march is to attract the attention of the whole people of this country to the greatest question that has ever been presented to them—the money question. Believing that the people can only digest one idea at a time, it was necessary to get up some attraction that would overshadow other matters and have their mind centered upon this one idea and to understand it intelligently.

Knowing that this march would consume thirty-five days from Massillon to Washington, that it would attract their attention and we could present this money feature to them in an impressive sense and a business manner and thus be able to educate them more in six weeks’ time than through any one political party in ten years.

Our plan is to arrive at Washington by May 1, next, and camp there until Congress takes some action upon the two bills that have been presented to them by Senator Peffer, viz.: “The Good Roads Bill” and “The Non-interest Bearing Bond Bill.” Believing that the unemployed people and the business men of this country whose interests are identical will try and get to Washington the first week in May, from three hundred thousand to five hundred thousand strong. In this manner they will bring the strongest impression to

bear upon Congress coming through the common people that has ever been made in the history of this country.

So long as Congress can keep the people isolated from each other all over the land, they will never grant them any relief, but when they come in a body like this, peaceably to discuss their grievances and demanding immediate relief, Congress can no longer turn a deaf ear, but will heed them and do it quickly.

[Read Good Roads bill.]

Now the propositions are, that Congress shall issue and appropriate five hundred million dollars of full legal tender treasury notes to the states and territories, pro rata, with the number of miles of roads in each state and territory at the rate of twenty million dollars per month, for the improvement of the public roads of this country, and to give employment to the unemployed in making these improvements. Another provision of this bill says that all labor shall be paid by the day—no contract labor—and the rate shall not less than one dollar and fifty cents per day of eight hours. This will settle the eight hour question, because it brings into competition the government, which stands ready at all times to employ the idle labor and making public roads at one dollar and fifty cents per day for a day of eight hours, and no employer of labor outside of the government will be able to employ a single man for less than one dollar and fifty cents per day of eight hours, so this will practically settle the eight hour question.

The other matter under consideration is the Non-interest Bearing Bond Bill, now before Congress, as follows:

[Read Non-Interest-Bearing Bonds bill.]

This non-interest, twenty-five-year bond bill grants to all states, counties, townships, municipalities, towns or villages the right to draw their non-interest, twenty-five-year bond, not to exceed one-half the assessed valuation of their entire property, and to deposit the same with the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington. It will then be mandatory upon him to issue the face value of these bonds and full legal tender treasury notes of the denominations of one, two, five, ten and twenty dollars each, returning ninety-nine per cent of those notes to the states, counties, townships, municipalities, towns or villages depositing these bonds, and the government retaining one per cent of the expensive engraving the treasury notes. The party so receiving the money agrees to repay it back at the rate of four per cent per annum, or in twenty-five annual installments without interest.

This will enable the states, counties, townships, municipalities, towns or villages, to make all the public improvements that they will need at all for all time to come without paying one cent of tribute to anyone in the shape of usury. They will be enabled to build their statehouses, their insane asylums, courthouses, infirmaries and school houses. All municipalities can build their own market-houses, public libraries, museums, enginehouses, schoolhouses, and public halls where people can come and discuss all

questions that interest them; pave their own streets; own and build their own electric light plant, water works, street railroads, and other public improvements that are a convenience and comfort, and promote the advancement of the whole people.

After this system of public improvements his inaugurated, it will settle the money question, as it will supply all the money needed for the public convenience, and to develop the resources of the country, and not one dollar can go into circulation without a service being rendered in the value credited to the government direct in the shape of public improvements, which will be beneficial to all.

This will supply actual money in place of confidence money. This will substitute a cash system for a credit or script system. The business of this country has been done on confidence money. Now that confidence has vanished, business has also vanished.

One year ago we had in circulation \$1,500,000,000 in actual money, \$1,000,000,000 of which was in the hands of the people making the small exchanges, \$500,000,000 was in the banks and bank reserves, and upon these reserves the banks of this country had created \$4,000,000,000 of confidence money, and by the conspiracy of the money lenders in Europe in throwing their securities upon our markets and converting them into gold and withdrawing the gold from the country. Thus through the continued agitation of the daily press claiming that if the government did not stop the purchase of silver through the Sherman bill, it would drive gold out of this country and would create a panic.

They did, through these means scare the small depositors and employees of the country into withdrawing their savings and deposits from the bank, and when employers went to the bank to get accommodations in the shape of discounts, the banker said, "self-preservation being the first law of nature, I must protect my depositors, and cannot therefore, discount your paper."

The manufacturer, expecting that there would be no trouble and using the paper that he had taken in payment for his goods, was nonplused and compelled to close down his works on account of not being able to realize this paper. This then became general throughout the country, business men were compelled to suspend, and thousands of millions of credit was affected. The paper confidence money which had been transacting the business of the country just the same as the actual money did, commenced to banish, and as it vanished business vanished with it; workshops became idle and are now rusting away; men were thrown out of employment, and now devastation and ruin have spread over our land.

To cap the climax, when the money famine was at its height, President Cleveland called an extra session of Congress to repeal the Sherman Act, which act did increase the volume of money at the rate of four million dollars per month. Had it been left upon the statute books, it would have made money a little easier, and by repealing that act business has become worse. There is little hope for the future in a business sense unless the two measures mentioned are passed. These would give immediate relief to the

unemployed, in making public improvements and substitute actual money in place of confidence money that has already vanished, thus taking away all possibility of panic and hard times in the future and make it an impossibility for a man to seek work without finding it.

Protest Song Lyrics

Silver Song, by C.M. Maxson

Ho! boys, what's this that we hear?
They've strike a new scheme we are told,
We have got to kill silver old England declares,
And pay what we owe her in gold;
Now she is the creditor nation,
This old tyrant from over the sea,
Eight billions of wealth she owns and controls
In this beautiful land of the free.

Now, say, shall she have her own way
To dictate what our money shall be?
No, she's hit the wrong man, when she struck Uncle Sam,
And we'll teach her a lesson you'll see.
Then stand on your feet like a man,
No matter what gold bugs may say,
We're on to their nice little plan
And we'll give the whole scheme dead away;
Ring it out with a shout,
let it echo o'er land and o'er sea
Free and unlimited silver my boys,
America's money shall be.

When England brought up our bonds just after the war,
We could pay them in silver or gold,
But in '73 she came over the sea
And got the law changed, we are told.
She found an old gray-headed traitor,
Who for money his country would sell,
And when to her schemes he did cater,
The devil with envy did yell.
Says he, "Heavens and earth, but I'd give all I'm worth,"
"If I had this old sinner in H—allelujah."

Marching with Coxey, by Courtney Snow White

We're going to join Coxey and on to Washington,
To interview the president to see what can be done,

And we will do it peaceably without a single gun,
While we go marching with Coxe.

Hurrah! hurrah! the people's will be done,
Hurrah! hurrah! without a single gun,
And this shall be our battle cry, on to Washington,
While we go marching with Coxe.

And now we're dead in earnest and something must be done,
For long ago the time has passed demanding things for fun,
And although they meet us there with threaded gatling gun
Still will go marching with Coxe.

Oh how the "Plutes" hooted when they first heard the plan
That full a million men would march with Coxe in the van,
But now they're kind o' weakening and say, we guess they can,
While we go marching with Coxe.

They say the ragged "Wealer" boys cannot stand the strain
They'll march up to the Capitol and then marched down again,
But that we've scared them terribly, to everyone is plain,
While we go marching with Coxe.

Now all the country thoroughfares, are lined with Coxe's clan
Pushing through to Washington as fast as ere they can,
Demanding legislation to help the working man,
While we go marching with Coxe.

Go Join Coxe's Army, by O. Dubois

I suppose you've heard of Coxe and his army on the Tramp,
'Tis composed of various elements, from the worker to the scamp.
They are Marching on to Washington our Congressmen to see,
They propose to change existing laws to suit us all to a T.
Then go join Coxe's Army, if you want to see the earth,
In a Pullman car you'll ride with the door's hung on the side
If you go join Coxe's Army.

They have vowed they never will wash their face until their Journeys o'er,
And I don't think that they'll wash them then for they've not done it much before.
They are going to put out greenbacks on the monthly installment plan,
If you want your share of whisky or beer just follow up Coxe's band.
Then go join Coxe's Army, get your share of eggs and Ham,
They give you toast and quail or thirty days in jail
If you go join Coxe's Army.

And when upon their uppers they will reach the white house [sic] door,
And Cleveland reaches for his gun will travel on some more,
They'll make them work for all they get and where will Coxey be then,
He'll be in the stew and so will you if you follow up Coxey's band.
Then go join Coxey's Army, go to congress [sic] with the gang,
They will vote a keg of beer for the tramps that gather there
If you go to join Coxey's Army.

Bold Warrior Waite and the governor, is setting up a road,
He has threatened to clean out the government, wade up to his knees in gore,
He couldn't raise a corp'rals guard to carry out his plan,
The people's going east to march and feast and follow up Coxey's band.
Then he'd better go and join Coxey's Army, be an officer in the line,
He can work his game of bluff, all the farmers kids can cuff
Which he can't do with Uncle Sam's Army.

I think I'll have to leave this town
For the people are getting so foxy,
That when I asked for cake or pie
They tell me to go join Coxey,
I've got an hour to leave the town,
Or they'll put me to breaking rocks,
But you can bet your pants that they won't get the chance,
For I'm off to join General Cox.

Now I'll go join Coxey's Army,
Rob a hen coop on the side,
And if a farmer's dog by chance, chewed to the bosom off my pants,
For a pension then I'll sue Coxey's Army.

Coxey's Army Song, by George Nixon (as published by the Cumberland Evening Times, April 19, 1894)

Come, we'll tell a story, boys,
We'll sing another song,
As we go trudging with sore feet
The road to Washington;
We never shall forget this tramp
Which sounds the Nation's gong.
As we go marching to Congress.

Hurrah, hurrah, we'll sound the jubilee;
Hurrah, hurrah, for the flag that makes you free;
So we'll sing the chorus now,
Wherever we may be,
While we go marching to Congress.

“Hobos, bums and cranks,” my boys,
Some deluded folks exclaim,
As onward with untiring step
We plunge through snow and rain;
But when we take our seats, my lads,
They’ll change their late refrain,
And call us the cavaliers of Congress.

Never let your heart grow sad,
The world is rolling on;
A few more years, a few more tears,
And we will all be gone;
But those who live to read of us,
Will sing this little dong
Of when we were marching to Congress.

Our leader, he’s a gentleman,
His heart is brave and true,
He stood a charge of ridicule,
Of bayonets sharp and new;
We never can desert the man,
Whatever else we do,
While we are marching to Congress.

Then sound that good, old bugle, boys,
Fall in, all ye oppressed;
We’ll march away with spirits gay,
And never stop to rest,
Till the tyrants’ grip is torn away,
With his diadem and crest,
On we go, marching to Congress.

Code of Conduct Regulations

Regulations issued by Carl Browne (as published by the Reville Echo, April 5, 1894)

Obscene, profane language along the march and in the camp is forbidden in order that there may be no ground for charges of insulting women and children. Absence from duty and refusal to obey orders will also no longer be allowed. The penalties are the withholding of one meal from the offenders, and the aggravated offenses dismissal from the army. Hereafter all soldiers must march, and abandoning of the roads for freight trains will be grounds for dishonorable discharge.

Other

Badge of "Unknown" Smith² (as published by the Uniontown News Standard, April 28, 1894)

Friendship, cooperation and peace. The unknown contingent of the Commonwealth Army. We favor all laws that bring peace on earth and good will to men.

Rhetoric of Army Representatives as Quoted by Newspapers

Alexandria Gazette

Jacob Coxey, January 27, 1894: "You'll find that when we reach Washington, on May 1, we'll have 100,000 men. We'll not take a dollar with us and instead of muskets every man will carry a white flag with the words 'Peace on Earth, Goodwill Toward Men, but Death to Interest-bearing Bonds.' No criminals or anarchists will be allowed to mingle with us. We will depend entirely upon the enthusiasm of the downtrodden people for the necessities of life."

Carl Browne, March 26, 1894: "All hell can't stop this movement now. I have foreseen from the start just how it would be. I knew exactly how many men would start with us, what the weather would be, and all that. You can make up your mind that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Jacob Coxey, April 23, 1894: "Many of the men have certificates from labor organizations and are withal honest and earnest. Despite the ridicule that has been heaped on them they are a set of noble fellows. See how they marched over the snow-clad mountains. General Washington's memorable winter in Valley Forge scarcely put his army to a more severe test."

Jacob Coxey, April 23, 1894: "General Stonewall Jackson's soul, for instance, is partially reincarnated in myself."

² "Unknown Smith" was a Commonwealer whose nickname was bestowed upon him by Carl Browne. Browne, not knowing who the Commonwealer was, introduced him to Jacob Coxey as Louis Smith. Later, newspapers identified the man as A.P.B. Bozzaro, with alternate spellings including Bozarro, Pizzaro and Pizarro. I use the "Unknown Smith" nickname when referring to the Commonwealer in this appendix.

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a reporter, April 24, 1894:

COXEY: The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth.
REPORTER: If the police arrest yourself and army, what then?
COXEY: Let them dare.
REPORTER: Will you desist from encouraging other industrial armies from storming the capital?
COXEY: On the contrary, I shall redouble my efforts to bring every man, woman and child to Washington.
REPORTER: Will not the fear of possible bloodshed deter you?
COXEY: I do not court a resort to arms, but we will demand our rights, even if it takes physical strength to prevail. I shall not commit myself to that, but will repeat my declaration to bring Congress to terms by besieging Washington until justice is done.
REPORTER: What if the unemployed starve in the streets of Washington?
COXEY: The stench from their ashes will force congressional relief.
REPORTER: Is that intended in all seriousness?
COXEY: Certainly. Matters will be carried to that extent if necessary.

A.E. Redstone, April 25, 1894: Described Coxey as “a big, brainy man, the equal of any man in public life.”

A.E. Redstone, April 25, 1894: [When asked whether his people would stay in Washington] “I haven’t anything to say about that; I don’t propose to answer such questions.”

Jacob Coxey, April 26, 1894: “It was a fine idea to buy this canvas—a good investment.”

Jacob Coxey, April 27, 1894: “We do not expect the Senate to pay much attention to written petitions, but the body of men we take to the Capitol will be a living petition, and no legislative body can afford to ignore a living petition. After we have presented ourselves and our papers we will go into camp and wait for Congress to act on our bills, and this is the thing that worries those fellows in Washington. We are going to stay there.”

Jacob Coxey, April 30, 1894: “I believe the good roads and non-interest-bearing bonds bills will be passed in two weeks.”

Jacob Coxey, April 30, 1894: The Army will remain in Washington “until the stench of their bodies fill the nostrils of the national legislators.”

Unidentified Coxeyite, April 30, 1894: "If there wasn't to Coxey in it, but just Browne and Unknown, there wouldn't be no Browne."

Unidentified Coxeyite, May 1, 1894: "Seems like the more money they takes in the less we gets to eat."

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and D.C. Police Captain Kelly, May 1, 1894:

COXEY: I wish to enter a protest.
KELLY: No, sir. You can take no action here of any kind.
COXEY: Well, then, I wish to read a programme.
KELLY: It cannot be read here.

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "I have no complaint to make as far as the police are concerned. They treated me with great consideration, but they had to carry out the law, even if it was an unjust one. My speechmaking, however, at the Capitol is over, and I shall not again attempt it. It was no use.

I was careful to walk on the sidewalk, and trespass upon no local regulation when I went up to the Capitol steps.

This is the beginning of the movement, that is all. The people are with us—the common people. Look at the thousands who cheered our cause to-day. We will remain right here. Other bands of unemployed will join us. Congress will see the will of the people and pass our bills."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "I am an American citizen; I stand on my constitutional rights."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "Jones is only a notoriety-seeker."

Jacob Coxey, May 3, 1894: "When Congress sees all of the unemployed men of the country in Washington it cannot refuse to legislate for them." "Probably we will do it on Decoration Day, because that will symbolize the union of the blue and gray."

Carl Browne, May 5, 1894: "It were a glorious mornin', the rays of the sun were a shinin' on 'em, and millions was a watchin' 'em. He wanted no guns nor bombs, but the law-makers to be the law-breakers."

Conversation between Carl Browne & Judge Miller, May 5, 1894:

BROWNE: But they do it.
MILLER: You be quiet, sir. You are in court.
BROWNE: Excuse me, sir.

MILLER: If that man makes any more interruptions, put him in the dock.

Cross-examination of Jacob Coxey by Mr. Birney in court, May 7, 1894:

BIRNEY: Are you responsible, Mr. Coxey, for encamping your men in the manure dump in South Washington?

COXEY: I am. And I think the people of Washington are indebted to us for cleaning the place up.

BIRNEY: Did you not know, Mr. Coxey, that you were violating the law in trying to speak?

COXEY: I am an American citizen, and I thought I had that right.

Jacob Coxey, May 9, 1894: "We claim the same privileges that the one per cent. of the people, the national bankers, have had to issue money based on the wealth of the State, county and municipality."

Carl Browne, May 10, 1894: "We think that the authorities may not insist upon yesterday's order. Should they do so we will probably remove our men to one of several tracts which have been placed at our disposal, but we do not consider that anyone has the right to eject us from our present camp, because the owner of the property, Mr. Bensinger, has granted us permission to occupy it until next Christmas if we desire to do so. Our desire is to be permitted to remain where we are until the other Commonwealers reach here and then to concentrate the entire army in a more extensive camp."

Jacob Coxey, May 10, 1894: "We have no intention of leaving Washington before some definite action, either negative or affirmative, is taken upon the bills which brought us here. There has not been any regular correspondence between the other bodies journeying toward Washington and myself, but there is no question that their movements have been inspired by the same cause I represent, and there is no doubt we shall all affiliate together when they get here."

A.E. Redstone, May 15, 1894: "If Coxey is sentenced to-day, as he will be, he will refuse to pay a fine, and he will go to jail.

Coxey will spend the rest of his days in confinement before he will pay a fine for exercising his privileges as an American citizen. Browne will probably be sentenced with him and he, too, will go to jail rather than pay his fine."

A.E. Redstone, May 15, 1894: "They will remain in camp and behave themselves. They will be joined this week by six hundred Commonwealers under Galvin and 1,000 more before many days under Fry. They intend to remain in Washington until Congress listens to their demands. They might as well starve to death here as anywhere else. They intend to remain in Washington until the next Congress meets. More than that, Coxey will yet make his speech from the front steps of the Capitol. Who will prevent him? Not

these codfish plutocrats of the House and Senate. They don't represent the people. The people are with us. If Coxe goes to jail for a week twenty-five thousand people will go down to the jail to give him a reception when he comes out. Our cause is growing every day, and Congress will yet be forced to comply with our demands.”

Baltimore Sun

A.E. Redstone, April 9, 1894: “This body of men is not at all connected with the Commonwealth army, as no Coxe men will come on until word is previously sent to our headquarters, and none will come in disorder or without military discipline.”

Honore Jackson, April 10, 1894; “One hundred thousand of Coxe’s men standing at the Capitol at Washington will simply be 100,000 interrogation points, reminding these legislators of the things which they have not done, and demonstrating to them that, had they not left those things undone, these 100,000 human queries would not be at the Capitol. They would be at home quietly attending to business. For every interrogatory thus appearing at the Capitol there will be 100 others that lacked the ability to walk there, but did not lack the will. To those Congressmen who combine integrity in their own single persons it ought to be a welcome change to see a few honest country faces looming up in healthy contrast to the sleek but expressionless countenances of the host of professional lobbyists, whose chief reason for existence would appear to be that they serve as an awful example of the truth of the scriptural apothegm that where the carcass is there will be vultures gathered together.”

Carl Browne, April 21, 1894: “At the pressing invitation of the populace of this lovely place, of which every citizen is a part of a continuously existing picture, which, if on canvas, would charm the most critical connoisseur of the picturesque, we have decided to remain over until Sunday morning at least.”

Jacob Coxe, April 21, 1894: “I have been in sympathy with this sort of thing ever since I was a boy. I was educated in the democratic party [sic], and in that organization got my first views on finance and imbibed the doctrine of fiat money. This was in 1875, and I voted with the democratic party [sic] in that year. When the Tilden campaign came on the party switched around and declared for hard money. I voted for Mr. Tilden, thinking the party would return to its fiat money principles, and I waited until 1877, when the Pennsylvania convention was held. It came out for hard money and I went over to the greenback party, organized a greenback club and carried my ward, getting more votes than both democratic and republican candidates. Since then I have attended every national soft-money convention that has been held except that which nominated Benjamin F. Butler, in 1884.

The bill calling for the issue of legal tender greenbacks for the building of roads came as the result of my living in the country. The road I had to travel was one of the worst I ever saw. After a particularly unpleasant drive, on December 28, 1891, I wrote out the road bill and started a petition in its favor, and sent it to Representative Warwick. He misunderstood it, as others have done, and did nothing for it. I set up the [illegible] and

had it advocated in a general way in the platform of the greenback convention which met in St. Louis in 1882. The Ohio State convention indorsed it in full. I tried to get it incorporated in the Omaha national platform, but did not succeed any better than I did at St. Louis.

About this time I tried to get up a bill to go as a companion to the road bill and one that would help the laboring party of the cities. For a long time I could not hit on the right thing. After thinking of the on last New Year's Day I went to bed late at night and the whole measure came to me in a dream. It was very vivid, and I awoke and thought the whole thing over. It was perfectly clear, and I at once got up and, without dressing, wrote out the non-interest-bearing bond bill."

Jacob Coxey, April 23, 1894: "The army is all right. We were never in better trim and when we reach Washington we will be in a capital condition. I shall leave the city on Monday afternoon as soon as the sale is over, going to Ridgeville, Md., and meet the army there. We skip Frederick, Md., as we spend a day more than we expected at Hagerstown. We will make Washington by May 1 and we will stay there until action is taken on the two measures which we have at heart. I have seen reports in the newspapers that the chief of police will interfere with us, but I don't pay any attention to them. Any interference with us will be grossly unconstitutional. Why, I and every man in my army own a portion of the Capitol, and neither the chief of police nor Congress has any right to interfere with us so long as we behave ourselves. I don't anticipate any trouble, and I don't believe any of our men will be arrested. If we are treated unconstitutionally, we shall take such action as we deem advisable.

The army consists of respectable men. The men have behaved well with very few exceptions. I make no restrictions as to the amount of drink any man wishes to consume, but if a soldier is found drunk twice he is discharged and will not be allowed to again join the ranks.

We have created an impression which will be a lasting one. The people are with us everywhere. The newspapers have done all in their power to belittle the movement, and have occasioned us to some inconvenience by getting the sheriffs or mayors down on us in some places, but their efforts to upset our plans will be fruitless. We are bound to win. I can tell you our men are more determined now than when we started and we will win."

[Responding to a question about whether Kelley's army is antagonistic to Coxey's Army:] "Oh, no, we have all the same object at heart, and I expect he and his men will meet us in Washington. So, too, will Frye and his army. The Federation of Labor indorsed our programme at their convention in Chicago on December 13 last. I approve of Kelley's action in refusing to seize the train at Omaha, as it shows that he desires to keep within the bounds of the laws."

Bloomsburg Columbian

Carl Browne, March 30, 1894: "All hell can't stop this movement now. I have foreseen from the start just how it would be. I knew exactly how many men would start with us, what the weather would be, and all that. You can make up your mind that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Boston Daily Globe

Conversation between Jacob Coxey, Carl Browne, Christopher Columbus Jones and Judge Miller, May 2, 1894:

BROWNE: As far as I am concerned, I believe your honor will do us justice, but as it's my right, I'll have a trial by jury.
MILLER: How about you, Mr. Coxey?
COXEY: I'll do the same.
MILLER: Jones?
JONES: Same.

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a reporter, May 3, 1894:

COXEY: The people who have the money have all the power, and we can't expect to get a show. I have made no program as to what I shall do even if I do get off.
REPORTER: Do you feel disappointed?
COXEY: We have to take things as we find them, and then we did not know to what extent the plutocrats would go.

Conversation between Superintendent Dunn & R. J. O'Brien (a Coxeyite), May 3, 1894:

O'BRIEN: And I had it.
DUNN: Are you going to return to the army?
O'BRIEN: I should say not. I've got enough, and now I am going to New York.

