Home Rule or Rome Rule? The Fight in Congress to Prohibit Funding for Indian Sectarian Schools and Its Effects on Montana

Colin Gunstream
Carroll College, Helena, MT

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Home Rule or Rome Rule? The Fight in Congress to Prohibit Funding for Indian Sectarian Schools and Its Effects on Montana
This thesis for honors recognition has been approved for the
Department of Political Science.

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Preface:

During winter break of my sophomore and senior years I went on a headlights trip to Browning, MT with Carroll College Campus Ministry. We worked at a De La Salle Blackfeet School, a private catholic school that served kids from fourth through eighth grade. I was inspired by the work they were doing there and from my knowledge it was the only Catholic Indian school in Montana and this perplexed me—it was my knowledge that the original Catholic missions had schools on the reservations.

In April of my sophomore year I went to Dr. Jeremy Johnson’s office to discuss writing an honors thesis on the relationship between the government and Indian reservation schools in Montana. He was very excited about the idea and told me to start reading up on the subject. I started reading on the history of the Catholic missions in Montana. I was interested by the stories of the nuns and priests who came a long ways to start these missions and serve the Native Americans. And I was interested in how prominent the Catholic Church was in the development of Montana.

So I asked myself, what happened to them? The authors of the books answered this question only briefly: the federal government cut funding for these schools between 1896 and 1900, and the mission schools could barely survive without these funds. Eventually, some faster than others, they withered away. So I asked myself a third question. Why did the government cut funding from these schools? My answer is the thesis that follows.
Abstract

In the mid 1800's, Catholic Missions settled in Montana and sought to evangelize Native Americans. During this time, Catholic schools were established and this became the predominant mode of education for Native Americans. The schools relied heavily on financing from the Federal government, and when the decision to cut funding from these schools between 1896-1900, all of the Mission schools in Montana either closed or lost their significance. This thesis analyzes the different modes of thought in Congress and in interest groups from 1890-1900. This thesis argues that the National League for the Protection of American Institutions, a small but significant interest group in New York was widely responsible for this change in policy and in thought both in Congress and in State legislatures. Furthermore, this thesis argues that this change in policy confirms punctuated equilibrium theory, as this policy change was not a long evolutionary change, but a short change with a punctuated hit.
Chapter One: Introduction and Literature Review

The National League for the Protection of American Institutions (NLPAI), which existed from 1889 to 1890, is an interest group that has received hardly any attention. The only substantial chapter we can find is from the former secretary of the League James M King in his book Facing the Twentieth Century. Our Country: Its Power and Peril. After that, the only secondary literature we can find on the National League for the Protection of American Institutions is contained in PhD Dissertations and brief mentioning in other books. However, the League is generally not written about extensively, and is apart of a study that is much broader. Thus, I am offering the first extensive study of the League and its implications for other communities and Governments. The general consensus in scholarship is that the NLPAI is anti-Catholic and an extension of the American Protective Association (APA)—a significant anti-Catholic group at the time.¹ I agree with

the scholarly census on this statement, as the NLPAI contained members that were anti-Catholic; and individual members made public statements about their distaste with the Catholic Church. While the goals and the mission of the organization were non sectarian and against all religious appropriations, regardless of denomination, the NLPAI was essentially for the popular anti-Catholic “status quo.”

In the third chapter, this study evolves from the NLPAI to a study of the decision in Congress to cut funding for Indian Sectarian schools. Because Indian Catholic Mission schools were the major benefactors, this would seriously impact reservations across the country, including those in Montana. I provide a brief history of how anti-Catholicism evolved in America, key members and debates in the Federal Government that led to this decision and the story of how the decision to sever the ties between Indian Sectarian education and the Federal Government came to be.

The scholarship on this decision to cut funding for sectarian schools is rather brief. The most substantial books I could find is by Chris Rodda—a self published author who wrote *Liars for Jesus* and Paul Francis Prucha, a notorious Native American scholar who wrote *The Churches and the Indian Schools: 1888-1912.*
I conclude this study by looking at the Catholic Mission schools in Montana both before and after they received money from the Government. I look at the comprehensive history of five mission schools and show how they all failed or significantly changed after their funding was cut. I also make the argument that the NLPAI made a double impact on Montana at this time. First, they vigorously lobbied and successfully managed to get Congress to cut all funding from Indian Sectarian schools. Second, they were incredibly influential in the State Constitutions during their existence. Montana became a state in 1889 and their State Constitution (like many other state Constitutions) was heavily impacted by the NLPAI’s work. After the Federal Government cut off funding for the Mission schools, the State of Montana could have bailed the Mission Schools out with state funding, but because their Constitution strictly forbid all government appropriations for religious purposes, the Mission schools were left to fundraise solely on their own. The Missions were unable to find enough money to continue operations, and as you will see, they all eventually failed—some sooner rather than later.