Butler Citizen

Unknown Smith, April 20, 1894: "Members of the commonweal, this thing must be settled once for all! Will you have for a leader Smith, the man who has led you, taught and drilled you, or this leather-coated skunk?" [Crowd cries, "Smith!"] "Very well, then it is Smith. Fall in, commonweal. Forward. March."

Catoctin Clarion

Carl Browne, May 10, 1894: "It is still the 1st of May with us until we have the meeting on the steps of the Capitol." "It is simply a continuation of the legislative day, and we

shall keep turning the clock back until the meeting is held. The Washington police have shown themselves pretty expert in clubbing heads, but they will have to get more practice on Western heads before they can stop this crowd.”

Chicago Herald

Interview with Carl Browne, April 17, 1894:

“The idea of the commonweal army was first conceived by me. This was last December. Mr. Coxey and I talked the matter over thoroughly and he promised financial assistance. Together we formulated a plan of campaign and in January it was given to the world. In Chicago, some time previous to this, the unknown, whose right name is A.P.B. Bozzaro, sent for me. I had some trouble with the police, who would not let me make speeches. Bozzaro was a patent medicine vender [sic]. He invited me to his lot and allowed me to make my speeches there. I was thankful for the kindness he has shown me and I told him if ever an occasion arose when I could be of service to him I was at his command.

This occasion arose when the plan of the commonweal army was given to the world. I received a letter from Bozzaro, asking me to secure him a position in the Army. I told him in reply that I would do all that I could for him. He came to Canton, Ohio, and got on a big spree there. He carried a revolver cane, a weapon which he used on a hotel waiter with deadly intent while in his delirium. This matter was hushed up. Bozzaro cut off his long, wild western hair and otherwise changed his appearance. He came to Massillon, looking so tough, ragged and disreputable that I was ashamed to introduce him to General Coxey. Finally he went away and came back dressed in citizen’s attire. He was sober and asked me to give him a chance. “I want to begin life anew,” he said. I told him I would give him an opportunity.

He begged me not to give his right name when I introduced him at a mass meeting at Massillon and on the spur of the moment I presented him as the great unknown. At Duquesne I had to reorganize the Army, because Bozzaro had incilcated [sic] in the minds of the men a sort of military idea contrary entirely to the original plan mapped out for the commonweal. From that time on trouble has been brewing. He wanted the Army turned into a military organization, something Mr. Coxey and myself did not consider consistent with our plan as citizens.

Before leaving the Army last week Mr. Coxey and I had an honest discussion over Bozzaro. Mr. Coxey felt that Bozzaro was planning trouble then and he warned me against the man; so that you can readily see my telegram to Mr. Coxey in Pittsburgh about our trouble Saturday, was no surprise to the general.

I bear Bozzaro no ill will. I believe him to be a man possessed of an equal share of good and evil. The reincarnated spirit of a good spirit and a bad spirit is in the man. Just at present the Mr. Hyde part of Dr. Jekyll Bozzaro is uppermost. While Bozzaro is Dr. Jekyll he is a good fellow, a clever man and a smart man, but when the evil spirit

predominates Bozzaro is a man to be shunned. In this condition he can work evil in the army of the commonweal of Christ.

Chicago Tribune

Letter to the *Tribune* from Carl Browne, March 27: "To the Common People of the United States: The Shylocks of the United States are doing all in their power to crush J.S. Coxe and ruin him financially. They are trying to divert attention from his real purpose to relieve the distress and suffering of the common people by raising a hue and cry that all his creditors are closing in on him. The plutocratic press of the United States is assisting the Shylocks in their attempts to ruin him financially and place him before the public in a ridiculous light. When Gov. McKinley was in financial distress the plutocrats of the United States contributed about \$150,000 for his relief. Mr. Coxe, like most business-men who transact a large amount of business, has indebtedness, which in the ordinary circumstances of business he would be able to meet. But because of his activity in the interest of the common people some of his creditors have been induced to close in on him. This will be done and his property sacrificed unless immediate help is forthcoming. Let the great common people of the United States look upon it as a privilege to contribute, in sums however small, for his relief. The common people of Canton, citizens who have undertaken this work of relief, have chosen Allen Cook as Chairman and he can be found at No. 23 South Market Street, Canton, O."

Jacob Coxe, April 24, 1894: "Law-abiding citizens, sir; he speaks of law-abiding citizens. I assure you that I am glad to hear he is becoming a law-abiding citizen himself. Why, he and his Secretary of State committed the most flagrant violation of the law known in the history of the country when they issued these \$50,000,000 of interest-bearing bonds. And he talks of law-abiding citizens! We shall march on to Washington regardless of Mr. Cleveland's proclamation. It is foolishness to say that our movement will break up within a few miles of the capital. That has been said all along, but we are going right ahead. I don't believe Mr. Cleveland will issue a proclamation. While stopping at the Casino in Central Park yesterday a gentleman who I was introduced to handed me his card, and told me that his estate of 100 acres in Washington would be placed at my disposal, and there the army could camp and make its headquarters. The name of the gentleman is H.P. Waggoner, and his estate is called Woodley Park."

Jacob Coxe, April 24, 1894: "I don't know anything about [how my followers were treated in Boston yesterday] except what I read in the newspapers, and don't put a bit of credence in their reports. I believe it was merely a fullness of heart and exuberance of spirit on the part of the crowd that had pushed eagerly forward to catch the words of the speakers that caused them to be knocked off their feet and their followers dispersed."

Jacob Coxe, April 24, 1894: "The Australian Government owns and operates its own railroads, and so should the American Government. If the United States Government did as well by its unemployed as the City of Cincinnati has done, this movement would never have been started. This is all we shall ask them to do—to give us work."

Henry Vincent, April 28, 1894: “There is nothing unreasonable in the demand for the issue of \$500,000,000 because the banks of New York alone have more than that in their vaults. Congress certainly can lay aside that sum of money and with it give employment to the idle labor of this country to build good roads.”

Cora Richmond, April 28, 1894: “To suppose that the Coxeys sympathizers and followers are tramps and hoodlums is an insult. If the government could see to it that the men could work in their own States and Territories, Coxeys would not now be needed.”

General Randall, April 28, 1894: “I shall call on the railroad men and endeavor to arrange for a train. If their rates are too high we shall do what any man would do, we shall walk. If you have jobs, hold them, if you have a business, stick to it, and once in a while think of us who are out of work.”

Jacob Coxeys, April 30, 1894: “We’ll stay here all summer unless Congress takes action on these bills. I believe they will be passed in two weeks. You only have to pick up the papers to see what desperate straits these men are coming to to get to Washington. It makes no difference if they don’t get here Tuesday. We will go to the Capitol and make our demands and come back here to camp and wait. This revolutionary spirit of ’76 is making the money-lenders tremble now. Congress takes two years to vote on anything if left to itself. Twenty millions of people are hungry and can’t wait two years to eat. Four million men idle for nine months. That’s what Grover Cleveland has cost this country. If Congress knows what the people need and does not give it Congress is dishonest. We propose to give them the benefit of the doubt and show them the way out of the hole.”

Jacob Coxeys, April 30, 1894: “It has not yet been decided whether a proclamation shall be issued to the people of the United States in relation to our movements. This will depend largely upon developments tomorrow and after we have had a talk with our friends. We will probably not march for several days, so that the soldiers may rest.”

Columbus (IN) Daily News

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: “Comrades of the Commonwealth: Liberty lies weltering in her own blood at the nation’s capital city to-night, stabbed in the house of her friends by her supposed guardians. Free speech has been suppressed, and policemen’s clubs have taken the place of the scales of justice. But it is only temporary. ‘Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.’

Brothers, we have entered upon the beginning of the end. The wounds of will be staunch, and the scales of justice will again be equally poised as in the days of our illustrious sires, for we have come here to stay until there is a greater gathering here of men than confronted Lee on the banks of the Potomac years ago, and then the real traitors—the Rothschilds, who used the men of the South to bring on that war, to the profit of King Gold—will be overturned, like Belshazzar of old, and every producer

will then get the products of his labor, for the passage of Brother Coxeys bills would be the entering wedge to such a condition.”

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: [When asked if he wanted to make a statement.] “I don’t wish to say anything until I hear from the American people.”

Jacob Coxeys, May 3, 1894: “I was careful to walk on the sidewalk and trespass upon no local regulations when I went up to the steps.” “This is the beginning of the movement, that is all. The people are with us, the common people. Look at the thousands who cheered our cause today. We will remain right here, other bands of unemployed will join us; congress [sic] will see the will of the people and will pass our bills.”

Cumberland Evening Times

Jacob Coxeys, March 24, 1894: “We got over a bushel of letters this morning from people who expect to join our movement en route. The money is beginning to come in heavy now, too. We got over \$1,400 today, and assurances from many people who live along the route we have mapped out, that they will furnish the army with provisions, as it passes along. There won’t be any trouble about supplies. Horses, provisions and even money will roll in upon us in greater quantities than we will have any use for.

[Reporter: “But how about your army, General, is it not about time that some of your followers were beginning to join you here?”] “Oh, they’ll be coming in tomorrow. I expect that tomorrow’s sun will rise upon an assemblage of at least 10,000 members of our army. They will be marshaled up on the circus grounds, from which point the start is to be made Sunday at 12:30 pm sharp.”

J. Brown of Pittsburgh, in a letter to Coxeys, March 24, 1894: “Lead your men like a new Joshua, and go ahead as if God is with you, and who shall dare be against you?”

Carl Browne, in response to J. Brown, March 24, 1894: “That man must be placed in command of a division as soon as he joins the army. He is of the right sort.”

Jacob Coxeys, March 28, 1894: “I will join the army at Salem, Ohio, this evening and remain with it until Washington is reached. I do not expect the greater portion of those who are in sympathy with the movement to join us until we near the capital.” [In response to a question about how many soldiers he had, Coxeys replied,] “About 200.” [Asked if he regarded the outcome of the movement as likely to be successful:] “Most assuredly. We have the moral backing of the great majority of the people in the country, and the politicians at Washington must pay heed. During the next six weeks, and before we reach the Capital, this feeling will receive expression all over the country. It is a campaign of education. We are not cranks. We desire to accomplish our purpose and deem this the most effective way of doing it. We might have gone to Washington on trains, but that would not have attracted the attention necessary to a thorough discussion of the matters at issue. The men in the army are not tramps. If they had work they would do it, but they cannot secure employment.”

Jacob Coxey, April 6, 1894: [In response to the dismissal of three Commonwealers.]
“We will have no dime museum freaks in this aggregation.”

Conversation between Carl Browne and Unknown Smith, April 16, 1894:

SMITH: Members of the Commonweal: You and I have camped together ever since the march to Washington was begun. You all know that while I have demanded military discipline I have not treated you with contempt, or as if you were children. I have not taken it upon myself to issue daily addresses to you as though I was a king and you were my subjects. I have tried to organize you into an army for the sole purpose of furthering the success of this march. I have no more to say as to who shall be the leader of this Commonweal than any one of you has, but I have just as much to say about it as that leather-coated egotist over there. Now I ask you to vote by raising your hands on the question. Who shall be your commander? Will you have Browne?” [Silence] “Will you have me? [All hands shot in the air.] Very well, then, if you wish me to command I will command. Commonweal, forward, march!

BROWNE: Men of the Commonweal, this is mutiny. It is the work of the Pinkerton detective. Who knows who this man is who seeks to control you?” [Jeers from the audience.] Very well, you may lead these men astray if you choose. But I control the commissary wagons, and I shall not proceed.

SMITH: Marshals of Communes A, B, C and D, you will detail the men of your respective commands to take charge of the commissary wagons.

Jacob Coxey, April 16, 1894: “I am sorry that I have been called on to settle such a dispute as has arisen in the commonweal. The eyes of sixty-five millions of people are now fixed on this noble and patriotic band, and on the success of our movement depends the future happiness of a great people. To achieve success, we must have order; to have order, we must have a head, and I am the head of this movement, but in order to see that you are properly furnished with rations on this march, I am often called on to leave you to arrange for this purchase and deliverance to us of these things, and in my absence I have named Mr. Browne as the head, and I expect his orders to be obeyed—we cannot have two persons in authority, therefore Mr. Smith was wrong in his assumption of authority on yesterday, and in order to prevent a repetition of his offense it would be well to rid ourselves of him. What say you? We will vote on it, and all those in favor of his expulsion, please raise their hands.” [All hands go up.] “Then it is settled. Mr. Smith goes to join some museum aggregation if he likes.” [Then, in response to a murmur from the crowd that said, “Jesse Coxey must go too; he was as much to blame as Smith.”] “All right, if Jesse was wrong he will have to go too.”

Unknown Smith, April 16, 1894: "No, I have not, although I may not move with the main body I will be with them when they enter Washington and will probably lead them into that city. As to my having been dismissed from the Commonweal, the idea is foolish. How could Browne or anybody else dismiss me? The movement is for the good of the people and everything must be harmonious if the movement is to be a success. No one man has more authority than another; in this aggregation the majority rules.

I think I will take a rest of about three days and meet the aggregation at Hancock or as near that place as the body may be at that time. In the meantime [Jesse] Coxe and myself have arrived at the conclusion that we will endeavor to raise funds on our own responsibility, as we deem ourselves as capable of attending to this, as we have attended to the army when we were with it. In regard to Browne's general orders for the coming two or three days, we, as members of the Commonweal, will have no objection to his attending to that, as he has done in the past. As I said, we deem it necessary to take steps to raise funds with which to carry the project on a little better than it has been in the past.

All these bad reports about me have been given out by Browne in his rage and disappointment at not being wanted as a commander of the Commonweal. This was decided by over a two-thirds vote of the members of the army, who held a meeting on that subject on the hillside or road leading into Frostburg. These reports given out by Browne are entirely false and not worthy of attention by the generous public. Mr. Jesse Coxe and myself have decided to deliver a lecture tonight at Miller's hall on North Center street at which meeting I shall enlighten the public so as to the real tone, aims and objects of the Commonweal movement. I shall disclose my object in connecting myself with this movement and explain why I have undergone such hardships in the forwarding of the Commonweal. The 'veiled lady' (my wife) will be present at this lecture tonight and will with Jesse Coxe assist in receiving the public."

Jacob Coxe, April 16, 1894: "These poor fellows who are with me are but a drop in the bucket compared to the hosts that will appeal to Congress by petition to pass this bill."

Carl Browne, April 16, 1894: "The public is already well aware of what took place Saturday. Your paper has given the thing clearly. The Unknown told the men in the army deliberate lies. He told them he had been commissioned by General Coxe to command them. You will remember how that lie was nailed by General Coxe himself. Bozarro got young Coxe half full of whiskey and made the boy side with him. Coming near 'Johnson's' Saturday just previous to the army stopping for lunch he bade one of the men to go to the commissary wagon for a piece of bread and meat. He issued this command in a dictatorial voice and I stopped the man and forbade him going for the food, telling Bozarro he had no business to eat before the other members of the army ate. He was no better than the rest. This made him angry. Later on he rode up to me and asked why I called him down. I told him he had no business to act in the way he did.

Since then he has tried every way [sic] in his power to influence the men against me. How he has succeeded the public knows. There is no personal magnetism in Bozarro.

His influence over the men, weak as it has been, has all been by making assertions which have been refuted by Gen. Coxe himself.

The story about Bozarro [illegible] to straggle, but this was promptly suppressed and by 10 o'clock all the men were in camp.

Carl Browne, April 17, 1894: "Commonweal comrades – We have crossed the 'Alps of our journey,' where the ice and snows met our legion, not with 'the cold hand of death,' thanks to unceasing care, and we are now in the sunny Italy of 'Maryland, My Maryland,' and the 'prodigal son' was not made more welcome than we have been since we crossed the line. But the good people of lovely Cumberland particularly have made our sojourn in Camps Victory and Thackeray a feast of joy and a flow of soul, and we richly earned it, and as American citizens they bestowed it upon us in that spirit.

As an evidence of the little influence the majority of newspapers now have, advising the people to shun us, our camp has been graced each day with the handsome faces of the proverbially beautiful Maryland ladies. They have placed their commendation upon us and we cannot fail.

We march at 8 o'clock to the canal wharf in Cumberland where we are enabled to embark upon two boats to take us to Hancock, Md., which is our next place to speak. The distance is over 50 miles. This speaking there will be some time during the day or Thursday, April 19th, and will probably be from the boat at the wharf there as it will be our first stop. It will be called Camp Cumberland in honor of the good people of this hospitable city in which we are now camped.

On Friday morning, April 26th, we will reach Williamsport, where we disembark and go into Camp California, named in honor of the State that is sent forth so many men to join the Commonweal, and for their heroic conduct in overcoming difficulties to reach us.

Among the many who have so generously made us welcome in Cumberland, while it may seem invidious distinction, still I deem it justice to mention: Brothers Averett, of the *Times*, Mayor Hebb, Sheriff Clarence King, Mertens Sons, Dr. J.R. Garmin, Hon. Lloyd Lowndes, David W. Sloan and the many other generous people of this beautiful city, whose names we are unable to ascertain, who so generously contributed to your support.

While in route to Hancock the certificates of merit which I promised you on the other side of the mountain if you remained true, will be given out. Goodnight. Signed, Carl Brown, Chief Marshal Commonweal of Christ."

Jacob Coxe, April 19, 1894: "Understanding that two individuals formerly connected with the Commonweal of Christ, called 'Unknown' by the press, alias Smith, and Alexander Childs, are representing themselves as advance agents of the Commonweal and obtaining money ostensibly for use, we deem it simply justice to ask protection of

the law from them and ask you to arrest them for obtaining money under false pretenses if they continue to do so. The Childs part of the 'freaks' had a paper in his possession signed by Carl Browne when he deserted the Commonweal for this attempt at money-making of it, which is now invalid. You are instructed to take it away from him."

Carl Browne, April 21, 1894: "Comrades of the Commonweal: This Camp has surely been well named for the expected opposition on the part of the business men and bankers, as has been forecast in my last general order, as the situation appeared late last night, has been happily dissected, for, upon our entrance in the town, Mayor Keedy met us and stated that we were welcome to camp upon grounds within the city limits, and extending other courtesies on behalf of other citizens in caring for our stock. So this has been our Battle of Yorktown and we have the second Cornwallis sword. Shortly after the establishment of these headquarters here today, J.D. Simmons, a prominent citizen, came with 120 loaves of bread. Following him came Robert Warner & Son with 90 pounds of fish and our multitude was fed by a modern miracle.

John W. Ritter brought into camp three dozen pairs of socks and a number of shirts. There is no doubt that there will be many other contributions from the generous people of Hagerstown, as there were at Cumberland, before we break this camp, as many have visited us today and expressed themselves as agreeably surprised at our peaceable conduct; quite in contrast with what they had read in the blackmail newspapers of the city; for of all the scurrilous newspapers published in Maryland it seems to have descended to the lowest depths of degradation and its desire to serve monopoly.

On our way to this camp from Camp California the American flag was again halted by a soulless toll corporation and compelled to pay tribute to wave in the land of Carroll of Carrollton. On the invitation of the mayor the meeting will be held on the court house steps in the evening.

Tomorrow morning the bugle will be blown at 7 o'clock, breakfast at 8, and line of march at 9 to Camp Medhurst, near Boonsboro, Md., in honor of the California minister who had the courage to follow in the footsteps of his master and preach a sermon of welcome to one of the contingents of the Commonweal struggling to reach us from that glorious State.

Brother Coxey leaves this evening for a business trip to New York for several days and in order that there may be no more lies imposed on you by anyone connected or unconnected with the Commonweal, he left me with a document of which of the following is a copy:

'To whom it may concern: This is to certify that Mr. Carl Browne has full control of all horses, wagons and belongings thereto that is connected with the Commonweal and power to do as he sees fit with the same during my absence, the same as if it belonged to him; also full command of the commonweal during my absence. Signed, J.S. Coxey, Carl Browne.'"

Carl Browne, April 23, 1894: [Talking about people who made donations in light of the railroad's refusal to give the marchers a train] "This will only hasten their doom when we do get there."

Frederick Citizen

Jacob Coxey, May 11, 1894: "This country is like a big bunch of straw, and all that is necessary to start it into a roaring flame is the torch. Do you dream that in court the torch was applied? We came here as army of peace that knows violence is the last wish of any member of its army, but I fear that the match has been applied and that time alone will tell what is to be the outcome. If violence does follow, the consequences will not be on our heads, for others will be the cause of it. It now looks to me as though it would be useless to try and accomplish anything more in the line of public reformation by peace."

Carl Browne, April 27, 1894: "I have made a lot of sticks, four feet long and one inch square, on which will be attached small, white flags, bearing the words: 'Commonweal of Christ, Commune A, B, C, D and E. Peace on Earth, Good-will Toward Men,' and I ask you to carry them. If that will not be sufficient to stand off the troops, we will call on our friends, the ladies of Maryland, to protect us."

Frederick Examiner

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a reporter, May 2, 1894:

COXEY: I have no complaint to make as far as the police are concerned. They treated me with great consideration, but they had to carry out the law, even if it was an unjust one. My speechmaking, however, at the Capitol is over and I shall not again attempt it. It would be no use. The American eagle did a good deal of squealing to-day, but that was to be expected. The authorities pinched him rather hard. He'll have his say, however, sooner or later.

REPORTER: Did you hear, General, that Marshal Browne had been arrested and clubbed?

COXEY: I understand that he had been arrested, but I certainly hope the report of his being clubbed has no foundation [...].

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "For heaven's sake let a man alone when he wants to sleep. Do you think there are wild animals in the cage?"

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and an Associated Press reporter, May 2, 1894:

REPORTER: What do you intend to do when the police prevent you from holding your meeting in the Capitol grounds?

COXEY: No one will prevent us. Does not the constitution guarantee the right to peaceably assemble and petition congress [sic]?

REPORTER: But there is a police regulation passed by congress [sic], which forbids processions and assemblages on the Capitol grounds, and the police will stop your army if it attempts to trespass.

COXEY: The constitution was written before any police regulations. If they come in conflict with the constitution they are void. We stand squarely upon the constitution; that is our platform.

REPORTER: How do you intend to enforce your rights?

COXEY: There is but one way, by an appeal to the courts. We will go before the highest court in the land, if necessary. Meanwhile we will wait here in Washington if it takes all summer. If the court refuses us our rights there will be a revolution.

Frederick News

Jacob Coxey, March 12, 1894: “I stake my word on it that my bills will pass congress [sic] before the middle of May. The petition with boots on it will be irresistible. The people are aroused. By June 1 there will be work in this country at good wages for every man who wants work. The day of salvation is at hand. I believe that there will be 5,000 in line when we start for Washington.”

Jacob Coxey, March 20, 1894: “The conduct of the Army will be, as the name implies, an army of peace.”

Jacob Coxey, March 27, 1894: [In response to a question about how the marchers would get home.] “March them back? Not by a jugfull! I will get on a train and come home myself, but the army must get home as best they can.”

Jacob Coxey, April 27, 1894: [In response to an offer of a campsite at Brightwood.] “I think we will accept because, you know, it is enclosed, and we can charge admission.”

Carl Browne, April 27, 1894: [On the name of the camp Gaithersburg, ‘Alice Marsh.’] She died “a victim of Moloch of gold usury.”

Carl Browne, April 27, 1894: “As we near Washington, everything is as peaceable with us as a summer’s dream. The doves of peace hover around our banners as bees around sweet August flowers. We stay in this lovely camp tonight upon the banks of the little Bennett Creek, over which shot and shell were hurled years ago while the women of the place were huddled together in the cellars—all to put the chains of bond slavery upon their ankles by Wall street [sic].”

Carl Browne, April 27, 1894: Referred to the mayor of Frederick as a “would-be Carter Harrison [who was] dangerous to Liberty, a dictator, and might have expected death, as all dictators deserve.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and a citizen of Clarksburg, MD, April 28, 1894:

CITIZEN: Are you General Coxe?
COXEY: My name is Coxe.
CITIZEN: Well, ain't you going to make us a little speech here?
COXEY: Why, certainly.

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and a correspondent for the *News*, April 28, 1894:

COXEY: Why should an earnest man with strong convictions be regarded as not sane? Is it an evidence of insanity that a man works rigorously and spends money freely along the lines of his convictions?
CORRESPONDENT: People find it difficult to believe that a thoroughly business man has enough of Christ in his heart to spend not only his time and his money in the way you are with an unselfish singleness of purpose.
COXEY: I see, I see.
CORRESPONDENT: You don't veritably believe the measures you are pressing upon congress [sic] can be passed or progressed in this session, do you?
COXEY: I am not willing to admit that—no sir. I am not. Written petitions amount to nothing. There is the kind of petition that talks and has power. There are 20,000,000 of well nigh starving men in this country. Let them come to Washington and stay there all summer if necessary. If they must die of starvation let them die under the eyes of congress [sic], where the stench of their ashes will fill the congressional nostrils until something is done to abate the stench and its cause. It matters not to me if I'm deemed a crank. I know I'm right. I don't care if I'm ruined financially in this work. I can recover.

Freeland Tribune

Carl Browne, April 19, 1894: [Referring to a free lunch that was provided to the Army.] It “came like the manna in the wilderness where of the fragments Moses took up 12 blankets full.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and D.C. Police Captain Kelly, May 3, 1894:

COXEY: I wish to enter a protest.
KELLY: No sir. You can take no action here of any kind.
COXEY: Well, then, I wish to read a programme.
KELLY: It cannot be read here.

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: "I propose to form my men in line and march them up the capitol steps."

Hagerstown Herald and Torch Light

George Nixon, April 26, 1894: "Sir:--with your permission I wish to prefer my thanks and those of the Coxey army generally to the many citizens of Hagerstown for the courtesy and kind treatment we received at their hands during our brief stay. The landlord and lady of our Beeler House deserve special mention for the part they took in making our sojourn one to be remembered with sincere gratitude. But, Mr. Editor, if you find no objection to the few paragraphs which follow, you will confer a favor by publishing them also.

In the Daily Mail of April 20th the following appears:

'They are the toughest lot that ever hit this town. From start to finish the mob, as it limped and stumbled along, was a dead sure line of real tramps. Every other man was a cripple in some way, and there did not to be one intelligent or sensible human being in the whole lot. It was indeed a seamy lot, raked from the purliens of the world and dressed in dead men's clothes. The blasphemy of calling such a mob of tramps the Commonwealth of Christ was all too apparent.'

My dear friend—you who wrote that rubbish—let me admonish you in a friendly way and stroke your extraordinarily thick cranium with my 'tough' and 'crippled' hand.

Do you know, my dear sir, that people who are taught anything in a civilized land really believe that the Savior sometimes condescends to notice the poor and lowly? They also believe that if the great Sufferer for mankind came along today with his band of fishermen such men as you would have Him apprehended and locked up as a tramp.

Poor man! Your liver is out of order. You have worms and a medley of contrasting disorders that are dragging you headline to destruction. Take a bottle of some good soothing syrup and a few hot bricks nightly until relieved. I pity you."

Hillsboro News-Herald

Jacob Coxey, March 29, 1894: "I am now satisfied that I will be followed into Washington by 150,000 men. As people hear that we have actually started they will begin falling in. Up to this time they have been afraid that we were bluffing. Now they see that we mean business."

Jacob Coxey (in response to Major Moore), May 10, 1894: “As the schedule had been carried out so far, he intended to complete it.”

Juniata Sentinel

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: “I was born at Selinsgrove, Pa., on Easter Sunday, 1854, and four years after my parents removed to Danville, in the same State. Up to thirteen years of age I went to school pretty regularly, but from the time I was ten years old I have worked for my living. When I was fourteen years of age school for me was abandoned, and I went to work in a rolling mill, where I carried water and did other small work. Later on, I was promoted to more important work in the mill, and at sixteen I was running a small mill engine. I was an engineer for eleven years, and in ‘79 I went into the scrap iron business in Pennsylvania. Two years after I removed to Ohio and bought the stone quarries at Massillon, and have been engaged in that business and the breeding and raising of horses ever since.” “Originally I was a democrat, but when that party got away from the principles of finance which I believed in I abandoned the party and for years voted and worked for the greenback party. I have attended all but one of the greenback conventions, since ’79—In 1885, without my knowledge I was nominated on the greenback-labor ticket for State Senator and stumped the county.”

Middleburgh Post

Jacob Coxey, March 15, 1894: “I stake my word on it that my bills will pass congress [sic] before the middle of May. The petition with boots on it will be irresistible. You will see them flocking here by special train before the 25th of this month to start with me to Washington in the peace procession. By the first of next June there will be work in this country, at fair pay, for every man that wants it. I believe that there will be 5,000 men here at a low estimate when we leave Massillon. I expect the locked out miners in this section of Ohio to be with me to a man.”

Carl Browne, March 29, 1894: “I believe that a part of the soul of Christ happened to come into my being by reincarnation. I believe also that another part of Christ’s soul is in Brother Coxey, by the same process and that is what has brought us closer together than two brothers. I believe the remainder of the soul of Christ has been fully reincarnated in thousands of people that accounts for the tremendous response to our call to try to bring about peace and plenty to take the place of panic and poverty. To accomplish this means the second coming of Christ, and I believe in the prophecy that He is come, not in a single form, but in the whole people. This explains our banner of peace, with His figure as a central painting.”

New Haven Register

Drunken, unruly Commonwealer, March 27, 1894: “I’ll tache yez to pull a gun on me!”

New York Times

Jacob Coxey, April 22, 1894: "I got away from the main army at Hagerstown, Md., yesterday, after paying 98 cents toll for the horses of the contingent. I rejoin the main army at Ridgeville, Md., Tuesday. I shall wait here over Monday evening to see my horses sold. They will be the property of the highest bidder."

Jacob Coxey, April 22, 1894: "Now, as to the Army of the Commonweal. The main army will march to Washington and meet there other divisions that will march in and a multitude that will have come by rail.

All will march and assemble and demonstrate to give the American public an object lesson in political economy. We will rivet public attention on this relief question."

New York World

Jacob Coxey, May 3, 1894: [In court.] "Here I am, if you want me."

Conversation between Carl Browne and a *New York World* reporter, May 3, 1894:

BROWNE: We are going to stay right here and follow up our first great victory that we won yesterday by still greater ones to come. Our present grounds will soon be altogether too small when the expected additions to our number arrive, and we have three men out to-day looking for a new camping place. By Saturday there will be many more in Washington.

REPORTER: What are you going to do then?

BROWNE: We will simply stay here and take in the other detachments as they come. Our next demonstration will probably be on Memorial Day, thought it may be delayed until the Fourth of July. I am confident that by the last of this month we will have 50,000 men here.

REPORTER: How are you going to feed this multitude?

BROWNE: That will be a simple matter enough. You have [...] of the immense organization [illegible].

Ohio Democrat

Jacob Coxey (in response to Major Moore), May 10, 1894: "As the schedule had been carried out so far, he intended to complete it."

Jacob Coxey, May 12, 1894: "They have not been voting the way they have been thinking."

Oskaloosa Evening Herald

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: "As far as I'm concerned, I believe your honor will do us justice; but as it's my right I'll have a trial by jury."

Jacob Coxey, May 3, 1894: "The people who have the money have all the power, and we can't expect to get a show. I have made no programme as to what I shall do, even if I do get off. I don't know whether I shall go to the capitol again or not."

Philadelphia Inquirer

Carl Browne, April 1, 1894: "I first organized within the reincarnated parts of Calisthenes in 1877. Realization of the incarnation of Christ came to me in the dead of night while in a cabin in my mountain home in California in December, 1890. I was sitting at the bedside of my invalid wife. Her illness was such as to draw forth the innermost affections of the human heart. The Calisthenes part of me was strongly antagonistic to divine ideas, and up to that time I had been in violent opposition to Christianity, all the Christ part in me being subject to control of other parts. Somehow, while my poor helpmate lay there, thoughts came into my head as thoughts will, and I speculated on the Theosophical doctrine of departed souls taking up their abode in living persons, and I wondered if hers would go into mine. At the instant there seemed to be a flash of lightning, not vivid but subdued, and she rose up and kissed me. A peculiar feeling seemed to possess my being, and I felt the Christ control take possession of me, and all the infidelity of Calisthenes was repressed. I believed from that moment I commenced, as was my wife's wish, to absorb her soul, as when the spark of her life went out on Christmas Day, 1892, all that was good in her went into me, and there was a great amount. It gave me strength to go forth and do work for humanity, and by that addition I was able to realize that a part of the reincarnated soul of Christ was in me, and I was competent, when I met Brother Coxey, to recognize the part of Christ in him."

Jacob Coxey, April 1, 1894: "Christ was simply a great reformer. He went about, like Browne here, doing all the good he could, and as he preached against those who live upon interest and profit, they controlled the masses, as they do now, and so encompassed his death upon the cross."

Racine Daily Journal

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "I have no complaint to make as far as the police are concerned. They treated me with great consideration, but they had to carry out the law, even if it was an unjust one. My speechmaking, however, at the Capitol is over, and I shall not again attempt it. It would be no use. The American eagle did a good bit of squealing today, but that was to be expected. The authorities pinched him rather hard. He'll have his say, however, sooner or later."

Reveille Echo

Caroline Coxe, March 29, 1894: "The father had my child meet him at a hotel in Massillon. Lieut. Browne was with Coxe when the girl arrived. They proposed to dress her up in the Stars and Stripes, mount her on a white horse and have her ride to Washington ahead of the army of peace. He presented the project in such glowing terms that the girl was enchanted with the idea and promised to go if her mamma would consent. Mr. Browne said she might go with her father without her mother's consent, but she will not go on such a crazy crusade with such a crowd, that is apt to be criminal where it isn't crazy. Browne wants her to go without my consent. Now, I have no quarrel with General Coxe, but if they induce my daughter to place herself in such a questionable position, I will have Carl Browne and General Coxe arrested for kidnapping."

Caroline Coxe, March 29, 1894: "Our domestic relations were not unpleasant until he became prosperous. When he got hold of his stone quarries he made so much money it seemed to change him unaccountably."

Reynoldsville Star

A.E. Redstone, March 21, 1894: "The preparations for receiving the army are going forward nicely. I have spoken to Senator Stewart of Nevada about getting the use of his tract of land at Chevy Chase for them to camp on and he says he has no objection if the people living there have none. There will also be an escort to go out from Washington to meet the travelers. It will be composed of workmen and others and we count on 10,000."

Carl Browne, March 28, 1894: The purpose of the crusade is "to protest against any further robbery by interest upon paper notes (bonds) based on the public credit, when that same credit could be used to issue other pieces of paper (notes or legal tender) without interest of profit to National (so called) banks."

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and Carl Browne, May 9, 1894:

BROWNE: We can go no further.
COXEY: Is this the front of the Capitol?
BROWNE: No.

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and D.C. Police Captain Kelly, May 9, 1894:

COXEY: I wish to enter a protest.
KELLY: No sir. You can take no action here of any kind.
COXEY: Well, then, I wish to read a programme.
KELLY: It cannot be read here.
KELLY: Where do you go now, Mr. Coxe?
COXEY: To our new grounds in Southeast Washington.

Salem Daily Herald

Jacob Coxey, March 9, 1894: "Our march is going to be as great a success as we can now expect. There is not a doubt of its attainment. In preparing for this grand emancipation our leaders have accomplished more than the newspapers give us credit for. We have the indorsement of 2,400 labor organizations that have sent us words of cheer and promised aid. Others, private individuals along the line of the great march have sent us promises of assistance in the way of commissary stores. Instead of any anxiety over a lack of numbers we fear there will be too many in the procession to be cared for. Still it is no worse for people to starve in this way than in the large cities. The object in journeying through the country is to get the citizens enthused. Then there will be no crucible to get them to fall in line."

Jacob Coxey, March 22, 1894: [When asked what success he anticipated the movement would have] "...the very best. If the movement does not accomplish anything directly it will set the people to thinking and inspire them, so that good will come from it eventually [...]. There is a possibility of 10,000 people being present but I figure on a conservative basis and place the number at 3,000. We do not expect tramps, but respectable citizens to join in the crusade. The situation that confronts Massillonians at present I think will be fully met and every man joining the army will be provided for. How many do you think will start from Salem?"

Carl Browne, March 29, 1894: "Once more comrades of the Commonweal allow me to congratulate you in issuing general order No. 6, for after trying ordeals, discipline of such ecstasy as to draw forth friendly comment from even a hostile press has been established, and although brother Marshal Louis Smith is entitled to great credit in this respect each individual member of the Commonweal is entitled to as much, for without your hearty co-operation there could be no discipline at all as we lack that element of force used in all military organizations. Continue on brave brothers. On Thursday morning, March 29 the bugle call will be blown at 8 o'clock and order of march given at 10:30. March out Main street to Hape road near Leetonia a distance of 5 miles at which place halt for lunch. Word having been received from brothers Ferguson and Thayer, of an enthusiastic meeting held last evening a committee has been appointed of which Brother McCready was selected chairman to provide dinner. At 1 o'clock p.m. the order of "forward march" will be given on the Columbiana road to Camp Trenton at which place a meeting will be held at the [residence] of Brother Primmer.

Brother Frank Mills, secretary of the Beaver Falls trades council is here on behalf of three different labor organizations.

Our welcome at Alliance was most hearty and generous. The following persons were given special mention: D.W. Smith, Clem Rockbill, Charles Jenkins, Wand H. Cline, George Heitzman, L.G. Kelley and wife, Dan Kifer, R.G. Smith, J.R. Haines, Foster Haines and Mayor Excel."

Scranton Tribune

Carl Browne, March 21, 1894: “As the gallant knights of old entered the arena, unheralded and unknown, to fight the battles of right and justice, with victory or death as options, so tonight I present to you one who comes to us willing and humble to devote his great talents to a worthy cause—the great unknown—who will now address you.”

“The Great Unknown,” March 21, 1894: “Now is the day of the people,” “Christ is with you in spirit. He will soon be with you in person and appear at Canton next Sunday evening,” “With Christ for us, who can oppose,” “Congress may ‘pooh pooh’ the idea, but they will come to time,” “Nothing can oppose the movement.”

Telegram from Astor Evans, March 23, 1894: “Have 300 men ready at Cranberry, 150 more under direction of William Cassidy at Tomhicken. Wire instructions.”

Carl Browne, March 26, 1894: “You boys are behaving yourselves honorably, and all the sneers about tramps and vagabonds that are being hurled at you daily by a portion of the press fall from your backs like water from ducks. Pay no attention to the snickering of those who have never felt the pangs of hunger, but be true to yourselves and it will cause others to be true to you.”

Telegram from Jacob Coxey to George Francis Train, March 26, 1894: “Camp Tuscarora, Easter Sunday, Headquarters, Massillon, Ohio. Citizen George Francis Train, Continental hotel, New York. Will you lead the march on to Washington. Signed, Chief J. Jackson, Hotel Conrad.

Jacob Coxey, April 30, 1894: “We shall lose no time at this camp. Tuesday morning we shall march down Twenty-first street to the statue of Washington, and along Pennsylvania avenue, pass the white house [sic] and the treasury [sic], reaching the steps of the capitol [sic] at noon. There we shall hold a meeting and impress upon congress [sic] the advisability of agreeing to the measures of the commonweal, the good roads and the non-interest-bearing bonds bills.” [Asked, “What if they stop you?”] “They can’t stop us. The constitution [sic] does not permit them. There’ll be no interference. We shall not transgress any law that is constitutional. There will be no disorder in our parade or meeting. We have a perfect right to gather on the steps of the capitol [sic] and we’ll do so.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a United Press Reporter, May 1, 1894:

COXEY: We will have our parade tomorrow and we will come up to the capitol grounds. Not, I would say, as a parade, but as private citizens. I have learned that there is a statute preventing parades of any kind on these grounds and we have kept the law up to this and do not propose to break it now. We will march to the grounds, it being our

programme to reach them at noon, when we will disband and after making a speech will assemble at the peace monument and march back to our camp.

REPORTER: But you said you would not violate the law and yet you say you will make a speech on the grounds, is that not a violation of the law?

COXEY: No, the constitution gives us the right to do that and Congress has no power to pass laws in violations of the constitution.

REPORTER: But supposed you were warned not to and told that your arrest will follow if you attempt it.

COXEY: I will make the speech anyhow. We will test the constitutionality of the law.

Conversation between Carl Browne and a D.C. Police Sergeant, May 2, 1894:

POLICE: What do you intend to do?

BROWNE: I propose to form my men in line and march them up the Capitol [sic] steps.

Oklahoma Sam, May 3, 1894: "We are gaining confidence in the public." "I hope you won't think I am putting on frills ridin' roun' in a cab yesterday."

Carl Browne, May 12, 1894: "Our policy is fully settled upon. It is one of passive resistance to the unwarranted persecution of the district authorities. We are not at all captious. It is simply a case of being driven to the wall. We have made this camp the most sanitary spot in this part of Washington, and if we are put out in the street the city will have to take care of us where the sanitary arrangements are not as good as our own. I suppose they'll arrest us one at a time. Coxey will go first and we'll step into the breach. When I am arrested some one will take my place in command, and so on until the 500 men have successively been arrested. We have prepared for it. I have cautioned all the men to be careful and strike no blow." "No one will forcibly resist. By the time they have depopulated this camp the reinforcements from the west will be arriving and the game can continue indefinitely. There is no doubt about the other armies reaching here. I know all the leaders, Frye, Kelly, Galvin, and all of them were in San Francisco with me, and I know that I can count on them. We have the whole west with us in this movement. The farmers from Ohio and beyond will see that we are fed as long as we stay here." "We shall not want food. I got the shipping receipt today for the carload of provisions that is now on the way from Springfield, Mo. That car is having a triumphal career to Washington. It is decorated with flags and a big sign showing its contents and destination, and all along the road people are tacking cards to it. It will inspire the formation of new armies, and thousands of men will be following it in the course of the month. You can say that this movement has surely begun. No one can doubt that its ultimate end will be successful."

Carl Browne, May 14, 1894: "That settles it." "We are law abiding citizens, and will not do anything in violation of your orders.

Carl Browne, General Orders, May 15, 1894: "Comrades, We have spent a glorious day in this camp, despite the lowering clouds, when we entered upon the part of a few old gentleman of Hyattsville, who, as it was a moonlight night last evening, got frightened at their own shadows. But we have been favored by a number of the good people of that place today, many ladies, who all expressed themselves that the insult to us by the so-called indignation meeting was uncalled for.

Tomorrow morning bugle call at 7 a.m.; breakfast at 8. At 9 o'clock strike camp and move to the ground in the rest of the George Washington hotel Bladenburg [sic], where we will remain indefinitely as a base of operations. Our headquarters will be in the old George Washington hotel, once the headquarters of the men in whose honor it was named when he was fighting the British, as the Commonwealth is now fighting the English gold ring.

Brother Coxey and his wife and little Legal Tender will also take up quarters in the hotel, which has been kindly placed at our service during our stay in the neighborhood. Marshal C.T. McKee will attend to donations as usual, tomorrow, and will take as Brothers Lewis, Loritz and Alex Alcorn.

For special reasons every member is expected to remain in camp tomorrow unless granted a pass, with forfeiture of badge for disobedience. Twelve more of Marshal Galvin's men joined us today, and I have organized Commune A of the California community."

Jacob Coxey, May 22, 1894: "I did not violate [the law]."

Jacob Coxey, May 22, 1894: "I would have the government issue money against municipal non-interest bearing bonds deposited with the secretary of the treasury at Washington. These bonds would be issued to half the municipality's assessed valuation. In other words, there would be two dollars' worth of property back of every dollar issued by the government against the bonds. It now issues money to banks upon much easier terms. The bonds would not be sold. They would merely be held as security. They would be adequate, because real estate cannot be run away with or be carried off by embezzlers. They would be stable because, with money issued against them, the work of improvement would go steadily on, and property would not decrease in value where there is plenty of work for labor and improvements are persistently made. And each year the municipality would redeem 4 percent. of the issue, so that in twenty-five years the total would be wiped out."

Shenandoah Evening Herald

Jacob Coxey, March 12, 1894: "I stake my word on it that my bills will pass congress [sic] before the middle of May. The petition in boots on it will be irresistible. The

people are aroused. By June 1 there will be work in this country at good wages for every man who wants work. The day of salvation is at hand. I believe that there will be 5,000 men in line when we start for Washington.”

J.A. Conrad, March 16, 1894: “Many of us want to join your army and will do so, we can pay our own expenses, and if we can get reduced rates will come 1,000 strong.”

W.F. Sutherland, March 16, 1894: “I propose to raise 100 men here. I propose to start with this number and walk to Lime Rock. There I will get 1,000 men, divide and take two routes to Washington.”

Jacob Coxey, March 20, 1894: “The conduct of the army will be, as the name implies, an army of peace.

Christopher Columbus Jones, March 28, 1894: “Men are enlisting all the time, and several women have made application for a place in our ranks, while provisions are pouring in on us.”

Jacob Coxey, April 16, 1894: “Neither Marshal Browne nor I have any more rights here than the poorest soldier.”

Conversation between Jesse Coxey and Jacob Coxey, April 16, 1894:

JACOB:	Smith must go.
JESSE:	I won't obey the orders of that leather coated skunk.
JACOB:	Then you may go back home.
JESSE:	I will go wherever I d—d please!

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and an Associated Press reporter, April 30, 1894:

REPORTER:	What do you intend to do when the police prevent you from holding your meeting in the Capitol grounds?
COXEY:	No one will prevent us. Does not the constitution [sic] guarantee the right to peaceably assemble and petition congress [sic]?
REPORTER:	But there is a police passed by congress [sic], which forbids processions and assemblages on the Capitol grounds, and the police will stop your army if it attempts to trespass.
COXEY:	The constitution [sic] was written before any police regulations. If they come in conflict with the constitution [sic] they are void. We stand squarely upon the constitution [sic]; that is our platform.
REPORTER:	How do you intend to enforce your rights?

COXEY: There is but one way, by an appeal to the courts. We will go before the highest court in the land if necessary. Meanwhile we will wait here in Washington if it takes all summer. If the courts deny us our rights there will be a revolution. I do not advocate revolution, nor do I desire it, but it will be irresistible, and it will be the greatest revolution of history if the American people are once thoroughly aroused.

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and D.C. Commissioner Ross, May 1, 1894:

COXEY: We would fumigate the grounds. Besides, our people are very healthy. They can stand a great deal. If you could only have seen some of the trials and tribulations they have undergone on their march here, you would not think the presence of a canal would affect them.

ROSS: How long do you expect to remain here?

COXEY: Why, we expect to remain here until we get action on our bills. The few men that are with us are only a forerunner of what is coming. Of course, when the full strength of the army arrives this lot will not be large enough.

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and an Associated Press reporter, May 1, 1894:

COXEY: Nothing remains for us but to make an amicable arrangement for the meeting on the steps. We shall not insist on marching into the grounds, but when we reach the curb I will tell the boys to break ranks and march in like other citizens.

REPORTER: Then what?

COXEY: Then the meeting will begin.

REPORTER: Suppose the sergeant-at-arms objects?

COXEY: He cannot object. We can hold our meeting there, as the Constitution [sic] gives us a right to do. It would be another thing if we undertook to come inside the building and hold a meeting, but that we shall not assume to do.

REPORTER: You will attempt the meeting then in the face of official objection?

COXEY: Yes, and regardless of the law, because of our constitutional rights.

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "I am done talking, the American people must speak now. This is not the first time I have been in jail. I have been making these fights for the people all my life."

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "I have no complaint to make as far as the police are concerned. They treated me with great consideration, but they had to carry out the law, even if it was an unjust one. My speechmaking, however at the capitol is over, and I shall not again attempt it. It would be no use."

Somerset Herald

Jacob Coxey, April 18, 1894: "Things are to be lively along the Potomac again."

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a reporter, April 25, 1894:

COXEY: [Asked what the Army would do if Congress took action.]
They will disperse. But if Congress turns a deaf ear to our demands we will remain and clamor at the doors of the national legislative halls until our cry is echoed by thousands of others who are now on their way to Washington, and others who will flock there to insist on their rights.

REPORTER: What would happen if the police threw them into jail as vagrants?

COXEY: They had better not. We are an army of peace, but it would not be well to deny the people, as represented by us, the right to use these grounds. We own them, and unless we assert ourselves the lazy fellows in Congress will go on filling their bellies and neglecting the starving.

REPORTER: Would you resort to arms?

COXEY: No; we do not believe in the sword, but there are other means.

Jacob Coxey, April 25, 1894: "When Congress passes our bills to build good roads by my plan, and the non-interest-bearing bill, the millennium will have arrived."

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "Well, I shall speak from those steps tomorrow anyhow."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "We don't know where we will stay to-morrow night. Perhaps we will camp in the Capitol grounds. We are going to carry this thing through to the end. Haven't we done everything I said we would?" ["All except having 100,000 men to form the parade," someone said.] "I didn't say we would have 100,000 men in line. I said there would be 100,000 people with us in Washington. And so there will be, but they won't be in line."

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "We shall lose no time at this camp. Tuesday morning we shall march down Twenty first street to the statue of Washington and along Pennsylvania avenue, past the White House and the Treasury, reaching the steps of the capitol at noon. There we shall hold a meeting and impress upon congress [sic] the advisibility [sic] of agreeing to the measures of the 'Commonweal'—the good roads

and non-interest bearing bond bills.” [“What if they stop you?” was asked.] “They can’t stop us. The constitution does not permit them. There’ll be no interference. We shall not transgress any law that is constitutional. There will be no disorder in our parade or meeting. We have a perfect right to gather on the steps of the capitol and we’ll do so.”

Jacob Coxey, May 9, 1894: “Our plans are to simply sit down here and wait. We will be joined by thousands of other unemployed people. For myself, I propose to lay aside every other occupation and remain in Washington until some session is taken by Congress. If that body should adjourn without affording any relief to the unemployed, we will simply demand that the President call an extra session.”

Tacoma Daily News

Jacob Coxey, April 4, 1894: [In response to a question about whether he would march the Army through South Carolina after Washington:] “Sir—There are no conditions upon which I would do such a thing. We are not out for blood but for bloodsuckers. We are going to Washington to get work for 4,000,000 idle men, and when that is done our mission is accomplished. We are not Hessians nor idle adventurers out looking for a racket. We have a serious purpose. The hearts of the whole people beat in unison with ours. Except as citizens of a common country we care nothing about South Carolina. Let her own people take care of their own affairs. Respectfully, Jacob S. Coxey.”

Uniontown News Standard

Jacob Coxey, March 27, 1894: “We mean business, and I am sorry to have to leave at all. This evening I must go to Chicago and sell Almont, Tonton and Emmanite by Acolyte, three valuable horses. I shall only remain absent one day and will join the band of peace at Leetonia.”

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: “There will be 100,000 sympathizers with the army from out of town here to-day. All of them will not march, but they will be here, and the movement will spread. We have kept all of our promises up to date and we are going to keep them. The parade will come off as it has been advertised, and we will hold our meeting on the capitol steps.”

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: “Our friends downtown told us they would make all the arrangements for supplies. Brother Coxey and I took them at their word and left them to care for the provisions while we attended to more important things. We have been arranging for the grand parade and demonstration, and we have secured a new camp ground for you. I don’t blame you, boys, for feeling hot, but as Shakespeare says ‘All’s well that ends well,’ and the great Army of the Commonweal is still before the eyes of the nation.” [In response, a marcher shouted, “Yes, that’s the way he has jollied us all along the line.”]

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: “I was careful to walk on the sidewalk and trespass upon no local regulations when I went up to the steps. This is the beginning of the movement,

that is all. The people are with us, the common people. Look at the thousands who cheered our cause. We will remain right here, other bands of unemployed will join us, congress [sic] will see the will of the people and will pass our bills.”

Jacob Coxey, May 3, 1894: “When congress [sic] sees all of the unemployed men of the country here it cannot refuse to legislate for them.” “I am certain that I have not been guilty of law breaking. I saw Vice President Stevens and he told me that he would consult with Speaker Crisp about setting aside the regulation forbidding speech making on the capitol grounds. I am certain that the law is unconstitutional and I wanted to test it. I left my army and walked peaceably to the capitol steps, bearing the banner or device, which the law forbids. I demanded of the police the exercise of my right. When they refused me I asked if I could read a protest. They refused that and I made no attempt to speak or read, merely asking them to accept the protest, which they refused to do. Then I turned around and made my way from the grounds. If there was lawlessness in my action I fail to see it. I did not know whether the vice president had concluded to let me speak and I wished to test the law. Marshal Browne walked over the grass contrary to the law, but he did it because the mounted police were trying to ride him down.”

Carl Browne, May 4, 1894: “We have 525 men in our camp. We have weeded out all the bad element. Things are getting along very smoothly and there has been no trouble of any kind.”

Washington Evening Star

Jacob Coxey, January 27, 1894: “You’ll find that when we reach Washington on May 1 we’ll have 100,000 men. We’ll not take a dollar with us and instead of muskets every man will carry a white flag with the words ‘Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men, But Death to Interest-Bearing Bonds.’ No criminals or anarchists will be allowed to mingle with us. We will depend entirely upon the enthusiasm of the down-trodden people for the necessities of life.”

Jacob Coxey, March 12, 1894: “I stake my word on it that my bills will pass congress [sic] before the middle of May. The petition in boots on it will be irresistible. The people are aroused. You will see them flocking here by special trains on March 25 to start for Washington with the peace procession. By June 1 there will be work in this country at good wages for every man who wants work. The day of salvation is at hand. I believe that there will be 5,000 men in line when we leave Massillon. I expect all the locked-out coal miners to be in it to a man.”

Carl Browne, March 12, 1894: “As order is God's own law. it is also necessary for intelligent action by His people; so the proposed procession will be composed of groups of men (citizens) numbering five in each, one of whom must be selected as marshal or group marshal, to be numbered in the order of date of group formation. Groups may be federated into companies or communes of not less than thirty men and not more than 105. Commonwealers may be federated into regiments or communities of not less than

215 nor more than 1,055. Communities may be federated into cantons of two or more. All communes, communities, and cantons must select five marshals, to be numbered first, second and so on, the same as the group marshal shall be designated, thus: First, group marshal, first commune marshal, first canton marshal, first community marshal. Badges of designation will be furnished free by Brother Coxey, bearing appropriate designs made by himself.

How's this for an exhortation: Now, hurry up! The time is short, and, although the roads will be horrible, remember the condition of the soldiers under Washington, in the snow at Valley Forge struggling to win this fair land from an English tax on tea; and we, the degenerate sons of illustrious sires, have allowed English bondholders to get us more tightly in their grasp than George IV had our forefathers. Rouse up! and demand of Congress to issue paper money based on our own security. If paper money could fight battles and kill men in 1861 it can build good roads and public buildings, and thus save us from starving to death in 1894. Rouse, ye bondsmen, and protest against the yoke at least.”

Jacob Coxey, March 19, 1894: “I propose to march forth from this city at noon on Easter Sunday next at the head of a cavalcade that will strike terror to the hearts of those who have been abusing their power by legislating in favor of the rich against the poor.

My destination is the Capitol at Washington, D.C. My object is to demand of Congress the passage of the non-interest bearing bond bill prepared by the J.S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the United States.

Upon my departure from Massillon, I am at this time unable to accurately estimate the number of lovers of honest government who will follow me, but my impression is that there will be at the least calculation five hundred of us. When we reach the Capitol I will have behind me the voice and influence of over one hundred thousand persons. If not, I have misjudged humanity and have been misled by advices sent me from my agents in all parts of the United States. At this time I would prefer not to make public my entire following. The undertaking is a huge one.

Trades and labor assemblies freely indorse our plans, and we are promised contributions in nearly every state in the Union. The Economites, the Pennsylvania communistic society, have assured us of substantial support. We have a Philadelphia letter assuring us that 20,000 will go from there to Washington by rail. Perry, Oklahoma, promises to send a train load, and Chillicothe, Mo., another.

As to the expenses, two original cartoons on roads and road work will be sold along the line for incidental expenses. Individuals must count upon paying their own living expenses, but these will be materially lightened by the contributions of provisions which are promised all along the line.

I am extremely sorry that the impression extant regarding our procedure should be wholly based on a prime conviction of the ridiculous nature of the scheme. Let me

assure you, it is not alone unfair, but correspondingly mistaken. This will not be a gathering of the lower classes, who, by their number and consequent personal immunity from responsibility, expect to be enabled to forage and steal at will. There will be no violence.

Naturally, the result of this movement has been a rude awakening of the oppressors of the people. First, they attempted to crush us by ridicule and contempt, as if our plans were those of insane people. Now the stronger elements of political power are being made to subserve their interests. They are thoroughly scared. Attempts have been made to scare my wife, and induce her to use her influence to have me back out. They tell her that I will be ruined financially the moment this crusade begins; that I will be killed or imprisoned. These arguments are futile.

I expect to have assembled about the steps of the Capitol at Washington at noon on May 1 a half a million men. The people need not fear trouble from us.”

Jacob Coxey, in a dispatch to Governor Pattison of Pennsylvania, March 19, 1894: “My morning mail says that Sheriff John Moore, Greene county, Pa., has received instructions from you to meet our band of peace at the state line and read the riot act. Wish this either denied or corroborated by your honor.” [Pattison’s reply: “The sheriff of Greene county knows his duty and, I have no doubt, will fully perform every requirement of the law.”]

Carl Browne, March 21, 1894: “Christ is with you in spirit. He will soon be with you in person and appear at Canton next Sunday eve.”

Carl Browne, March 21, 1894: “I am pleased to be called with this movement in its incipiency. With Christ for us who can oppose?”

Carl Browne, March 21, 1894: “Congress may ‘pooh-pooh’ the idea, but they will come to time. Nothing can oppose the movement.”

Jacob Coxey, March 22, 1894: “If Christ lived today, he would be hauled up as a tramp. We have laws that the hungry must be fed.”

Caroline Coxey, March 22, 1894: “The father had my child meet him at a hotel in Massillon yesterday. Lieut. Browne was with Coxey when the girl arrived. They proposed to dress her in the Stars and Stripes, mount her on a white horse, and have her ride to Washington ahead of the army of peace. He presented the project in such glowing terms that the girl was enchanted with the idea, and promised to go if her mother would consent, but I put a damper on that plan, and told them if the child was induced to go I would have both Coxey and Browne arrested for kidnapping.”

Jacob Coxey, March 23, 1894: “You’ll find that when we reach Washington on May 1 we’ll have 100,000 men. We’ll not take a dollar with us, and instead of muskets every man will carry a white flag, with the words ‘Peace on earth, good-will toward men, but

death to interest-bearing bonds.' No criminals or anarchists will be allowed to mingle with us. We will depend entirely on the enthusiasm of the downtrodden people for the necessities of life.

We propose only the peaceable plan now. When that fails it will be time enough to talk about force. We want 100 old officers, Union and confederate, to volunteer as marshals of divisions. Horses will be furnished to most of them. It is expected that the farmers of Pennsylvania will furnish supplies for the procession in its patriotic mission of the salvation of the republic.

A letter from Chicago states that 2,000 men from that city will be on hand ready to start Sunday. The indications now are that several thousand men will be in line when the long march begins Easter morning. Preparations were made yesterday to erect a mammoth tent on the gun club grounds, under which the army will be sheltered until the final start is made for Washington. Only about twenty men have appeared as yet to join in the march."

Robert C. Gwynn, March 23, 1894: "For several weeks I have been giving your proposed march much thought. I have also interested many other prominent real estate men. As a result, we have decided to contribute \$1,000 to be used as you may see fit. If you need any or all of this sum at once, please write me, care of Robert C. Gwynn, Room 901, 100 Washington street, Chicago. Yours, for the cause of the oppressed, Robert C. Gwynn."

T. Simpson Sloan, March 23, 1894: "Please find inclosed a check for \$300, and draw on me for \$55 per week till you secure the ear of Congress in the people's cause. Also permit me to add that all the hay on my Kanoko meadows is at your disposal, if needed, while en route or in camp. (Signed) T. Simpson Sloane"

George Cox, March 23, 1894: "To Gen. J.S. Coxe: Hail to the chief. Am entirely in sympathy with your grand movement. A century from now your name will be more revered than George Washington's. To the Capitol and Washington, and give the plutocrats hell! Enclosed please find check for \$100 to aid the great cause of the people against the aristocracy. Down with the Senate! Yours, in admiration, George B. Cox"

A.E. Redstone, March 24, 1894: "I see Col. Moore has settled the whole business for us. To think of a man setting himself up to dictate to peaceable American citizens and to say that a body of them shall not enter the Capitol grounds."

A.E. Redstone, March 24, 1894: "The men who will assemble here in Washington on May 1 will not be either vicious or criminal. All dangerous characters will be rigidly excluded from the ranks and only peaceable and law-abiding citizens will come to Washington to present in person the petitions they have so often presented in writing and which have been as frequently ignored."

A.E. Redstone, March 24, 1894: [Responding to question, "How many of your friends will be here?"] "I expect to see at least 300,000 men here on the 1st of May. There will not be any interference with the progress of the army by either county or state authorities of the territory through which it will pass. There will be no vandalism allowed and an efficient commissary will be carried along to provide for the wants of the association, and they will bring enough with them to feed for ten days all those in Washington who have nothing by reason of the injustice of congressional legislation. I have no doubt of the successful result of our mission, in the immediate passage by Congress of the two bills Mr. Coxe will bring with him."

A.E. Redstone, March 26, 1894: "I did not expect to see a very large crowd go from Massillon, but from Reederburn [sic], where the army is to formally organize, the numbers will be swelled. I suppose the cold, disagreeable weather was a disadvantage to the army at its start, but I had a dispatch from Gen. Coxe, telling me that he had started, and that everything was encouraging."

A.E. Redstone, April 18, 1894: [Referring to a woman who made donations to the Army.] "That was one of the noble women of Virginia. She came in to tell me that she was one of the class who lived on rents and didn't have to seek labor for support, but that she sympathized with our movement. She said she had a dozen pillows and pillow cases that she will send here for the use of the army as well as a lot of collars." ["A lot of what?"] "Of collars. Collars and neckties for the members of the commonwealth to put on and wear when they reach Washington. She says the ladies over in Virginia have organized to help the cause. Oh, I tell you popular sympathy with our movement is rapidly increasing and showing itself on every side."

I saw a young fellow on a horse the other day. He had on leggins and held one of these gads in his hand, with a loop in the end of it. His horse had a bob tail and a hard trot. The young man's stirrups were so short his knees nearly reached the pommel of his saddle. I hollered to him to hold on, and he wanted to know what for. I told him if he didn't stop he'd fall off, sure."

Carl Browne, April 18, 1894: "It seemed that everybody made it a gala day. Stalwart men, graceful women and joyous boys and girls gathered on either bank of the canal and showered their blessings upon us with handkerchiefs and hats, parasols and canes. They urged us in our mission for the salvation of the country."

Carl Browne, April 18, 1894: "Our voyage has been like the languorous languor of the lingering day when Cleopatra floated down on her barge of perfumed sails to meet Antony. Instead of her silken sails is our starry flag of freedom and the glorious banner of peace; for perfumery we have been regaled with the buds of springtime.

In lieu of her decks of beaten gold, we have substantial boards of oak; instead of slaves, our crew is a band of brothers, however, ill-clad, the victims of a co-operative commonwealth, the fast-coming future system of the United States."

Carl Browne, April 18, 1894: “Yes, ‘tis true the pure souls of women are quicker to discover and realize the reincarnation of Christ in the brothers of the commonweal.”

Carl Browne, April 25, 1894: “It took a good deal of moral courage [to dismiss marchers for drinking], but I believe I am right, and I will handle any men on that basis.”

Carl Browne, April 26, 1894: “We are now trying to prevent by peaceable means one of the most terrible revolutions the world has ever seen, which will surely come if Congress does not take favorable action on the proposed legislation.”

Jacob Coxey, April 27, 1894: “I deprecate violence of any sort in this movement, but as sure as people are set upon and maltreated in the pursuit of their rights, just so sure will the mass of the people rally to their support.

It is very hard to draw the line and say where a man begins to violate the law in getting that which is his right.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a reporter, April 28, 1894:

COXEY: It just amounts to this. We rely upon the public at large to support this movement.

REPORTER: By that you mean support for your commonwealers?

COXEY: Certainly I do. If the enterprise is not maintained by the people, in whose interest it is, then it must fall, but we believe and rely without doubt upon the public support.

REPORTER: Can you personally afford to maintain these men through the summer or for any extended period?

COXEY: Indeed, I cannot. The fact is that I have sought not to appear as paying the expenses of this journey and I have said as little as possible about what I have paid. I will state, however, that I paid all the outfitting of this expedition up to the start, except \$15, which was presented. The contributions all along until after Pittsburg was passed were quite ample, but since then I have been obliged to pay the expenses much of the time. At Frederick we got plenty to eat and there was no expense.

REPORTER: Your men propose, it is said, to demand some share of the gate money charged the public for admission to the camp—what will you say to them?

COXEY: Say? What will I say? I will say that the money so received has been and is used to maintain them. I handle it, of course, but it goes for the support of the men.

REPORTER: Has more money been spent on their maintenance than has been received since leaving Pittsburg?

COXEY: Yes, oh, yes. This matter has been carefully considered, and within two or three days a proclamation will be issued, addressed to the American people to maintain and prosecute this campaign. We intend not to stop insisting upon action by Congress in behalf of the unemployed when once we have reached Washington.

REPORTER: Do you intend to issue the proclamation?

COXEY: That has not yet been decided. It may come from another source.

A.E. Redstone, April 28, 1894: "I am not talking today."

Christopher Columbus Jones, April 28, 1894: "I believe that Congress will take favorable action on Mr. Coxeys bills. There will be 200,000 men in Washington to petition to that effect. I cannot say and I do not know what action will be taken if Congress should take adverse action. We are now members of the commonweal and under Mr. Coxeys instructions. Personally, I should say congress [sic] had two things to do - other to say 'yes' or 'no.' In the latter case, I presume we should march back to our homes to starve at leisure.

I don't know anything about the admission to be charged at Brightwood. I presume Mr. Coxeys knows what he is doing. The men have got to be fed and if it is for that purpose it is all right. For our contingent, we are not out on this thing to make money. All we want is enough to eat to keep us from begging. I don't believe the government will dare to prevent our meeting in front of the Capitol."

Conversation between Jacob Coxeys and Capitol Police Captain Garden, May 1, 1894:

GARDEN: What do you want to do here?

COXEY: I wish to make an address.

GARDEN: But you cannot do that.

COXEY: Then can I read a protest? [Then drops a piece of paper.]
That is for the press.

Conversation between Jacob Coxeys and a reporter for *The Star*, May 1, 1894:

REPORTER: How did you like your treatment, Mr. Coxeys?

COXEY: I have no complaint to make as far as the police are concerned. They treated me with great consideration, but they had to carry out the law, even if it was an unjust one. My speechmaking, however, at the capitol is over and I shall not again attempt it. It would be no use. The American eagle did a good deal of squealing today, but that was to be expected. The authorities pinched him rather hard. He'll have his say, however, sooner or later.

REPORTER: Did you hear, general, that Marshal Browne had been arrested and clubbed?
COXEY: I understand that he had been arrested, but I certainly hope the report of his being clubbed has no foundation. I deprecate the incident very much. Browne had no right to rush across the grass as he did.

Unknown Smith, May 1, 1894: "Even enemies in time of war respect flags of truce, and yet Browne was mobbed by a crowd of policemen and dragged away and Mr. Coxey, I suppose, arrested. If there had been any necessity for such action it might have been different, but here was a case of two men simply wanting to make a speech from property which belonged to the entire people and a speech on a subject which they believe was of the most intense importance to the American people. There were two hundred policemen present, and if these men had been allowed to speak and go away quietly, there would have been not the slightest trouble or difficulty. The treatment Coxey and Browne had received is outrageous and I feel assured the American people will resent it."

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and a Capitol Police captain, May 1, 1894:

COXEY: Is this the representative of Col. Bright?
CAPTAIN: I am the captain of the Capitol police.
COXEY: Then I demand the right to deliver an address to the people. I make this demand in the name of the people of the American nation, and I demand the assistance and protection of the Capitol police while I do so.
CAPTAIN: You can't make any address here.
COXEY: Then I demand the right to enter and read a protest. [Was told that he must not do so.] Then I will submit this paper to you.

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: "This beautiful day ushers in a new dawn in history and from now on it will be a continuous 1st of May until the bills we have come to present to Congress shall have become laws. The people of America in the future will look back upon the 1st day of May, 1894, as the most important date in history, marking, as it does, the birth of a new and fuller and freer liberty for the now down-trodden masses of the American common people.

This movement, mark you, will not cease with the American people, but will spread its beneficent [sic] influences until the whole world is touched and softened and sweetened by it."

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: [Asked about what would happen in the authorities prevented the protest.] "I am not sure that interference with our plans would not be better for the movement. Such action would still further inspire the sympathies of the great masses of the people with our object and accentuate in their minds the impression

so generally entertained, that the plutocrats will not brook any interference, no matter how peaceful it may be, with their determination to tighten their grasp on the country's throat.

I feel within me—my reincarnation tells me that no matter what happens and despite any and all circumstances the eventual success of our movement is assured.”

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: “Whether or not we will be permitted to speak, I cannot say, but you must be careful to preserve the peace. Then we will reform and march to our new camp near by, which has been provided. This demonstration will be more powerful than force, than guns, than bombs.”

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: “People said that we wouldn't march up Pennsylvania avenue when we reached here. Yet the police department yesterday informed Brother Coxe that we could march. We are here on time and will go to the grounds on time. All are certainly on deck. Yesterday it looked as if we wouldn't have many, but now we will go in with spirits as bright as the May day on which we march. Mr. Crisp refused yesterday to let us speak on the Capitol steps. We didn't see the Vice President. That is the latest I can tell you. We will go into the Capitol grounds as industrials. They can't prevent us from doing that.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and D.C. Police Captain Austin, May 1, 1894:

COXEY:	Thank you, captain. Lead me in the direction of the camp.
AUSTIN:	What camp? Brightwood?
COXEY:	No, the other one, but I don't know where it is or how to go there.

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: “I was more of the opinion that we would be more harshly used than Gen. Coxe was. You see, I dress in a more unusual way and I am much more unrestrained in my criticism of things as they are, and these in a community where law prevails are enough to insure me harsh treatment when the authorities get a chance.

I have no doubt that I would be justly and fairly tried by the judge, but I stand on my right to be tried by a jury.”

Jacob Coxe, May 2, 1894: “Our plans for the future are to simply sit down here and wait. We will be joined, I have no doubt, by thousands upon thousands of other unemployed people. For myself, I propose to lay aside every other occupation and remain in Washington until some action is taken by Congress. If that body should adjourn without affording any relief to the unemployed, we will simply demand that the President call an extra session. The presence here of three or four hundred thousand men, and by that time there will be that many here, will simply force the President to this step. These men will have to be fed some way, and Congress will have to be called together.

I cannot say whether we will make any further efforts in the direction of demonstrations or attempts to speak on the Capitol grounds. For the present, that matter will remain in abeyance. I have heard that some few of the army have been arrested by the police. If any of the commonwealers commit any act which subjects them to arrest, they should be taken in charge and given the full penalty of the law. We are not here to commit any wrongs or to break any laws; we are here simply to show Congress the result of the legislation of the past twenty-five years and to demand that our wrongs be redressed. Washington is a charming city, and if the laboring men of this country must starve, they might just as well starve here, surrounded by the beautiful parks, green trees and smooth-graded streets.”

Anna L. Diggs, May 2, 1894: “I did not invite Carl Browne to my house; he did not partake of a dinner there, nor did any ovation of any kind take place. I told Lieut. McCathran and Officer Mulhall that I would not sign his release if a man could be found who could do it. I asked these officers if they thought it would displease the citizens of the District. They both replied that the ‘people had only kindly feelings for the unfortunate men.’ My act was one of pure compassion and mercy.

When I saw such men as Lafe Pence and other Congressmen were without power for the want of property qualification in the District, I felt it was about time to throw Maple Square into the breach and save the country. When Carl Browne was a free man he came to the door as a gentleman should to thank me for the privilege, as he said, of ‘breathing fresh air once more.’ He looked very pale and broken. I set before him a cold collation, of which he ate sparingly and hastily departed.”

Conversation between Carl Browne and a *Star* reporter, May 2, 1894:

BROWNE: We are going to stay right here and follow up our first great victory that we won yesterday by still greater ones to come. Our present grounds will soon be altogether too small when the expected additions to our number arrive, and we have three men out today looking for a new camping place. By Saturday there will be many more in Washington.

REPORTER: What are you going to do then?

BROWNE: We will simply stay here and take in the other detachments as they come. Our next demonstration will probably be on Decoration day, though it may be delayed until the Fourth of July. I am confident that by the last of this month we will have 50,000 men here.

REPORTER: How are you going to feed this multitude?

BROWNE: That will be a simple matter enough. You have no idea of the immense organization that is at work all through the west securing supplies for the commonweal. Our next demonstration will be on the same lines with that of yesterday. We shall insist for the right to free speech in

the grounds of the Capitol and on its very steps, and we shall fight this matter until victory perches on our banners and we have swept this iniquitous statute from the books. This is the first thing that we have to fight for now. The rest will follow after.

Conversation between Michael McDowell (a Coxeyite) & Judge Kimball, May 2, 1894:

McDOWELL: I am an American citizen, and, in the name of the Constitution, I call upon you to protect me. [...] I had a little drop of drink in me.

KIMBALL: That's the trouble, a little drop of drink.

Conversation between George King (a Coxeyite), Police Officer Garraway & Judge Kimball, May 2, 1894:

KING: I'm guilty of vagrancy, but not of being drunk.

KIMBALL: What was this prisoner doing?

GARRAWAY: He was on Pennsylvania avenue 'holding up' everybody.

KIMBALL: Begging?

GARRAWAY: Yes, sir.

KIMBALL: Where are you from?

KING: California. I've been working down south, and I came through here some time ago. I went up the road and joined the army, and then came back here.

KIMBALL: But you can't beg on our streets.

KING: Judge, your honor, I was sick and hungry and wanted something to eat.

KIMBALL: Are your parents living?

KING: Yes, sir; they are in California.

KIMBALL: Why don't you return there?

KING: That's what I want to do. If your honor will let me go I'll leave for home.

KIMBALL: Thirty days on the farm, and when you get out you had better leave.

R. J. O'Brien (a Coxeyite), May 2, 1894: "I was marshal of commune B." ["Are you going to return to the army?" he was asked.] "I should say not. I've got enough, and now I am going to New York.

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "Go to Congress yourselves. Quit sending lawyers there. Send to Washington people of your own class. If you do, you can't do any worse than they have done for you, and you might do a great deal better."

Jacob Coxey, May 2, 1894: "I am here and ready."

Jacob Coxey, May 3, 1894: "There is little new to record today regarding the army. We are gaining confidence every day and our cause is growing. It is not so that I am in communication with the other armies that are marching to Washington. All that I know of that is what I read in the newspapers. Everything is booming perfectly at the camp and there is no complaint. We shall move as soon as another camping ground has been selected."

Conversation between an unidentified Coxeyite and a Capitol doorkeeper, May 3, 1894:

COXEYITE: I am just watching them fellers.
DOORKEEPER: But only members of Congress are allowed in here.
COXEYITE: Oh, I only wanted a place to sit down, but I didn't like to sit in the seat of any of them fellers, and I was just looking round.

Conversation between Carl Browne and Judge Miller, May 4, 1894:

BROWNE: But they do it every day, just the same.
MILLER: You be quiet up there. Remember you are in a court room now, and if you make any further interruptions you will be put in the dock.

Jacob Coxey, May 5, 1894: "I request, as commander of the commonweal of Christ, to be allowed the privilege of charging admission to our camping ground, as the entire proceeds are used in feeding and clothing our men connected with the commonweal and should come under the charitable clause of the law."

Conversation between an unidentified Coxeyite and Judge Kimball, May 5, 1894:

COXEYITE: I'm a member of Coxey's army and I'm here looking for work.
KIMBALL: How have you been fed and clothed?
COXEYITE: With the Coxey army.
KIMBALL: Then you have no means of support?
COXEYITE: Not unless I get work.

Jacob Coxey, May 7, 1894: "I own a stone quarry, manufacture sand for making steel and run a stock farm for breeding trotting horses. At present I am engaged in lobbying for the unemployed people of the land. I am trying to secure passage of two laws, which will give employment to the workingmen of the land in making government improvements."

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and Mr. Birney, May 7, 1894:

BIRNEY: What expenses?

COXEY: Shoeing horses, paying tolls and buying provisions when we were short.
 BIRNEY: How many horses did you have?
 COXEY: Sixteen, besides those that drew my carriage.
 BIRNEY: Whose were these horses that were shed?
 COXEY: My own.
 BIRNEY: Did you shoe the men?
 COXEY: No. The people shod them.

Jacob Coxey, May 9, 1894: [Asked whether American institutions were created for the purposes of resolving the government into a money lender.] “That is already the case with one per cent of the community.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and Representative Ryan, May 9, 1894:

COXEY: [Upon being asked how he claimed to represent so many.]
 Take the Farmers’ Alliance, the Knights of Labor and other organizations and they are all in sympathy with this movement.
 RYAN: But, don’t you think more than one per cent of the people are represented through their chosen members in Congress?
 COXEY: Yes, but as a rule they are being misrepresented, instead of being represented.
 RYAN: Well, have you any showing to make, any proofs to offer, that you represent 99 per cent of the people?
 COXEY: No. I don’t claim that.

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and Health Officer Hammett, May 10, 1894:

COXEY: Well, doctor, I received your notice to vacate the camp, and have come to ask you the reason such a notice was issued.
 HAMMETT: Briefly speaking, the camp is unhealthy, unsanitary and a menace to health.
 COXEY: But you are aware of the improvements in the shape of sanitary arrangements that have been made there since we have occupied it?
 HAMMETT: Yes. I know all about that, but they have not been in accordance with the regulations. You are occupying eighty lots, and the law requires that every lot so occupied shall be provided with a privy and proper sewer connections.
 COXEY: Do you mean to say that in the case of a building occupying an entire square of eighty or one hundred lots

that you would require eighty or one hundred privies and sewer connections?

HAMMETT: But that is not a parallel case. The owner of that property has subdivided it into eighty lots, and these lots are occupied separately.” “There can be no doubt of the sanitary condition of your camp. I have been familiar with the place for twenty-three years and know it well. The emanations from the ground, which is filled ground, are deleterious to health. Why, the owner of the lot told me yesterday that he would not think of corralling his horses here. If houses were erected there the situation would be different. The floors then would be a barrier to the foul odors emanating from the ground. Now it is well known that the sun dissipates odors and poisonous germs, but at night it is different. The noxious odors from the canal only serve to increase the liability to disease. Why, Mr. Coxe, the continuation of that camp is likely to breed typhus fever. Then there is a likelihood of dysentery, which is almost as bad as cholera.

COXEY: Mr. Health Officer, there was cause enough there before the army arrived to make the whole neighborhood unhealthy. We have removed the cause, and increased the sanitary condition 100 per cent. Drain pipes have been made, sewer and water connections have been made, and the camp is, in my opinion, in as good sanitary condition as any house in the neighborhood.

HAMMETT: According to the reports made to me by the physicians sent to investigate the matter, it would take at least six months to put the camp in a sanitary condition. I can't understand how human beings can want to live in that place.

COXEY: There is where you misunderstand us, doctor. We have no desire to remain there. We have traveled hundreds of miles to better our condition, not to make it worse. And we have been exerting ourselves to make our camp sanitary. Why, we occupy the same position that thousands of people do who live in tenement houses all over the country. They are anxious to get away from their surroundings and better their conditions, and so are we. But let's to business. What I want is an extension of time in which to move. We have some equities and don't enjoy being evicted without a chance.

HAMMETT: The power to grant an extension does not rest with me. I am simply an executive officer and am carrying out the orders of my superiors. You will have to get an extension from the Commissioners or stand the consequences.

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and D.C. Commissioner Ross, May 10, 1894:

- COXEY: I am before you, gentlemen, to ask for an extension of time in which to move the Commonweal camp. We have complied with all regulations, but there seems a disposition to get us out. And we want to go, but certainly time should be given in which to find another camp. We don't want to be thrown into the streets and become a public charge.
- ROSS: [Ross stated that there was apprehension among a large number of citizens lest a pestilence should break out in the camp, and the Commissioners were simply acting on behalf of the citizens in ordering the army to move its camp to some more sanitary location The report of the health officer made that imperative.]
- COXEY: The health officer should direct his attention to the pools of stagnant water on the outside of the camp.
- ROSS: That shows the surroundings are bad and is another argument to move.
- COXEY: Gentlemen, we want to move and have been doing our utmost to get another camp. My arrest has been responsible for the delay. Even now an effort is being made to get another place.

Carl Browne, May 11, 1894: [When asked what would happen to the horses and the camp outfit if he and Coxey were arrested.] "Oh, that is arranged all right. You see, Oklahoma Sam, Primmer and Texas' have been paid employees of Mr. Coxey ever since we left Massillon, Ohio. They were engaged for the purpose of taking care of his horses and, of course, having visible means of support, they cannot be arrested as vagrants. If all the rest of us except these two men are treated as you indicate in your question, Sam and 'Texas' will still be at liberty. Mr. Bensinger, the owner of the property, has agreed to permit the horses to remain here and for the tents and our outfit generally to be kept standing just as they are. The authorities can't arrest the horses or tents, so if we have to go to jail they will be taken care of in the meantime and will be here awaiting our occupancy when we get out. Did you see that wagon I started out this morning?"

Carl Browne, May 11, 1894: [Painted on a wagon was: "Commonweal of Christ, Camp Tyranny is now open free For the impartial inspection of everybody, Speaking at 3 p.m."] "The police have given me permission to have that wagon driven through the streets of Washington, and I hope a good crowd will be attracted here by it to hear our speaking at 3 o'clock. Then I propose to take a vote of the assemblage upon the question as to whether it believes that our encampment is such an unfit place for habitation and so thoroughly unsanitary in its arrangements as the health authorities would have the general public believe. Yes, the forty-eight hours mentioned in the notice demanding our vacation of this place will end at 12 o'clock today, but I do not think it will be

carried into effect until tonight, if at all, and, anyhow, I am sure our speaking will come off without any interference.”

Jacob Coxey, May 11, 1894: “Gentleman, I have found a place, and the army of the commonweal of Christ is ready to move. It is outside the District of Columbia between Hyattsville and Bladensburg, and located in close proximity to the Spa springs, where we hope to moisten our parched throats and get forever rid of Dr. Hammett’s malarial and typhoid fever germs. It is a beautiful place for a camp, with a large creek running through it, where the festive commonwealer can practice cleanliness. We are glad to go, but want until tomorrow morning to get ready. Will you give us the extension?”

Carl Browne, May 11, 1894: “This hyar Capt. Fiebeger has got charge of the streets. Well, I want to parade my panorama wagon over the streets with a free invitation to the good citizens of Washington to inspect our camp and see how nice and clean it really it [sic].”

Jesse Coxey, May 12, 1894: [Upon seeing the new camp.] “Oh hell, if this is the place we are going to camp in there won’t be an army left in a week.”

Jacob Coxey, May 12, 1894: “I do not know whether we will come back to our late encampment ground or not, but we will hold meetings there at frequent intervals.”

Jacob Coxey, May 12, 1894: [Asked about the indignation of the residents of Prince George’s County.] “That is very funny. They will find out that we are not such bugaboos as the newspapers have led them to believe, and by Monday their sympathies will be with us to a man.” “Why, they are scared to death, like a child in the dark whose brain has been filled with curdling ghost stories. They will find that we are upright, honest, honorable and peaceful citizens and that they will have no cause for alarm. No, there will be no rigid discipline at the new camping place. We don’t need rigid discipline. Every man in the entire commonweal is imbued with the spirit of the movement, and none of them would even think of injuring its chances of success by any bad personal action on his part. We allow no drunkards, thieves or beggars in our ranks and as soon as we discover that a man’s personal character and habits are not what they should be we summarily get rid of him.

The Influence of our movement is spreading everywhere every day, and it is growing stronger and stronger. The people of the east have no conception of the deep feeling of the citizens of the west about the national distress which the bills I have the honor to be the author are intended to alleviate. The western farmers are showing their practical sympathy with our movement by sending provisions. A car load from Springfield, Mo., is now on its way here and will reach the new camp in a couple of days. Another is coming from Iowa, and I have no doubt that similar substantial evidences of the sympathy I speak of will increase from now on.”

Jacob Coxey, May 14, 1894: “The Marylanders were very much wrought up on Saturday night, and evidently were desirous of inciting our people to resentment so that

a row could be started. I never saw people in my life so anxious to create a disturbance. When I came along in my buggy to take a train at night several of the Hyattsville people harshly ordered me to 'drive on' and to 'move on' with threatening emphasis. I pulled my team to the side of the road and told some of them that they were trying to make trouble, and if they persisted they might find themselves behind the bars instead of putting us there, because the same laws govern the action of both sides. You can rest assured that we are going to stay right in Bladensburg unless the approaching industrials become so numerous that we will not have room for them at our new camping spot. In such a case we will have a rendezvous camp on Dr. Rogers' property that we moved from. Nothing that the Prince Georgians can do can make any of our men show resentment sufficient to precipitate a breach of the peace. Our intentions are peaceful and our actions will be none the less so. If any trouble occurs while the commonweal is in Maryland, it will be all one-sided and wrong-sided, and the entire responsibility will rest upon the Marylanders. I am going to move out to the George Washington Hotel myself this afternoon.

There is no regular program for the day other than the usual system which regulates the every day life at camp. We will have a meeting tonight, as usual, at which Mr. Browne and myself will speak. I had a visit last night from a number of Arkansas newspaper men, and at their request to give them a talk upon the objects for which the commonweal came to Washington, I made them a little speech, which one of their number endeavored to break the strength of by telling a funny story. A reform must always pass through several stages of public sentiment on its approach to attainment. The ridicule stage is one of them, but it is past so far as our movement is concerned in the west, as well as in that part of the east in which our objects are entirely understood, and the people now are thinking with a seriousness with which they have never before approached a great public question. I suppose the ridicule era has just reached Arkansas. Along with all the rest of the states, however, it will fall into line, too, and add the majority of its population to the national army of the American citizens who sympathize with our movement and appreciate that its undoubted success will terminate the terrible distress with which the United States is now afflicted. I can only repeat what I have said before, and that is that we are here to stay until Congress takes some definite action upon the bills which contain our views and which a correct understanding of will cause every true American to favor with all his heart. I am going over to the Clover Club entertainment on Thursday, and may take occasional trips away from the camp every now and then, but I will never be absent long. No, I do not anticipate any trouble out at Bladensburg and a collision between the commonwealers and the citizens of that ancient and honored neighborhood is too absurd a possibility to be even considered. The sentiment of the people out there is rapidly changing and I am sure they will all be our friends in a very little while. There has been no refusal on the part of the merchants to sell us anything we want to buy and I have no idea that there will be. If we have the money the merchants will do the rest."

Carl Browne, May 14, 1894: "That settles it. We are law-abiding citizens, and will obey your orders."

Carl Browne, May 17, 1894: “In union is always strength, so if Brother Coxe and myself are consigned to a dungeon, hold together and do not be idle within. Let the shoemaker mend shoes and the tailor mend clothes. After the practical is taken care of attend to the beautiful. Let every branch of industry that can be carried on be done. If nothing better offers, go to work and build a piece of model road in Brother Rogers’ woods as our object lesson to the country. Prove that you are honest workingmen, and not ‘hobos’ and ‘vags,’ as we are sometimes styled by a portion of the press. We have got to put in just so much time. In our absence Jesse A. Coxe will be in supreme command and will carry out our orders, whether from a jail, lecture room or elsewhere, as the case may be, for if not consigned to jail both Brother Coxe and myself will fill calls here and there to lecture to obtain funds to maintain the commonweal.”

Carl Browne, May 22, 1894: “Yes. I have been behind the bars before, but never for any real offense. It has always been for this same crime of indulging in free speech.”

Washington Times

George Cox, March 24, 1894: [Referring to the letter he allegedly wrote to Coxe] “I never sent him a check, nor any letter. I have no sympathy with this movement.”

A.E. Redstone, March 25, 1894: “You may be certain of one thing and that is that we don’t propose to worry about the threats of a petty officer [referring to Major Moore] regarding our presence and gathering in this city. Our people are coming in a Christian, peaceful spirit and propose to do no harm and violate no law. But if we meet with that sort of opposition it will only arouse the people.”

A.E. Redstone, March 25, 1894: “Senator Kyle sympathizes with us and approves of our plan, I think.”

A.E. Redstone, March 25, 1894: “I asked Senator Stewart to address our army on its arrival, but he declined. He says, however, that we can camp out on his land at Chevy Chase if we want to.”

Carl Browne, March 25, 1894: “One dark and rainy night during the holidays of 1891, while Brother Coxe was driving from Massillon to Pauls station, four miles north of Massillon, he foundered about in the muddy roads, and when about half way home he suddenly had an idea that the only way to get a good road system was for the government to build it and for Congress to exercise its constitutional right to make money and pay for it. Thus three birds would be killed with one stone—a good road system, plenty of money, and plenty of work for the idle.”

Jesse Coxe, April 15, 1894: “When wealth refuses to be taxed to support a government that is the protector of the rights of the people, why should people obey the mandates of that government in the recognition of the individual ownership of wealth?”

If Abel has an inalienable right to exchange his mutton for Cain's potatoes, why should not any community of Abels to have the same free rate of exchange with any community of Cains?

Coxey! Why, what evil has he done? Is the railroads, the brokers, and the newspapers are all in the interest of the god of monopoly, he is marching a band of convincing evidences to the seat of government to prove that there are people who are not wealthy, and have no visible means of support, and who have the temerity to assert that it is not their fault.

Will the House be able to count a quorum for the transaction of business in case a hundred thousand Coxey's ask to be heard on this subject?

Why not leave the marble G.W. under his winter shed until the quarrel of the Speaker and the ex is over? If uncovered untimely he might get on a permanent blush of regret that he ever allowed himself to be a father of such a state of things.

Coxey's band of pilgrims if allowed to inspect the condition of the Al Caaba of this Mecca may say April fool and be glad to walk home.

Nothing shows the weakness of the government so conclusively as a necessity for action.

Coxey is coming to ask a question, or rather to propound the unanswered conundrum, can capital be made amenable to law?

The Supreme Court of the land has decided that corporate bodies are individuals in their own defense. What is the present average size of individuals in this commonwealth?"

A.E. Redstone, April 17, 1894: "The people of this country are behind this movement. The commonweal is growing. It is the little giant of the age.

A.E. Redstone, April 21, 1894: "The report is not true, but a request has been sent to Gen. Coxey asking him to come to this city on Saturday and speak. His answer to the request has not been received, and so the report that he will come is, so far, without foundation. If he does come we will have a large hall for him. If he does not come, a mass meeting will be held at the commonweal headquarters, as announced in the call issued last Saturday night, at 7:30 p.m." [Asked how the movement was progressing:] "Firm, and the ladies are taking more interest in it than one would suppose. They are doing good work in organizing here and in other cities, and only this morning several ladies came up and tendered blankets and pillows, and collars, and neckwear for the men on their arrival. A number of groups have been organized of from five to fifteen each, and hundreds more have signified their willingness to join as soon as the regular organization is begun."

Conversation between A.E. Redstone and a reporter, April 22, 1894:

REPORTER: Any fresh news in relation to the movement?
REDSTONE: Yes. I have received word from George Francis train [sic] that he will come here and hire a large hall, in which the Coxeyites may bivouac free of cost. Train says that the Coxey commonweal is only flying the battalion of 4,000,000 American citizens with hungry stomachs. He claims that he turned on the psychic force that set the Coxey army in motion. He will deliver several speeches during his sojourn here.

REPORTER: Colonel, what ever became of the loaf of bread that was sent from Arkansas in care of President Cleveland for the benefit of the Coxey army?
REDSTONE: It is as yet in a mysterious hiding place. The express company agreed to deliver it at the commonweal headquarters if not left in the care of the person to whom it was directed. It should be forwarded to its destination. [Coxeyite interjects: "Yes, we want it that we may have it photographed and scatter the pictures of it all over the land as a souvenir of the movement."]

REPORTER: Colonel, what of all this talk that trouble is being created for Coxey by the "Unknown," the "Veiled Woman," et al.?
REDSTONE: Rot! Nothing in it! Plutocratic lies!

A.E. Redstone, April 24, 1894: "There will be a guard of honor of 15,000 men to march into town with you boys. There have been promised 500 wheelmen also, and all of the labor unions will turn out to greet you.

The committee on ways and means has accumulated provisions to prevent any fear of want, but there will be but little to do in providing for the unattached members. The labor unions, the Grand Army, and all similar institutions have promised to care for their people, and there will be no great drain in any part of the community.

I have been in the army myself, and I do not ask my men to go in for any hardships where I am not with in with them.

There is going to be no intimidation practiced on these men. In the first place the authorities do not want to, and the next day they'd not dare. The American people are aroused, and they are going to be the jury to decide the case. The word has gone out over the country in the clans are gathering far and near. There will be 50,000 men in Washington on the first of May."

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and a reporter, April 24, 1894:

COXEY: Then my army has struck terror into the hearts of the President and Congressman.
REPORTER: You heed the proclamation?
COXEY: Emphatically, no.
REPORTER: If the police arrest yourself and the army, what then?
COXEY: Let them dare.
REPORTER: Will you desist from encouraging other industrial armies from storming the Capitol?
COXEY: On the contrary, I shall redouble my efforts to bring every unemployed man, woman, and child to Washington.

Carl Browne, April 26, 1894: "Refrain from begging, either on the street or from private houses. Also refrain from filling up on bad whisky. A little good whisky taken in moderation won't hurt you, but any one of you drinking immoderately may consider himself dismissed from the commonweal."

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and Frederick County, MD, Sheriff Zimmerman, April 27, 1894:

SHERIFF: Well, general, I am tired of this and we are going back.
COXEY: You are at liberty to go back whenever you choose. I will present you with a marshal's badge as an evidence of good conduct.

Carl Browne, April 29, 1894: "Organized labor attention! You are hereby requested to report at the Coxe headquarters, Four-and-a-half street and Pennsylvania avenue, on Monday, from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m., and secure badges if you desire to march behind our banners from Brightwood Park to the Nation's Capitol."

Conversation between Carl Browne and a reporter, April 29, 1894:

REPORTER: How many in line this morning?
BROWNE: Three hundred and twenty. Three hundred and seventy.
REPORTER: You only had two hundred and fifteen two days ago.
BROWNE: Oh, well, we have taken in a lot more.

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: "Your paper will go down into history as having the only official preparations for the greatest day the world has ever seen."

Carl Browne, May 1, 1894: "Comrades or the Commonweal: To-morrow is the 1st of May. On Easter Sunday we left Massillon, Ohio, bound for the city of Washington. It was said that we would never get here. We are here! They now say, 'Where is your hundred thousand men?' We say they will be around us as we officially predicted, notwithstanding the refusal of the railroads of the country to fix excursion rates, thereby

thwarting us to the extent of their power. But all the subsidized press, shutting their ears to the shouts of the people, are harping: 'Oh, but these hundred thousand will not be in line!' Well, suppose they are not—they will count just as strong, won't they? Wait till there is a show of hands; that will tell the story!

The delay in getting food collected by the reception committee of the good people of Washington, for breakfast, was unavoidable so far as I can learn, but as soon as I learned it Brother Coxey gave me sufficient money to load up a wagonload of bread and cheese, etc., which, as you know, I brought into camp. I have ordered a supper of bread, meat, coffee, beans, and tomatoes; about the same for breakfast. We are indebted to Mr. A. R. Shephard, general manager of the Brightwood Driving Club, for our camp yesterday and to-night. To-night I have ordered straw for beds; take a good rest to-night. Remain in camp as much as possible, so as to be as fresh as the beautiful May morning that we expect so confidently to usher in the dawn of 'peace on earth, good will toward men.'

Bugles will be blown to-morrow at 7 a.m., breakfast at 8. Forward march will be given at 9 a.m. Unless there is a special order by 12 o'clock to-night Marshals Brodrick and Jones, of the Chicago and Philadelphia communities, will see to it that all the camp equipage, etc., are loaded on wagons.

Quartermaster Marshal Pfrimmer will have one feed for the horses in each wagon, also Commissary Marshal Blinn will have a lunch for the men. Chief of Staff J. A. Coxey will drill the commonweals from 8:30 to 9 a.m., with the peace staffs and flags and the following orders: Attention! carry peace! present peace! order peace! carry peace! right shoulder shift peace! left shoulder shift peace! carry peace! parade rest, peace! carry peace! present peace! gloria peace!

Marshals Roy Kirk, Arthur Leidham and George C. Clinton will see that the glee club sings the Commonweal songs as we march tomorrow. Marshals Scrum and Ball will issue new badges to all members of the Commonweal morning.

The following will be the order of march:

Escort—The Members of the Public Comfort Committee of Washington, D. C.
Miss Mamie Coxey, representing the Angel of Peace—Dress white, necktie red,
with silver heart. Liberty cap blue, with silver letters, PEACE!

Chief Marshal—Carl Browne.

Chief of Staff—J. A. Coxey.

Aids—Roy Kirke, J. J. Thayer, and S. Pfrimmer.

Commonweal American Flag.

Banner of Christ.

Pittsburg-Allegheny Banner.

Homestead Banner.

Commonweal Band.

Banners—Faith, Hope and Justice. The Cerebrum of the Commonweal.

J. S. Coxey, president of the J. S. Coxey Good Roads Association of the United States.

Banner—Co-operation, the cerebellum of the Commonweal.

Banner—The medula oblongata and all other parts of the reincarnated Christ in the whole people.

Banner—‘Christ is our leader.’

Commune A—Chicago community. Marshal, John Broderick. Commune Marshal, John Kelly.

Panorama wagon—The great financial conspiracy.

Commune B, C. C.—Marshal Charles Reis; commissary wagon No. 1; Marshal A. A. Blinn, and aids.

Commune C--Marshal, T. Hague.

Commissary wagon No. 2—John McPheeny.

Commune D—Marshal, T. Drennen.

Camp equipages wagon.

Commune E—Henry Besselman, tent wagon.

Commune F—C. C.—C. Humphries.

Miss Virginia Lavallette—Goddess of Liberty.

Philadelphia Community—C. C. Jones, marshal.

Commune A. P. C.—Marshal, George C. Clinton.

Labor organizations of Washington, D. C., who desire to fall in—A. E.

Redstone, marshal. They will please form on Fourteenth street.

All labor and other organizations from other points who desire to ‘fall in’ in alphabetical order—Ed. Moore, marshal. They will please form on First street.

I have just received the following communication, which explains itself:

‘Headquarters of the Metropolitan Police, District of Columbia, Washington, April 30, 1894: Permission is given to the ‘Commonweal’ organization to parade with music and seven vehicles on May first, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m, from the Brightwood driving park to Fourteenth street, to Pennsylvania avenue, to First street northwest, to B street northwest, to Delaware avenue northeast, where they are to disperse.

Upon reforming, the return of the organization to the point of beginning of the parade will be via B street northwest to First street northwest, to Pennsylvania avenue, to Sixth street northwest, to Florida avenue, and thence by the most feasible route to the camp.

Should, however, the camp be removed to Delaware avenue, between L and M streets southwest, the line of march thereto will be by the shortest route, avoiding passing through the Capitol or other public ground.

W. G. MOORE, Major and Supt. Met. Police D. C.’

At 12 o'clock Brother Coxey and myself will talk upon the Capitol steps if the following amendment to the Constitution of the United States has not been rendered void by some

little technicalities. The following is the ground on which we will make our stand for liberty, as our forefathers did in '76:

‘AMENDMENT 1—Congress shall make no law prohibiting or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.’

I cannot conclude this order more appropriately than by quoting the last paragraph of our bulletin, No. 4, of the J. S. Coxe Good Roads Association of the United States, issued last February:

‘Having faith in the rectitude of our intentions and believing that we are acting from inspiration from on high, we believe that the liberty loving people comprising this indivisible American Union will respond in such numbers to this call of duty, that no Hessian Pinkerton thugs, much less state militia or United States troops can be hired for gold to fire upon such a myriad of human beings, unarmed and defenseless, assembling under the aegis of the Constitution, upon the steps of the nation’s Capitol, to assert their prerogative, shielded as they would be by right and justice, and guided by Him in the interest of good and higher government, and thus will take place that final battle, long foretold; for it will be as noble Lester Hubbard once wrote: ‘That plain of Armageddon, dimly seen by ancient seer when the brute nature and immortal soul of man close in final contest, which shall herald the dawning of the era of love and tenderness, when nations shall know the fatherhood of God and live the brotherhood of man. This was the prayer of Him on Calvary’s cross, and at last it shall come true, for the Everlasting God hath so ordained it.’”

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and a *Times* reporter, May 1, 1894:

COXEY:	Nothing remains for us but to make an amicable arrangement for the meeting on the steps. We shall not insist on marching into the grounds, but when we reach the curb I will tell the boys to break ranks and march in like other citizens.
REPORTER:	Then what?
COXEY:	Then the meeting will begin.
REPORTER:	Suppose the Sergeant-at-Arms objects?
COXEY:	He cannot object. We can hold our meeting there as the Constitution gives us a right to do. It would be another thing if we undertook to come inside the building and hold a meeting, but that we shall not assume to do.
REPORTER:	You will attempt the meeting then in the face of official opposition?
COXEY:	Yes, regardless of the law, because of our constitutional rights.
REPORTER:	Suppose there should be forcible resistance by the executive authorities of the city?

COXEY: Well, we shall not assume that there will be any forcible opposition.

Conversation between Carl Browne and Speaker Crisp, May 1, 1894:

BROWNE: In case you find that such a law exists, will you give us permission to assemble there?

CRISP: I can make no definite promises.

Conversation between Jacob Coxe and D.C. Police Captain Garden, May 2, 1894:

GARDEN: What do you want to do here?

COXEY: I wish to make an address.

GARDEN: But, you cannot do that.

COXEY: Then can I read a protest? [Then drops a piece of paper.]

That is for the press.

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "Comrades of the Commonwealth: Liberty lies weltering in her own blood at the nation's capital city to-night, stabbed in the house of her friends by her supposed guardians. Free speech has been suppressed, and policemen's clubs have taken the place of the scales of justice. But it is only temporary. 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.'

Brothers, we have entered upon the beginning of the end. The wounds of will be staunch, and the scales of justice will again be equally poised as in the days of our illustrious sires, for we have come here to stay until there is a greater gathering here of men than confronted Lee on the banks of the Potomac years ago, and then the real traitors—the Rothschilds, who used the men of the South to bring on that war, to the profit of King Gold—will be overturned, like Belshazzar of old, and every producer will then get the products of his labor, for the passage of Brother Coxe's bills would be the entering wedge to such a condition.

I congratulate you upon your splendid action to-day; not a man left his post that I know of except one, and he is excused under the circumstances.

Your sympathy shown me has overcome me with emotion, and is a sufficient recompense to me for all the lies published that you were not loyal to me and were disposed to criticise my mistakes whenever made.

After remaining in a damp, dirty dungeon for several hours, owing to the delay in making a charge to lodge against me, I was finally let out on \$500 bail, which was furnished by two true Christian ladies of Washington, D. C., who had presented themselves at my cell door shortly after my incarceration—Mrs. Briggs and Mrs. Haines—and I was taken to the most hospitable home in Washington and made welcome, as well as Brother Coxe, whenever we choose to call—the home of a gifted authoress, as was her noble husband, the friend of the immortal Lincoln—Mrs. Emily

Briggs, from whose generous table my physical system was soon refreshed, as was my soul by hers.

I then visited my other benefactress, Mrs. E. C. Haines, the representative of 'labor' on my bonds, as was the former the representative of honest 'capital.'

I am also indebted to the noble nature of Brother Aaron R. Shephard, of the Brightwood Driving Park, who sent his own attorney, Mr. Hyman, a bright young man recently from New York, who attended to all legal matters pertaining to my release. I regret that we could not arrange to get Brother Jones out last night, but Marshal Clinton and myself did all we could to do so. He will be out in the morning.

This morning at 9 a.m. I am to confront my accusers, and I am promised an array of defense of prominent men most flattering to any one.

Bugle call at 7 a.m. Breakfast at 8 am. Lunch at 1 p.m. Supper at 6 p.m.

Dull hours at 11 a.m. and at 3 p.m., and it is desired that every member will be present. Samuel Priffmmer is hereby appointed paymaster as well as quartermaster marshal.

I will announce donations in order for to-night.

Fraternally, Carl Browne."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "Whether or not we will be permitted to speak, I cannot say, but you must be careful to preserve the peace. Then we will reform and march to our new camp near by, which has been provided. This demonstration will be more powerful than force, than guns, than bombs."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "People said that we wouldn't march up Pennsylvania avenue when we reached here. Yet the police department yesterday informed Brother Coxe that we could march. We are here on time and will go to the grounds on time. All are certainly on deck. Yesterday it looked as if we wouldn't have many, but now we will go in with spirits as bright as the May day on which we march. Mr. Crisp refused yesterday to let us speak on the Capitol steps. We didn't see the Vice President. That is the latest I can tell you. We will go into the Capitol grounds as industrials. They can't prevent us from doing that."

Carl Browne, May 2, 1894: "I am an American citizen; I stand on my constitutional rights."

E. C. Haines, May 2, 1894: [To Anna Diggs] "We'll make this a combination of capital and labor. You represent the capital and I'll represent the labor."

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: "Although I have perfect confidence in the fairness of your honor, I believe it is my right to have a jury trial, and will choose that method."

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: "Our camp is not large enough. The present army is only a nucleus. We will expand and remain here. On some holiday, either May 30 or the Fourth of July, we will make another demonstration and wipe from the statute books this iniquitous law which forbids citizens to speak on the Capitol grounds. Probably we will do it on Decoration Day, because that will symbolize the union of the Blue and the Gray."

Carl Browne, May 3, 1894: "Brothers of the Commonweal: Another day in Washington, and still another phase in our movements. To-day you have shown to thousands of eyes the fact that you are workers and not lazy 'hobos,' as you have been branded by afternoon newspapers of this city, for this has required hard, earnest work at your hands to make this camp comfortable as it is to-night.

At 9 o'clock this morning Brother C. C. Jones and myself appeared before Judge Miller, of the court of this city, at which time Brother Coxey was also arrested and compelled to give bail in the same amount as Brother Jones and myself. All our cases have gone over until Friday.

Marshals of communes will please take notice to recruit no more members until further orders.

The camp to-morrow will be known as Camp Briggs-Haines, in honor of that class of our citizens who are taxed without representation in legislation contrary to the Constitution of the United States. The women of our land, two of whom bear the above names of this camp, came forward when man was lacking and when liberty lay manacled.

Bugle call tomorrow at 7 a.m. Breakfast at 8 a.m. Lunch at 1 p.m. Supper at 6 p.m.

Marshal Coxey will drill communes at 11 a.m. and at 3 p.m. I am sorry to announce that Marshal Roy Kirk was called to his home at Frostburg, Md., by the illness of his father. During his absence a local newspaper representative will assume his place as my secretary. Good night."

Conversation between Carl Browne and Judge Miller, May 5, 1894:

BROWNE:	But they do it.
MILLER:	You be quiet, sir. You are in court.
BROWNE:	Excuse me, sir.
MILLER:	If that man makes any more interruptions, put him in the dock.

Carl Browne, May 5, 1894: "Another day of hard work and our camp is becoming a credit to the health of this part of the city, and the authorities ought to thank us, and so far as I know they do. It is only a portion of the local press that now keeps harping on with a coyotte-like youp.

The prosecution of Brothers Coxey, Jones, and myself commenced and we did not lack for counsel, while the array of volunteer witnesses was cheering to us. During the morning session of the court Senator Allen, of Nebraska, came in and made a masterful argument on constitutional law, covering the case of all three defendants.

Hon. Lafe Pence, Mr. Lipscomb and partner, and Hon. J. Hudson, of Kansas, announced that they appeared for Brother Coxey, while Mr. Hyman and Mr. Van Voorhies, M. C. from N. Y., said to the court that they would take care of the legal points in Brother Jones' and my defense, for I announced to all that so far as I was concerned the prosecution might do its worst, and I should not go on the stand. If I could not be cleared on the evidence of witnesses, I would go to jail again. I took occasion to tell the judge what I thought of him, and did not apologize, as falsely stated in the evening sheet that pretends only to give the 'news.'

To-morrow the name of the camp will be Camp Galvin, the leader marshal of the next incoming contingent of the commonweal which we expect in camp soon.

To-morrow Marshals Broderick and Jones, of the Chicago and Philadelphia communities, will detail two men from each commune under command of Brother C. T. McKee, who will go out with a wagon and driver, which Marshal Sam. Pfrimmer will furnish, for the purpose of gathering up the donations of shoes, hats, and clothing that have been tendered us, and to solicit from those who desire to contribute."

Carl Browne, May 6, 1894: "Comrades of the Commonweal of Christ: Another refreshing shower has made more pleasant our camp, which is now as healthy as any part of this malarious district.

Beginning with supper I have instructed Marshal Blinn to divide up camp utensils among its various communes, and each marshal of communes will hereafter draw raw rations from its commissary and provide their own ranks to cook and serve the same. The band will also mess by itself, as will also the teamsters and other attaches, all drawing raw rations from commissary Marshal Blinn. Hereafter commune marshals must distribute the donations of clothing, etc., collected by the donation committee, consisting of two members of each commune, now out under direction of Brother C. T. McKee.

A handsome Bible has been received by Brother Coxey, with \$1 inclosed [sic]. It was from a lady named Hart, in Texas.

A number of Christian ladies have brought into camp bundles of literature and delicacies for the sick. There are now but two members sick in our hospital, but they are rapidly recovering.

Sunday morning bugle call at 8 a.m. Breakfast at 9 a.m. Dinner at 3 p.m. Light lunch at 7 p.m.

At 11 a.m. there will be reincarnation services and singing by our choir and music by our band. Bro. Coxey and myself will speak upon the 'Kingdom of Heaven at hand' and 'Revelations revealed.' At 3 p.m., J. S. Coxey will drill the communers. At 8 p.m. I will draw some offhand cartoons and Bro. Coxey will explain his two bills.

The following donations have been received up to 6 p.m. Friday evening. If there has been any lack of credit given to those deserving it will be hereafter given upon notification to these headquarters.

[Donations listed.]

The prosecution of Brothers Coxey, Jones, and myself was not concluded and it went over until Monday. The snake is dead, but the tail is still wriggling. Monday night will probably see it as cold as the concrete sidewalks of the Capitol grounds on a Winter's morning. Good night."

Jacob Coxey, May 10, 1894: "We have no intention of leaving Washington before some definite action, either negative or affirmative, is taken upon the bills which brought us here. There has not been any regular correspondence between the other bodies journeying towards Washington and myself, but there is no question but that their movements have been inspired by the cause I represent, and there is no doubt we shall all affiliate when they get here."

Carl Browne, May 10, 1894: "Comrades of the Commonweal: Almost simultaneously with the completion of the sanitary work in our camp that renders it the most wholesome locality in that part of Washington in which it is situated, official notice was served upon Mr. Bensinger, the owner of the ground, that within forty-eight hours we must virtually vacate our present camp.

We yet hope to get the Board of Health to see that this action is unjust, for their course was based upon the report of physicians made upon our camp previous to the completion of our work of connecting our drainage with the sewer system.

We shall health the health officials to-morrow to an inspection of our camp, with a view of reconsideration. In the meantime, the order in force to-day of every man remaining in camp, unless on urgent business outside, will be maintained in case we must move, and every man should be at his post of duty at a moment's notice.

Same hours for rising and meals will be observed to-morrow as to-day. The name of the camp will still be Camp Tyranny until further notice.

Brother Coxey presented your petition to-day to the House Committee on Labor.

The news of incoming contingents augment the belief in a widespread conspiracy against us upon the part of gold monopoly in bringing its police arms elsewhere, as in

Washington, against the common people. The question is, how long will the people stand such outrages without universal remonstrances? Let us hope not much longer.

Good night.”

Conversation between Jacob Coxey and Representative Ryan, May 10, 1894:

- COXEY: [Upon being asked how he claimed to represent so many.]
Take the Farmers’ Alliance, the Knights of Labor and other organizations and they are all in sympathy with this movement.
- RYAN: But, don’t you think more than one per cent of the people are represented through their chosen members in Congress?
- COXEY: Yes, but as a rule they are being misrepresented, instead of being represented.
- RYAN: Well, have you any showing to make, any proofs to offer, that you represent 99 per cent of the people?
- COXEY: No. I don’t claim that.

Jacob Coxey, May 10, 1894: “We have thousands of petitions if we only have a chance to present them.”

Sign issued by Jacob Coxey & Carl Browne on camp gate, May 15, 1894: “First. No leaving camp without passes. Second. Doors closed at 11 p.m. Third. Members will be dismissed for violation of the above or drunkenness, for fighting, or for refusing to obey marshals orders, and for any wasting of food.”

Carl Browne, May 15, 1894: “Comrades: As you know, I surprised you last evening by a change of camp so suddenly, and had no time to explain. The prime cause was owing to the fact that a small clique of self-asserting, “law-abiding” citizens of Hyattsville had inflamed the good people of that little town into intimidating the women and children of the brave Dr. Rogers, who so kindly gave us an abiding place when we were reduced to dire extremity as him when he exclaimed that the ‘son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.’ I felt that it was unjust to the lady and her children to remain the cause for such acts of terrorism when the generous-hearted people of historic Bladensburg were ready to furnish us a camp.

And so here we are in the most perfect, healthful camp imaginable, and those ‘law-abiding’ citizens, who were so frightened at their shadows last Saturday evening, probably have now crawled into a hole and are trying to pull the hole in with them; in the meantime the taxpayers will have to pay thirty men \$2 for ‘going on duty’ to watch the moonlight shimmering over the Eastern Branch.

A young lady of Hyattsville this evening sent twenty loaves of bread to camp. She evidently desired to ‘cast bread upon the troubled waters.’ You have done splendid to-

day. Read the rules of the camp and be true to yourselves in the future, as in the past. Bugle at 7 a.m., breakfast at 8 a.m., lunch at 1 p. m., and supper at 6 p.m. Meeting to-morrow evening, at which every member of the commonweal is expected to be present, as something important will be communicated to you.”

Jacob Coxey, May 16, 1894: [When asked what they would do with the shipment of provisions.] “Well, we have about 500 storehouses on these grounds, and I think with these we can find a good and safe place for them.”

Carl Browne, May 16, 1894: “COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: You have done splendidly today, every hour has improved the comfort and sanitary condition of this camp, and Marshals Brodrick and Bullock are entitled to special mention in this connection.

I am glad to be able to state that Brother Kane, who was arrested last night by officer of Bladensburg, was not proceeded against. I am also glad to announce that the carload of flour sent by the good people of Springfield, Mo., reached here to-day and will be hauled to camp to-morrow.

Marshal Bullock will construct an oven, and Marshal Brodrick will detail bakers and put them to work baking bread from day to day as required. Marshal Brodrick will detail a commune to conduct a camp table, commencing Thursday to furnish camp fare to all who desire to eat with us and pay for the same.

Marshal of Donations C. T. McKee will report to Marshal Pfrimmer for instructions hereafter. Any member who goes to any house to beg for anything will be dismissed. Members should be careful not to expose themselves while bathing on pain of dismissal. Our case in court went over until next Thursday, when we are to be sentenced by the judge.”

Carl Browne, May 17, 1894: “COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: It takes light and shade to paint a perfect picture. To-day we have the rain to go with the sunshine of yesterday, and we have the shadow of Judge Miller’s sentence hanging over us for getting on the Capitol ‘grass’ while there are thousands of others who did that also.

Brothers Coxey and Jones and myself were convicted by a ‘stack,’ or professional jury, one enjoying the sunlight of liberty, and some have the sublime gall to tell us that this is a government of ‘equal rights to all’ that is now and has been administered at the nation’s capital the past twenty-five years.

Bah! As Madame Roland exclaimed when going to the block: ‘Oh, Liberty! what crimes are committed in thy name,’ so might we exclaim, ‘Oh, Justice!’

This is not the time to revive that force or to attempt to make it clear to the public, for at present the very tyranny that the ‘powers that be’ have been exercising over free American citizens because we are poor, is baring a wonderful effect to arouse the

lethargy of the conservative people in our behalf, and it may be that two months in jail by us will do more for you and the millions that you stand for than ten years of agitation. If so, we will gladly welcome the prison bars, so no matter what our sentence is to be to-morrow, let every one of you stand firm as you did in that trying torment, when you saw policemen's clubs flying on the memorable 1st of May, 1894, and when free speech was suppressed on the hearthstone of the American people.

We have you comfortably fixed in a healthful camp and located on leased land, amidst generous-hearted people of Bladensburg.

Your commissary is well stocked with flour, thanks to the liberty lovers of Springfield, Mo., and should you get nothing else you can exist a long time on that, and you can only fail if you disband and thereby weaken your cause.

In union is always strength, so if Brother Coxe and myself are consigned to a dungeon, hold together and do not be idle within. Let the shoemaker mend shoes and the tailor mend clothes. After the practical is taken care of attend to the beautiful. Let every branch of industry that can be carried on be done. If nothing better offers, go to work and build a piece of model road in Brother Rogers' woods as our object lesson to the country. Prove that you are honest workingmen, and not 'hobos' and 'vags,' as we are sometimes styled by a portion of the press. We have got to put in just so much time. In our absence Jesse A. Coxe will be in supreme command and will carry out our orders, whether from a jail, lecture room or elsewhere, as the case may be, for if not consigned to jail both Brother Coxe and myself will fill calls here and there to lecture to obtain funds to maintain the commonweal.

On the 30th of May, Decoration day, we will march to Washington and decorate the 'Peace' monument. Union and Confederate soldiers having volunteered to escort us on that occasion.

Should Congress, in the meantime, repeal its obnoxious cobweb 'law,' that virtually sets aside the Constitution of the United States, we will speak upon the Capitol steps that day. If it does not, we will make no attempt to do so, but will return to Camp George Washington again.

Marshal Hennessy, of the hospital staff, has been relieved for a few days for much needed rest. At his request Marshal John Howard takes his place. Marshal Stewart, who joined us at Pittsburg, has deserted. He took a saddle that did not belong to him. Marshal John Woods, of Commune A, has been granted a week's absence. Brother John Usher, of Panorama commune, fills his place.

William Darr, of Hyattsville, sent in some fine roasts of beef to-day. Mrs. Louisa Donnelly, 1889 Florida avenue northeast, and Mrs. Ruth King, of 1877 Florida avenue northeast, brought in two baskets of delicacies for the sick, but we have no sick to-day, as Brother John Thayer is rapidly convalescing. Brother C. T. McKee has brought in one crate of fish, one pail of apple butter, one basket of vegetables, and one box of fish

and meat. In the car from Missouri we also found five pair of shoes, six pails of jelly, and one side of bacon.

Among the visitors to-day were a retired captain of the United States navy and Seaman J. J. Pickering, of the U. S. S. Detroit, the latter being an old friend of mine from Los Angeles, Cal.

A prominent lady of Bladensburg sent to the hotel this morning a magnificent bouquet of roses to Mrs. J. S. Coxey, with well wishes for her sojourn in Bladensburg, and so time will make friends of many good people of Hyattsville when they find we are not enemies, but friends.”

Carl Browne, May 19, 1894: “COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: Your cheerfulness under so depressing circumstances as confronts us of flood and future would win the admiration of a stole and cause the heart of a cynic to have hope in humanity’s cause.

Our thanks are due to Brother Bartlett, a farmer, for kindly permitting fifty of you to sleep in his large barn; also to Father Russell for making many of you comfortable in Hyattsville, and also to Mrs. Lucy Ross, custodian of the old Macedonian church of Bladensburg, for tendering it to you to-night in this tumbling tempest. Also to Brother Gifford, proprietor of the George Washington hotel, who lodges fifty, and Brother Door, of Hyattsville, who lodges sixty more, and another person who lodges thirty, name unknown—all this quite in contrast with the custodian (who resides in Hyattsville) of an unused church here, who flatly refused to allow any of us to enter it. ‘Foxes have holes, but the son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.’

Remember, that behind the darkest clouds the sun is ever shining serenely, and that all will be well ‘when the clouds roll by.’

While I write this order authentic word is brought me that Brother Stagmeir, who owns the rich land on the opposite side of the river, has tendered the free use of the same for our camp if we get flooded out here, so, ‘in the bright lexicon of our youth, we know no such word as fail’ in this cause.

The donation to-day were from a New York man in camp, Brother Wright, 10 cents; half barrel of kraut, 1 barrel of fish, 100 loaves of bread, 1 peck of lettuce, 25 pounds of meat, 6 cans of tomatoes, 3 spring cots from Springman, of South Washington.

The shipping receipt of one carload of wood from Brother Stetlemeir, Burdette, Maryland, has reached us. Cash receipts to-day \$2. Brother Coxey was insulted by a capitalistic club of Clover coots of Philadelphia yesterday, who wanted him to come and explain his bid, and then they refused to listen to him. A number more of the advanced guard of Frye, Galvin, and Fitzgerald reached here to-night and are now members of the California commune. No sick to-night.

Judge Bradley to-day refused to give us a fair hearing in his court, and so our grist goes back to Judge Miller, who will sentence us at 10 a.m. to-morrow. What that sentence will be of course no one knows but the judge, but if it is to go to jail, let every one of you remain true. These headquarters will simply be removed to the jail, and I expect my orders carried out, no matter what happens, just the same as if I were with you in person, through my chief of staff, Jesse A. Coxey.

Brother C. T. McKee will speak to you occasionally in camp hereafter, and if I am absent on next Sunday will read to you my regular remarks on reincarnation.

There is no truth in the report that Marshal Kelley is coming on from his contingent to take command here. Brothers Frye, Kelley, and Galvin rank in the commonweal simply as Brother C. C. Jones, of the Philadelphia division or community. I know Brothers Frye and Kelley personally, and a good deal of the character of Galvin, and I know that none of them are troubled with the swelled head. Brother Frye was associated with me in a similar move on the legislature of California in 1891. Having devised all the plans, organized and engineered the commonweal thus far, I expect you all to remain true to me, in jail as well as out, and feel confident that you will allow no dissensions or contentions.

Brother Coxey and myself will soon issue a proclamation to call on the American patriots of 1891 to send us supplies, for our force will always be measured by the fullness of our commissary; and speaking of that, I must no longer delay honorable mention of Sisters Belt and Tregino, of the public comfort committee of Washington, for their unselfish devotion to us, and to brand one Maltby, recently of same committee, a wolf in sheep's clothing, judging from his acts, which speak louder than his protestations, and call upon all who desire to aid us to put nothing in Maltby's hands with expectation of reaching us.

In conclusion, remember, even if Brother Coxey and his bill are away at any time, that little Legal Tender is ever here—and that is why we are all here to petition more 'legal tenders.' Good night."

Carl Browne, May 21, 1894: "COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: Another miserable day has been passed by you, and yet it has been good for the cause, for it still more proves your fortitude under adversity, the true test of manhood, individually and collectively.

Owing to circumstances over which I had no control I was unable to be present and give my usual Sunday talk on reincarnation, but it was perhaps just as well, as you had opportunity to listen to a 'gentleman of the cloth,' talk on 'brotherly love' in front of a church which refused to shelter you from the weather. What we want is a heaven here, not a church that preaches of a heaven to come while it aids in the continuing of a hell here, instead of a heaven, as this should be and could be if these two bills of Brother Coxey's could be made the law of the land instead of the cobweb gag laws and usury system now on the statute books.

Brother Coxey spoke to an interested audience, of which many were ladies, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather.

Marshal Brodrick accomplished the removal of a part of the camp to brother Stagmeir's ground in good shape.

Last evening about 9 o'clock twelve members of Company C, Fifth Infantry, of the national guard of the District of Columbia, called at my tent, after shaking hands with Brother Coxey, and asked to meet the marshal of the commonweal. I greeted them in your behalf as well as myself, and thanked them for their call. Meanwhile Landlord Gifford, of the George Washington hotel, sent out liquid refreshments for us, and with my ginger ale (I sometimes take whisky), I proposed the toast, 'Well, boys, if you are ever ordered—and I hope that you'll never be—to fire upon us, please shoot over our heads in the cause of peace.' The cheer that they gave reminded me of the time of the French revolutionary period, when the soldiers of the Empire became the leaders of the people to chop off the heads of the people's oppressors.

Will history repeat itself in this last respect, too? Time alone will prove. For my part, I do not believe that there need be any fear for that.

To-morrow our 'keep off the grass' case comes up again at 10 a. m. before Judge Miller. I shall not take my valise with me, it would seem that Brother Coxey had found a four leaved clover in Philadelphia the way they are excited over there.

News has reached me of the death of little Rose, the 3-year-old darling of Brother Vincent, the historian of the commonweal. Let roses be pinned to the headquarters tent to mourn her sweet memory. Good night."

Carl Browne, May 23, 1894: "COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: "Promptly yesterday at 10 a. m. I entered the doorway over which is written these despairing words of Dante's, 'Let all who enter here leave hope behind'—the police court of the District of Columbia, which, with all its accessories, is a veritable hell on earth. The courtroom was crowded. Police officers were as thick as the stars of the milky way.

Although I did not have my buckskins on they seemed to think that Brother Coxey and myself were desperate desperadoes. After Congressman Hudson spoke on some legal points permission was given Brother Coxey and myself to say something, and then we realized that we were condemned and then tried afterwards. I spoke first, and the moment I touched upon the gold ring I was called down, and was so badgered that I feel I did not do justice to our cause. Still I managed to impress the judge with the most important fact that I did not break the peace on May 1. And yet I was treated as a wild criminal, and my head might have been broken only for a colored man having put his head in range so as to save mine, and how appropriate it was for a former black slave to protect a head of that face that had risked its life to save his from slavery, and especially the head of one who bore the name of Browne. Even the judge did not interfere with the applause of this sentiment in the courtroom.

I also had the satisfaction of telling that jury what particular kind of Judas Iscariots they were. I asked no mercy as I went on the grass while Brother Coxey did not. I thought that as he didn't he ought to go free. Brother Coxey then arose and said so in his dignified way that he did not carry a banner, neither had he broken no law and his conviction by the jury was wrong.

The judge then looked like he had to take a bitter dose of medicine, and leveled a long tirade at Brother Coxey, which if published in full would do us more good instead of harm, showing plainly to all how biased the court really was, as well as the 'stock' jury that had to carry out orders of Wall street.

So we were sent to Uncle Sam's Summer house out on the East Branch, where we went soon after in the black 'van' with cold steel indignities on our wrists, but we took everything, asking no favors and here we are and after one day's time spent are as busy as two bees, overwhelmed with mail and telegrams and words of cheer. While I refer to this place as a bastille, I do it in that sense in which we were consigned here, for upon the main this jail is a sort of government co-operative institution in which all here co-operative for the good of all herein in certain things; but only a few labor—thus a large amount of labor goes to waste by this halfway governmental co-operative system; only a few work, but all eat, and the poor farmer who raises it all goes barefooted and hatless.

We are treated kindly, and although we are used the same as others here, every one, as well as the officials themselves, do not seem to feel as if we were criminals. The rules of the jail, not the jailors, are harsh.

As an example, we were last night compelled to submit to vaccination on pain of having it done by force or a dungeon. Now, to us it seemed the height of inquisitorial punishment. We protested but submitted, and the excitement destroyed my pence for the night, for after I had been asleep awhile I awoke up delirious from the poison injected into my veins, for it so happened to affect me, although it did not Brother Coxey, who laughingly called it 'jail fright.' I told him they couldn't make the people out West believe that the jail had any terrors for me; that when a man was sick he was sick, and he couldn't help it; it was difficult that I could not control myself, as my head was swimming for two hours.

I mention this to go along with the many outrages that are committed in the shadow of the dome of supposed liberty. What right has any one to scratch another's flesh and inject whatever they chose into another's veins? They have the same right to stab you with a knife.

Glad to head through Marshals Pfrimmer and Salisbury of your comfortable camp. I have some assurances that you will have coffee as well as we, such as it is, once a day. In a few days contributions will begin to reach us from the West, and then we will take in all the recruits that are knocking at our picket lines.

I received a letter to-day from Marshal Frye, also from Marshal Shrum, who crossed the mountains with us. He was out in Iowa recruiting, and expects to be with us again on July 4 with a contingent of coal miners from Braxil, Iowa.

Fitzgerald's contingent arrived in Washington to-day, but fell into the hands of the successful schemers who in the past have ever managed to keep laborers' ranks divided in the interest of the despoiler, whether he can hold his men away from us to their detriment and ours remains to be seen.

Brother C. T. McKee continue to solicit contributions, and Marshal Ball will issue individual passes.

Brother Lafe Pence has donated 100 pounds of coffee; N. A. Dunning ten pounds of coffee, and Mr. Cook twenty-five pounds of coffee.

Be of good cheer and stand firm, good night."

Carl Browne, May 28, 1894: "COMRADES OF THE COMMONWEAL: Looking from our window it bids fair to be a glorious day—glorious to you outside, who enjoy the fresh air but not so glorious in that respect to those shut in by prison bars.

Mrs. Coxey reports to Brother Coxey everything all well in camp. This is cheering to us.

The removal the hostlers' tent to its old place is approved, and the quartermaster marshal is justified in his wishes in the matter. Now let the whole matter drop.

Brother Coxey's mail is large, and many people call at the jail who are not permitted to enter.

My advices from California are that the great state that has sent so many men to join us is now arranging to send supplies.

The line of march for the parade on the 30th of May will be given in Tuesday morning's orders, owing to delay in hearing from Major Moore as to the streets you may pass through. You will have a goddess of peace, notwithstanding the unavoidable absence of Miss Mamie Coxey, in the person of Miss Virginia Lavallette, of Philadelphia.

Let every commonwealer get him a cane from the woods to carry on that day and Marshal Pfrimmer will furnish a peace badge to put on them. In your behalf I thank the *Washington Times*, the only paper in Washington that gives these orders."

Carl Browne, May 30, 1894: "COMRADES: What could be more appropriate for the Commonweal of Christ to do on Decoration Day than to march to the Peace Monument and decorate it, and having elected so to do, go there in a spirit that you not only desire peace between those who wore the blue and those who wore the gray, but the perpetual peace of all nations, creeds and sects. The following is the order for the same, and let

every one of you go on that mission, resolved to keep the peace whatever happens. If any policemen should lose their heads at the sight of our banner of peace, as they did on the 1st of May, do not lose yours, and if they strike any blows, return them not. Do as I did on that day, 'turn the other cheek.'

The order to leave camp will begin at 7 a.m., and march up the Bladensburg road to Maryland avenue, where you will meet [sic] the escort, the Commune A of the Washington colored citizens' community, Noah Warner, marshal. What could be more fitting for the Commonwealth of Christ than to be led by former black slaves, for whom the whites fought to break the shackles of slavery from their ankles, only to fall in to a worse than cotton slavery—the slavery to interest on bonds.

Order of the commonweal march on Decoration Day.

First, Stars and stripes; second, Peace banner, portrait of Christ; third, Goddess of peace, Miss Virginia Lavallette (owing to absence of Miss Mamie Coxey); fourth, Acting chief marshal, Jesse Coxey (owing to my getting on the grass with buckskin coat on); fifth, Chief of staff to acting chief marshal, Samuel Pfrimmer; sixth, Aids to acting chief marshal, Marshals Broderick, Greenan, Saulisbury, Galvin, and Ball; seventh, Pittsburg and Allegheny banner; eighth, Homestead banner; ninth, J. J. Thayer and commonweal band; tenth, Banner, Faith, Hope and Justice, reverse side, J. S. Coxey profile; eleventh, J. S. Coxey's home phaeton containing 'little Legal Tender' and Mrs. Coxey with the driver (owing to Brother Coxey's vacation at Uncle Sam's hotel on the Eastern Branch); twelfth, Banner, co-operation, picture of the goddess of peace, reverse side, Carl Browne profile; thirteenth, good roads and non-interest-bearing bond bill wagon, containing wreaths of evergreen and flowers, Frank Ball, marshal; fourteenth banner, 'Christ is our leader;' fifteenth, Chicago community, John Broderick, marshal; sixteenth, commune A, Chicago community, Brother King, marshal; seventeenth, commune B, C. C., marshal; eighteenth, Commune C, C. C., Brother Hague, marshal; nineteenth, commune D, C. C., Brother Connor, marshal; twentieth, commune E, C. C., Brother Brooks, marshal; twenty-first, commune F, C. C.; twenty-second, commune G, C. C.; twenty-third, banner, 'Justice,' carried by two volunteers; twenty-fourth, commune A, Philadelphia community, Marshal Jackson in charge (owing to the absence of Brother C. C. Jones in the United States jail for doing nothing on May 1); twenty-fifth, Carl Browne's panorama wagon, with good roads picture displayed on one side, on the other side the sign as follows: 'Help Coxey, help the commonweal by donations, and go and see our scenes in camp this afternoon at Camp Bastile, near Bladensburg, Md. No extra charge to go to the headquarters in the jail. Jesse A. Coxey, manager;' twenty-sixth, California community, Brother Galvin, marshal; twenty-seventh, commune 'A,' California community, Brother Steinman, marshal; twenty-eighth, commune 'B,' California community, -----, marshal; twenty-ninth, commune 'C,' -----, marshal.

Next all other organizations in sympathy with the Commonwealth of Christ who choose to join subject to our orders. All old Union or confederate soldiers who fought in the late war, and who desire to participate, should report to Marshal Jesse A. Coxey, either

before the march if possible or on the line of march, who will assign them place in the line with the Brothers White as guards of honor to the goddess of peace. Marshal Broderick will attend to the details of the men to make wreaths for the occasion.

Commune 'A' of Washington white women's community of the Commonweal of Christ is hereby instructed to report at the Peace monument on Pennsylvania avenue, in front of the Nation's Capitol, at 9 a.m., May 30, 1894, under the marshalship of Lavina C. Dundore, and engage in such services as they may deem best until the arrival of the commonweal in front of the monument, when they will form four to eight abreast in front of the monument, facing the approach of the commonweal, and salute with handkerchief our goddess of peace. Upon reaching the monument, Marshall Jim A. Coxey will give the order to halt, and with the goddess of peace on his left and Marshal McKee on his right he will give these orders:

First, three cheers for peace.

Second, three cheers for the 'Blue and the Gray.'

Third, three cheers for the world's immortals, Washington, Lafayette, Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln.

Marshal Jesse A. Coxey will then take his stand on the other side of the monument and with Marshal McKee and the goddess of liberty on his right and left, respectively, he will then give the command to the commonweal to forward march and by left wheel countermarch around him and the monument down Pennsylvania avenue, at which time Marshal Ball will draw his wagon convenient to the ladles of commune A for them to distribute to them the wreath—which they will place upon the Peace monument while the commonweal is passing around it.

As each commune wheels its marshal will call for three cheers for peace. After the last has passed, a halt will be made and Marshal Coxey will leave one of our peace staffs Bearing a badge of the commonweal, and then in company with the goddess of peace, Marshal McKee and the band resume their places at the head of the column and give the order to return to camp by the same route as they came, which is hereunto appended, as is also the programme for the afternoon's entertainment at the camp, as heretofore announced. Marshal Bullock will be in command of the camp until the return of Marshal Coxey and the commonweal.

Hoping that you will all conduct yourselves in a manner to add luster to the names you have already engraved on the tablet of the world's heroes (for you are the pioneers of the movement that is to usher in the era of 'Peace on earth and good will toward men,' I close, fraternally, Carl Browne."

Carl Browne, May 31, 1894: "COMRADES: I learn by many who have visited us here since your parade this morning that you acquitted [sic] yourselves with great credit and still more impressed the law-abiding people of Washington that you are not the

character of men the Washington press, with the exception of *The Times*, have pictured you to them.

In honorable mention due those whose duty it was to have the care of the march, Acting Chief Marshal Jesse A. Coxey is particularly entitled to credit for his splendid conduct, owing to the fact of his age. He is reported to us as doing that which would reflect credit on even such veterans as Marshals Frye and Galvin, who have come all the way from California, and who were proud to march under his orders to-day, which, of itself, is the highest praise that can be given to these two brave men, for Marshal Galvin headed his community at its place in the rear of the column. Marshal Frye took his rank with Marshal Broderick by accompanying him in the parade.

Marshals Broderick and Salisbury and all the commune marshals did their work well. Our thanks are due to Miss Lavallette for her services as goddess of peace. She acquitted herself grandly and did us all credit. We are constantly being visited by friends, both ladies and gentlemen, and if you but hold your own, victory will be ours.”

Carl Browne, June 3, 1894: “BROTHERS OF THE COMMONWEAL: This morning you witnessed a scene that must have made you, who know the fatherhood of God and try to live the brotherhood of man, to feel pity for the misguided brothers drawn away from us by the to them invisible strings of the money power, to lay a basis for the subsidized press to scatter broadcast over the land, to cheer every boodler and banker now trembling with fear that their doom is not yet, and to strike dismay to the hearts of the people everywhere, whose eyes have been for weeks and weeks fixed upon our banner of ‘peace on earth, good will toward men,’ through the passage of Brother Coxey's good road and non-interest-bearing bond bills—the salvation of the republic—that there is a split in the commonweal when none exist. But be not dismayed, brothers; the plot will fail. Brothers Fitzgerald and Swift were partly used the same way, and the trap was baited for Brother Frye, but he did not try. It was reserved for Brother Ward, who wanted to speak on Decoration Day, contrary to orders, to be used to inveigle Brother Galvin and a number of his men into an act that can only end in disaster to them, because they cannot block this movement anymore than ‘Unknown Smith,’ by lying, tried to do.

All the Benedict Arnolds of past ages, reincarnated in one, cannot thwart the ultimatum of the commonweal, for it has been raised up by the ever-unerring God for a purpose. Exigencies may occur that will sweep you all away from this beautiful camp, for you cannot live on scenery alone, and I know, for I have tried it; and circumstances may arise, by the money power so showering aid upon your brothers who have just left our camp, as to cause some of you even who now stay willing for principle to exist on bread and water, to envy those who, for the very express purpose of breaking your ranks with discontent, may be fed on meat and other substantials for a few days, and after that end has been accomplished disperse you all, and then try to imprison you under the vagrant act, after your leaders have thus deserted you through no real wrong on the part of those who might do this only for the lack of a little martyrdom—the martyrdom that these leaders have sworn that they are willing to undergo for your cause and theirs.

But others will come in place of all deserters, if there be any, and I do not believe there will be any further. If I did, I would not issue another order to you. Brothers Frye and Saulsbery remain true, as does Commune A of the California community, and they hold up the 'dear old flag' of the glorious state, even if others 'do it dirt,' like the deserters this morning; and also like Judge Fields, who heartlessly turns his back upon me, penniless and in jail, contrary to the true California spirit, and contemptuously denies me the right (so I am informed) of a habeas corpus, to which all American citizens are entitled unless they have an idea, according to the latest construction. A week from to-day Brother Jones can join you, and Brother Coxey, if he chooses, but unless habeas corpus sets me free, and in justice it ought, I'll be here seventeen days yet before I can again speak to you face to face, man to man; but with all the force I can put into the point of a pen, which has been said is 'more powerful than a sword,' I send you greeting of faith in each and every one of you in Camp Bastile, to be true to our noble cause, the emancipation of wage slavery, and to provide work for every honest man who wants work at good wages."

Carl Browne, June 4, 1894: "COMRADES: The 'All's well at Camp Bastile'" came to-day through the little white dove of love in a note from Mrs. Henrietta Coxey, to Brother Coxey, as no visitors were permitted to-day as that might be 'Sabbath-breaking,' and it seems this modern Phariseeism is just as vindictive as in the days of Him, the chief Sabbath-breaker of all history, who was so 'sacrilegious' as to 'pluck corn in a neighbor's field' on that day also; but then I know full well that everything is all right.

We were visited Saturday by a number of ladies of the Washington White Women's Commune of the Commonweal of Christ and others who will join it, and they will soon inaugurate a movement to aid those noble women of the public comfort committee—Madames Colby, Tregina and Belt—whose unselfish devotion to your cause should cause the blush of shame to come to the cheeks of other Washington ladies who have the sympathy but who lack the courage to come out boldly for the right like the trio mentioned. I hope the events of this day in camp will be beneficial to our future.

Our mail continues large, also telegrams of sympathy, but all 'words, words, words.' Action is what we want—'grub.'

Some of our California friends want an accounting of money that does not even come. So far as Brother Coxey's receipts are concerned, I will make oath that he has spent thousands above all donations of everything whatsoever. From my knowledge of Brother Frye, I believe that he never received a dollar that has not been expended for the benefit of the cause, unless he bought the gold braid on his hat and those shoulder straps, and the total cost of those would hardly buy three tongue sandwiches, but they were given to him. Do not allow such claptrap to cause dissensions.

Remember that Jesse Coxey has faithful aids, Brothers Pfrimmer, Broderick, McKee, Salisbury, Jackson and others who have crossed the mountains with him. I know that it is needless to write this to men who have so long proved their worth like you, but in the hope that *The Times*, the only Washington paper friendly to the cause of the common

people, may publish for effect on the general public, I do so, and in that spirit I know you will pardon me.”

Carl Browne, June 9, 1894: “COMRADES: Two days more and then we, too, will be able to breathe the fresh air of freedom.

Comrades will assemble at the jail on Sunday morning to escort Commander Coxe and Marshal Browne to the camp. The march will be first to the National hotel and then to the camp direct.

Honorary Commune Marshal R. J. White, who has been on special duty in Virginia, reported to jail headquarters to-day that affairs will be all right in that state for us.

The action of Chief of Staff Jesse A. Coxe, commissioning Brothers Sutherland and Taylor, of my Connecticut contingent, as community marshals, with position as aids on chief marshal's staff, is approved.

The action of Aid Marshal Broderick in putting Marshal Bullock out of camp for injudicious action and language is also approved. Marshal Bullock's canton badge is simply honorary, for meritorious conduct heretofore performed. He should not in camp assume higher duty than his position, which is marshal of the carpenters' commune A. The action of Mr. Coxe in giving to our brothers from California in Bladensburg 100 loaves of bread when they were suffering for it has silenced one Washington 'cook' at least.”

Carl Browne, June 10, 1894: “COMRADES: We have been informed by Warden Leonard that our release has arrived, and that we are at liberty to walk out of this bastille of the money power at any time after 8 a.m. Sunday morning, June 10, 1894. So we have concluded that, inasmuch as Centurion Austin, of Grover Cleveland's despotism, has declared that you can not exercise your rights as American citizens to come as our organization, you had best not attempt to come any other way, because you would be termed by these high-handed officials such as Austin a mob. So bide your time. Marshal Pfrimmer will bring a team to the jail at 9 a.m. to take Mr. and Mrs. Coxe to the National hotel. He will also detail a team in charge of Marshal McKee to be at the jail at the same hour to convey Marshal Jones direct to camp and Marshal Jackson, of the Philadelphia community, will march his command and such other communes as may desire to fall in to meet Marshal Jones at the District line and escort him to his headquarters in Camp Liberty, as Camp Bastille will be known to-morrow.

Chief of staff Jesse A. Coxe informs us that you are anxious to meet us at the District line, and permission is asked to do so, and it is hereby granted to you should you come in commonweal organization, and be sure and 'keep off the District grass,' for 'it is sacred to monopoly.'

Major Williams, who was an old Union soldier, accompanied by Mrs. Williams, of the Washington Woman's Commune A, have taken up quarters in our camp and signaled

this entry by bringing about \$50 worth of provisions for the commonweal. Major Williams is hereby approved as honorary marshal of the Philadelphia community, with rank Brother C. C. Jones holds.

A letter has been received at these headquarters signed by Brothers Galvin, Brennan and Ward, asking permission to take part in what they term 'an honor to us' in escorting us to camp from jail. I have answered that, while returning our thanks, they should arrange all such affairs with those in our camp who are planning this—that Jesse A. Coxe is in command there during our absence."

Carl Browne, June 13, 1894: COMRADES: Yesterday Brother Coxe and myself spent the most of the day as lobbyists—not for 'sugar' with 'sugar' that has 'cured' so many congressional 'hams,' as well as a President and a Secretary of the Treasury, but 'without money and without price.' We did a good day's work for being so lately 'off the grass.' We called upon Senator Vilas, who received us cordially and invited us to write out our views to file with the special senatorial how-not-to-inquire-into-the-labor-depression-committee. Next we saw Senator Kyle, who is chairman of the Senate committee on Bro. Coxe's good roads bill, and he agreed for us to appear before his committee on next Friday morning at 9 a.m. We three had an interview with that grand old Oregon for flat money— Jones of Nevada. Then we saw Peffer and Senator Stewart, also Senator White and Perkins, California. We next saw Representative Cannon, of California, who gave me \$5 for humanity's cause, and Boen, of Minnesota (\$5 more), also \$5 from Hon. A. J. Streeter, of Illinois, the old greenbacker, and \$10 cash from a Congressman who did not want his 'left hand to know what his right hand did.'

Representative Coffeen introduced the good roads bill in the House at Brother Coxe's request.

To-morrow I shall purchase a seine with the money with which to catch fish for the camp, and buy some tools and other useful articles, and then get some more the same way as this was obtained—by asking for it for you.

My attention has been called to a meeting advertised for Wednesday evening in Grand Army Hall in which it is said that 'members of the Coxe and Galvin industrial armies will be present.' So far as members of the commonweal are concerned I desire to say if any member attends sever their connection with us, for said meetings are for lawyers and others to bloviate, not permitted to speak under our rules in our camp. The object of these meetings are not for your benefit as they are gotten up by one Mattly, a fired out member of the Public Comfort Committee, for cause. We recognize no one calling themselves 'industrial armies' as part of the commonweal of Christ.

On your behalf I have thanked Miss De Witt for favoring us last evening with cornet solos, and urged her to come again next Sunday."

APPENDIX D

Newspapers Consulted

Alexandria Gazette (Alexandria, VA)

Baltimore Sun (Baltimore, MD)

Belmont Chronicle (St. Clairsville, OH)

Bloomsburg Columbian (Bloomsburg, PA)

Boston Daily Globe (Boston, MA)

Boston Evening Post (Boston, MA)

Butler Citizen (Butler, PA)

Cambria Freeman (Ebensburg, PA)

Catoctin Clarion (Mechanicstown, MD)

Chicago Herald (Chicago, IL)

Chicago Inter Ocean (Chicago, IL)

Chicago Tribune (Chicago, IL)

Columbus Daily News (Columbus, IN)

Cumberland Evening Times (Cumberland, MD)

Democratic Northwest (Napoleon, OH)

The Evening Independent (Massillon, OH)

Frederick Citizen (Frederick, MD)

Frederick Examiner (Frederick, MD)

Frederick News (Frederick, MD)

Forest Republican (Forest County, PA)

Fort Wayne Sentinel (Fort Wayne, IN)

Freeland Tribune (Freeland, PA)

Hagerstown Evening Globe (Hagerstown, MD)

Hagerstown Exponent (Hagerstown, MD)

Hagerstown Herald and Torch Light (Hagerstown, MD)

Hillsboro News-Herald (Hillsboro, OH)

Hocking Sentinel (Hocking, OH)

Indiana State Sentinel (Indianapolis, IN)

Indianapolis Sun (Indianapolis, IN)

Juniata Sentinel (Mifflintown, PA)

Le Mars Sentinel (Le Mars, IA)

Logansport Daily Times (Logansport, IN)

Lowell Daily Sun (Lowell, MA)

Middleburgh Post (Middleburgh, PA)

National Tribune (Washington, DC)

New Haven Register (New Haven, CT)

New Orleans Times Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

New York Times (New York, NY)

New York World (New York, NY)

Ohio Democrat (Logan, OH)

Omaha World Herald (Omaha, NE)

Oskaloosa Evening Herald (Oskaloosa, IA)

People's Voice (Wellington, KS)

Perrysburg Journal (Perrysburg, OH)

Philadelphia Inquirer (Philadelphia, PA)

Racine Daily Journal (Racine, WI)

Reveille Echo (Frederick, MD)

Reynoldsville Star (Reynoldsville, PA)

Rock Valley Register (Rock Valley, IA)

Salem Daily Herald (Salem, OH)

San Francisco Chronicle (San Francisco, CA)

Scranton Tribune (Scranton, PA)

Shenandoah Evening Herald (Shenandoah, PA)

Somerset Herald (Somerset, PA)

Sullivan Republican (Laporte, PA)

Tacoma Daily News (Tacoma, WA)

Titusville Morning Herald (Titusville, PA)

Trenton Times (Trenton, NJ)

Uniontown News Standard (Uniontown, PA)

Washington Bee (Washington, DC)

Washington Evening Star (Washington, DC)

Washington Times (Washington, DC)

Wellington Enterprise (Wellington, OH)

Wheeling Register (Wheeling, WV)

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- Schwantes, Carlos. "Coxey's Montana Navy: A Protest Against Unemployment on the Wageworkers' Frontier," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (1982): 98-107.
- . "Western Women in Coxey's Army," *Arizona and the West* 26, no. 1 (1984): 5-20.
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- Shankman, Kimberly C. *Compromise and the Constitution: The Political Thought of Henry Clay*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999.
- Sillars, Malcolm O. "The Rhetoric of the Petition in Boots," *Speech Monographs* 39, no. 2 (1972): 92-104.
- . "Defining Social Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net." *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 46, no. 1 (1980): 17-32.
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- . "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 42, no. 1 (1976): 1-19.
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- Stewart, Paul Bradley. "Early American Petitioning (1789-1892), Public Life and the Public Sphere." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 2002.
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- Trachtenberg, Alan. *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. New York, Hill & Wang, 2007.
- Vatz, Richard E. "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 6, no. 3 (1973): 154-161.
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- Voeltz, Herman. "Coxey's Army in Oregon, 1894," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (1964): 263-295.
- Wasem, Ruth Ellen. *Tackling Unemployment: The Legislative Dynamics of the Employment Act of 1946*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2013.
- Weber, Max. *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- White, Neil. *Company Towns: Corporate Order and Community*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2012.
- Wiebe, Robert. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1967.
- Williamson, John. *Federal Aid to Roads and Highways Since the 18th Century: A Legislative History*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2012.
- Wills, Garry. *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.
- Wrage, Ernest J. "Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33, no. 4 (1947): 451-457.
- Young, Alfred F. *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1999.

- Zaeske, Susan. "Signatures of Citizenship: The Rhetoric of Women's Antislavery Petitions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 2 (2002): 147-168.
- . *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery and Women's Political Identity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Zarefsky, David. "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs* 44, no. 4 (1977): 352-373.
- . "A Skeptical View of Movement Studies," *Communication Studies* 31, no. 4 (1980): 245-254.
- . "Four Senses of Rhetorical History." In *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, edited by Kathleen J. Turner. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998.
- Zunz, Olivier. *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Sean Luechtefeld

Education

University of Maryland at College Park (Ph.D., 2016); Communication.
Dissertation: "Petitioning in Boots: Motivation & Mobilization in the Rhetoric of
Coxey's Army, 1894." Dissertation advisors: James F. Klumpp & Andrew D. Wolvin

Wake Forest University (M.A., 2009); Communication
Thesis: "Making Sense of Messages: An Analysis of the Relationship Between
Candidate Image and Issue Stance." Thesis advisor: Marina Kremer.

The Florida State University (B.S. & B.A., 2007); Communication Studies and Political
Science; Minor, Sociology; Certificate, Public Administration
Thesis: "Point and Click in '06: Online Campaigning and the 2006 Florida
Gubernatorial Race." Thesis advisor: Danielle Wiese Leek.

Employment

CFED – The Corporation for Enterprise Development, 2010 - present
Associate Director, Communications

The Johns Hopkins University, 2015 – present
Adjunct Faculty, Master of Arts in Communication, Krieger School of Arts & Sciences

University of Maryland, 2009 – 2013
Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication

Wake Forest University, 2007-2009
Graduate Assistant and Assistant Debate Coach, Department of Communication
Speech Advisor, Babcock Graduate School of Management
Tutor, Office of Student Athlete Services

New Winston Museum, 2008-2009
Executive Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer and Fundraising Campaign Manager

Wilson Resources, Inc., 2005-2007
Communications Manager

Peer-Refereed Publication

Luechtefeld, Sean and Adam S. Richards. "The Interaction of Issue and Image Frames
on Candidate Assessment." *Communication Studies* 67, no. 1 (2016): 20-36.

Non-Refereed Publications

Parry-Giles, Trevor and Sean Luechtefeld. "Political Campaign Communication & Campaign Outcomes." In *Introduction to Communication Studies: Translating Scholarship into Meaningful Action*, edited by Kara Schultz and Alan Goodboy. Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt, 2012.

Rist, Carl, Brigitte Gavin, and Sean Luechtefeld. "Take the Money and Run? Investigating Whether Parents will Raid Children's Savings Accounts: A Case Study in Unqualified Withdrawals at the SEED Site at OLHSA." Washington, DC: CFED, 2012.

Luechtefeld, Sean. *Image Bite Politics: News and the Visual Framing of Elections* (review essay). *Political Communication* 27, no. 3 (2010): 339-341.

Teaching Experience (Instructor of Record unless otherwise noted)

480.601: Introduction to the Digital Age, Graduate Seminar, Johns Hopkins University (1 section; 18 students)

480.608: Analytic Techniques in Communication Research, Graduate Seminar, Johns Hopkins University (1 section; 10 students)

480.636: Web Writing & Content Strategy, Graduate Seminar, Johns Hopkins University (3 sections; 37 students)

COMM107: Oral Communication – Principles & Practice, University of Maryland (3 sections; 63 students)

COMM200: Critical Thinking and Speaking, University of Maryland (3 sections; 52 students)

COMM230: Argumentation and Debate, University of Maryland (16 sections; 381 students)

COMM398G: Political Advertising and the 2012 Election, University of Maryland (1 section; 4 students)

COM642: Political Communication, Teaching Assistant for Allan Loudon, Wake Forest University (1 section; 35 students)

EXST010: An Introduction to Public Speaking and Debate (Discovery Program), University of Maryland (included directing undergraduate teaching assistantship [Amber Pandya]; 2 sections; 40 students)

UNIV101: The Student and The University, University of Maryland (included directing undergraduate teaching assistantship [Melissa Zissman]; 2 sections; 30 students)

Competitively-Selected Conference Presentations

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Coxey's Army: Collecting Signatures for a Petition in Boots." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV, November 2015.

Luechtefeld, Sean and Adam S. Richards. "The Interaction of Issue and Image Frames on Candidate Assessment." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL, November 2014.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Rhetorical Narrative in the 2012 Presidential Debates." A paper presentation at the 2013 University of Maryland Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2013.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Endorsing Florida: An Analysis of the Influence of Florida Governors' Endorsements of Presidential Candidates." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL, November 2012.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Into Obscurity: Economic Arguments in the 2012 Election." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL, November 2012.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "But Are You Really Better Off? Renewal, Resurrection, and the Rhetoric of Ronald Reagan." A *top paper* presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Cambridge, MA, April 2012.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Economic Empowerment and Public Policy: The Discursive Construction of Poverty in America." A *top paper* presentation at the 2012 University of Maryland Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2012.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "The Anti-Populist's Populism: The Rhetoric of William McKinley." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA, November 2011.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "The Rhetorical Economy: The Case of William McKinley's 1896 Campaign for the Presidency." A *top paper* presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Arlington, VA, April 2011.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Colonizing the Capitalist Economy: A Theoretical Reconceptualization of the System-Lifeworld Architecture." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Arlington, VA, April 2011.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "The Anti-Populist's Populism: The Rhetoric of William McKinley." A paper presentation at the 2011 University of Maryland Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2011.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "A Petition in Boots: Jacob Coxey's Constitution of Citizenship in 1894." A *top paper* presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2010.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Speaking of the Economy: Agenda-Setting and Argumentative Strategies in the 2008 Presidential Debates." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2010.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Constitutions of Citizenship During the 1894 Industrial Army Movement." A paper presentation at the 2010 University of Maryland Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2010.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Revisiting Candidate Assessment: Charting a Course Toward Understanding Image and Issue." A paper presentation on a top papers panel at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, April 2010.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Discourses of Change(.gov): Promoting Participation in Politics." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL, November 2009.

Hahn, Taylor W., and Sean Luechtefeld. "Leveling the Playing Field: Improving Accessibility for "Small" Schools Through OpenSource Debate." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL, November 2009.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "The Rhetoric of the Gay Marriage Debate: Metaphor and News Media's Construction of the Gay Rights Movement." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Philadelphia, PA, April 2009.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Finding the Grey Area: Obama '08 and Meaningful Racial Minority Representation." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, San Diego, CA, November 2008.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Creating a Rhetorical Dwelling Place for Discussions of Race: A Rhetorical Analysis of Obama's *A More Perfect Union*." A *top paper* presentation at the annual convention of the Carolinas Communication Association, Columbia, SC, October 2008.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "More Money, More Problems: Revisiting the Question of Female and Minority Participation in Intercollegiate Policy Debate." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2008.

Luechtefeld, Sean. "Point and Click in 2006: Online Campaigning and the 2006 Florida Gubernatorial Race." A paper presentation at the annual convention of the Southern States Communication Association, Louisville, KY, April 2007.

Additional Conference Activity (Chair, Panel Organizer, Panelist)

Panelist. "Modern Political Campaigning: Analyzing the Effectiveness of New Campaign Methods with Millennial Voters." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Philadelphia, PA, November 2016.

Panelist and Panel Organizer. "Mediated Responses to Sports Scandals by U.S. Universities." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, March 2016.

Panelist. "Discourses of the 2016 Presidential Election: A Public Debate." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, March 2016.

Panelist. "Guilty or Innocent? Embracing Opportunities for Public Deliberation and Debate through *Serial*." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, March 2016.

Panelist. "Is Adnan Sayed Guilty? Embracing Opportunities for Public Deliberation and Debate through *Serial*." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV, November 2015.

Panelist. "Is it Better to be Articulate or Intelligent in American Politics? A Public Debate." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Philadelphia, PA, April 2015.

Moderator. "Communication & Advocacy: Manufacturing the Right Message for the Factory-Built Field." A panel presentation at the annual Innovations in Manufactured Housing Conference, Corporation for Enterprise Development, Seattle, WA, November 2014.

Panelist and Panel Organizer. "Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty: Where We Stand 50 Years Later." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Providence, RI, April 2014.

Chair. "Reading Providence, Rhode Island, Rhetorically." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Providence, RI, April 2014.

Panelist and Panel Organizer. "Assessing Arguments in the 2012 Presidential Debates." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2013.

Chair. "Contributed Papers in Political Communication." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2013.

Chair. "Contributed Papers in Argumentation & Forensics." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2013.

Chair. "Marriage and the State: Perspectives on Activism and Advocacy in the Debate over Marriage Equality." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL, November 2012.

Panel Organizer. "National Politics on the Sunshine State Stage: Exploring Florida's Role in Federal Elections." A paper session presentation at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL, November 2012.

Moderator. "How to Talk about Assets: What Works with Policymakers and Potential Allies." A panel presentation at the biennial Assets Learning Conference, Washington, DC, September 2012.

Panelist, Respondent and Panel Organizer. "Arguing the Issues in Campaign 2012: A Public Debate." A public debate presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Cambridge, MA, April 2012.

Panelist. "'It's the Economy, Stupid': Economic Discourse in the 2012 Election." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Cambridge, MA, April 2012.

Chair, Panel Organizer, and Panelist. "Politics, Pedagogy, and Postmodernism: Conflicting Notions of Objectivity in Argumentation." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Arlington, VA, April 2011.

Chair and Panelist. "In Search of Judson Welliver: Writing a New Chapter in the History of Presidential Speechwriting." A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Arlington, VA, April 2011.

Panelist. “The Future of Public Debate.” A roundtable discussion presented at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, April 2010.

Chair. “Political Communication Meets Maryland Politics: A Tribute to Ted Sheckels.” A panel presentation at the annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, April 2010.

Invited Presentations

Presenter. “Leveraging Social Media in Native Communities.” An invited virtual presentation to the Native Community Development Financial Institution Network, November 2016.

Moderator. “A Choice, Not a Compromise: Creative Strategies for Changing the Narrative about Manufactured Housing.” An invited presentation at the 2016 Innovations in Manufactured Housing Conference. CFED, San Antonio, TX, November 2016.

Presenter. “Creating a Winning Communications Strategy: Raising Awareness and Garnering Attention for Manufactured Housing.” A workshop presentation at the 2015 Innovations in Manufactured Housing Conference. CFED, Minneapolis, MN, October 2015.

Presenter. “Communications or Public Relations? A Case Study.” An invited presentation for students in *PR Principles*, a graduate seminar at the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, September 2015.

Presenter. “Learning to Present Effectively and Confidently.” An invited presentation for College Park Scholars program on Environment, Technology and Economy. University of Maryland, College Park, MD, April 2013.

Presenter. “Engaging Critical Thinking with Debates.” An invited presentation at the 2012 Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation. Center for Teaching Excellence, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, August 2012.

Presenter. “Blogging 201 – Using Your Blog to Create a Virtual Community.” An invited presentation at the 2012 Washington, DC Social Media Summit. Center for Nonprofit Success, Washington, DC, May 2012.

Colloquium Presenter. “Coxey’s Army’s 1894 Enactment of Citizenship.” An invited research presentation to the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD, November 2010.

Colloquium Presenter. "A Critical Analysis of Barack Obama's change.gov." An invited research presentation to the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD, November 2009.

Academic and Professional Workshops

Arnold-Ebbitt Interdisciplinary Rhetoric Institute, hosted by the Pennsylvania State University Center for Democratic Deliberation. State College, PA. February 2013.

Lilly DC Conference on University Teaching & Learning, hosted by the Lilly Foundation. Bethesda, MD. June 2012.

University Teaching and Learning Program. University of Maryland Center for Teaching Excellence. Expected completion May 2013.

Arnold-Ebbitt Interdisciplinary Rhetoric Institute, hosted by the Pennsylvania State University Center for Democratic Deliberation. State College, PA. February 2012.

Teaching Portfolio Retreat, hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Maryland. College Park, MD. January 2012.

Arnold-Ebbitt Interdisciplinary Rhetoric Institute, hosted by the Pennsylvania State University Center for Democratic Deliberation. State College, PA. February 2011.

Archival Research Seminar at the National Archives and Records Administration, hosted by the University of Maryland. College Park, MD. October 2010.

Alternative Public Spheres Pre-Conference, hosted by the National Communication Association. San Diego, CA. November 2009.

Awards and Recognitions

U.S. Representative to Japan. Committee on International Discussion and Debate, National Communication Association. Tokyo, Japan. June 2012.

Outstanding Teaching Award. Department of Communication, University of Maryland. College Park, MD. May 2012.

Outstanding Service Award. Department of Communication, University of Maryland. College Park, MD. May 2012.

Centennial Scholarship. Eastern Communication Association, Cambridge, MA, April 2012.

Top Paper, Public Policy Division. Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2012.

Top Paper, Political Communication Division. Annual Convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Cambridge, MA, April 2012.

Second Place Paper, History & Sociology Division. Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2011.

Top Paper, Political Communication Division. Annual Convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Arlington, VA, April 2011.

Robert Gunderson Award, Top Student Paper, Public Address Division. Annual convention of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2010.

Top Three Paper, Political Communication Division. Annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Baltimore, MD, April 2010.

Second Place Paper, History & Sociology Division. Graduate Research Interaction Day, College Park, MD, April 2010.

Top Three Student Paper, Jarrard Graduate Student Paper Award. Annual convention of the Carolinas Communication Association, Columbia, SC, October 2008.

National Debate Tournament Champion Coach, National Debate Tournament. Fullerton, CA. March 2008.

All-American Debate Team, Cross Examination Debate Association. Presented at the annual CEDA National Championship, Norman, OK. March 2007.

Champion, International Debate Academy Slovenia Tournament, Ormoz, Slovenia. November 2006.

Competitive Grants, Funding and Financial Awards

Graduate Teaching Assistant Travel Award. \$750 scholarship to attend the 2013 Lilly DC Conference on Teaching and Learning. University of Maryland Center for Teaching Excellence, College Park, MD. May 2013.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Travel Award. \$750 scholarship to attend the 2012 Lilly DC Conference on Teaching and Learning. University of Maryland Center for Teaching Excellence, College Park, MD. May 2012.

ECA Centennial Scholarship. \$250 scholarship in recognition of outstanding dissertation research. Cambridge, MA. April 2012.

First Place Research Paper. University of Maryland Graduate Student Government, \$500 Travel Grant. College Park, MD. April 2012.

Graduate Student Travel Award. University of Maryland Department of Communication. \$400 Travel Grant. College Park, MD. November 2011.

Second Place Research Paper. University of Maryland Graduate Student Government, \$400 Travel Grant. College Park, MD. April 2011.

Jacob K. Goldhaber Graduate Student Travel Grant. University of Maryland Graduate School, \$400. College Park, MD. September 2010.

Second Place Research Paper. University of Maryland Graduate Student Government, \$350. College Park, MD. April 2010.

Alumni Student Travel Award. Wake Forest University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, \$600. Winston-Salem, NC. November 2008.

Richter Scholarship Recipient. \$2,500 grant to conduct research in Ecuador. Presented by the Richter Foundation at Wake Forest University. Winston-Salem, NC. March 2008.

Professional Organization Memberships

National Communication Association, 2008-present

Eastern Communication Association, 2008-present

Nonprofit Technology Network, 2013-present

Maryland Teachers & Researchers, 2009-2014

Southern States Communication Association, 2007-2008

Cross Examination Debate Association, 2004-2009

National Debate Tournament, 2004-2009

Reviewing Activity

Journal Reviewer

- *Communication Quarterly*, 2010-2012.

Convention Reviewer: National Communication Association

- DC Connections (a special division for the 99th annual convention), 2013.
- Political Communication Division, National Communication Association, 2011-present

- Public Address Division, National Communication Association, 2011-present.

Convention Reviewer: Eastern Communication Association

- Argumentation & Forensics Interest Group, 2010-present.
- Political Communication Interest Group, 2009-2013.

Additional Service to the Discipline

- Chair, Argumentation & Forensics Interest Group, Eastern Communication Association, 2013-2014, 2016-2017.
- Vice Chair & Convention Planner, Argumentation & Forensics Interest Group, Eastern Communication Association, 2012-2013, 2015-2016.
- Secretary, Argumentation & Forensics Interest Group, Eastern Communication Association, 2010-2012, 2014-2015.
- Editorial Assistant, *Communication Quarterly*, 2009-2012.

Service to the University

- Committee Member, Oral Communication Assessment Project, Office of Undergraduate Studies, University of Maryland, 2012-2013.
- Organizer and Presenter, Maryland Communication Workshop, College Park, MD, October 2013.
- Member, Academic Procedures & Standards Committee, University of Maryland, 2012-2014.
- Senator, University of Maryland Senate, 2012-2013.
- Organizer, Maryland Teachers & Researchers, University of Maryland, 2009-present.
- Student Mentor, *JuicyEthics*, a symposium on the ethical and communicative considerations of the *JuicyCampus* website. Wake Forest University, February 2009.
- Organizer, *Campus Community Connection Forum: Bridging the Gap Between Winston-Salem's Campus Communities*, a panel on community relations between Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem, NC. Wake Forest University, December 2007.

Service to the Department

- Member, Department of Communication Colloquium Committee, University of Maryland Department of Communication, 2012-2013.
- Admissions Ambassador, University of Maryland Department of Communication, 2009-present.

Association of Communication Graduate Students at Maryland (COMMgrads) Offices

- Graduate Student Representative to the Department of Communication Assembly, 2012-2013.
- Member, Social Committee, 2012-2014.
- President, 2011-2012.
- Representative to Maryland Teachers and Researchers, 2009-2011.

Community Service

- Member, Public Relations Committee, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society National Capital Area chapter, Alexandria, VA, 2015-present.
- Planner, Biennial Assets Learning Conference, Washington, DC, 2010-present.
- Volunteer Assistant Debate Coach, South Anchorage High School, Anchorage, AK, 2010-2012.
- Member and District Representative, Florida Forensic League Board of Directors, 2005-2007.
- Planner, Americans with Disabilities Act Working Group Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, August 2005.
- Judge, Numerous high school- and college-level debate tournaments, 2004-present.