I don’t, however, argue that this is a good or bad thing; it just is what it is. Rather, the point of this study is to explore social political and anti-Catholic thought during this time and restore a piece of Montana political history that has largely been ignored.

Last, this study is a research project in Political Science and appropriate Political Science theories have to be evaluated. Political Science is a unique scholarly field because we do not deal with laws, and consequently, nothing is for certain and everything can be argued for or against. Thus, we analyze and produce theories to help us understand what is going on in the world of Political Science. The theory I analyze here is punctuated equilibrium theory and will be dealt with in the final chapter.
Chapter Two: The National League for the Protection of American Institutions

The National League for the Protection of American Institutions (NLPAI) was an interest group dedicated to “secure constitutional and legislative safeguards for the protection of the common school system and other American institutions, and to promote public instruction in harmony with such institutions, and to prevent all sectarian or denominational appropriations of public funds.”\(^2\) Although less radical than sister interest group such as the American Protective Association (APA) and the American Secular Union (ASU), the group, in short, wanted to defund private religious schools that received aid from the federal government. The NLPAI’s belief in defunding sectarian education wasn’t necessarily rooted in Anti-Catholicism (unlike the APA), but in the belief that the government funding religious schools violates the United States

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Constitution. While this may have been the NLPAI’s belief, it is a highly skeptical claim, as the League was consistently following the anti-Catholic “status quo.” The point here is that the League was saying one thing and doing something completely different.

The NLPAI was created on August 22, 1889 in Saratoga, New York. Although many citizens of New York attended the initial meetings, notable members included the Hon. John Jay (the grandson of John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court), the Hon. William Allen Butler, the Rev. Dr. Miner and EA Studley. At the end of August 23rd, 1889, the League’s Constitution was adopted and their first goal was established: to create a Constitutional Amendment barring the use of public money in sectarian schools.

On December 24, 1889, just four months after the creation of the league, the NLPAI became officially incorporated under the laws of the state of New York. The Hon. John Jay was elected President; Charles B Chapin elected Secretary (later replaced by James M King) and William Allen Butler headed the Law Committee. Other

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4 Protestant institutions—Harvard, Yale, etc were already well established and did not need significant funding to “get going.” This is what I mean by an anti-Catholic “status quo.” I give credit to my reader, Alex Street for pointing this out to me.
significant men mentioned on the certificate were: Prof. H.H. Boyeson, Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, John D Slayback, Churchill H Cutting, James M King, William H Fellowes, and William H Parsons, to name a few.6 The goals of the league remained the same—to amend the United States Constitution to forbid the allocation of public money to sectarian schools. However, the article announced that the league’s fight was an old one, as former President Ulysses S. Grant fought for the same objective in 1876. Nevertheless, the NLPAI’s ultimate purpose was “to nurture patriotism and the love of American institutions.”7

In addition, the NLPAI announced that they were “entirely non-partisan and non-sectarian” and welcomed all members regardless of religious or political views.. A manager of the League told a reporter of The New York Times:

“The manifestation of a growing desire to secure appropriations of public moneys for sectarian purposes has alarmed thoughtful men all over the country and given rise to the movement which has resulted in the organization of the league. We are not inimical to sectarian schools, but to their establishment or support by public funds. So long as they maintain themselves they give us no concern. I may say also that we have many liberal Catholics with us, the effort to keep children of Catholic parents out of the public schools having aroused a strong opposition among the members of that Church.

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Nor are we any more favorably disposed to Protestant schools. We are against sectarianism.”

The objects of the league were set in stone, and it would be up to solid leadership to follow through with these goals. Among the men selected to lead this new group, perhaps no one was more qualified or more significant than the Hon. John Jay, Jr. John Jay was a largely unnoticed and underrated political giant in the State of New York. The early years of Jay’s political involvement concerned slavery and the Civil War. Jay detested slavery, and was a manager of the “New York Young Men’s Anti Slavery Society” More importantly; however, Jay was largely responsible for the beginnings of the Republican Party in the state of New York.

Following these two political victories, Jay served as a United States minister to Austria in 1875. Following Jay’s service, he moved on to the debate over religion and public schools, which would occupy his career until his death in 1894. Jay’s personal views on this topic are best exemplified in the New York Times article “Rome Rule or Home Rule” published shortly after the announcement of the creation of the NLPAI.

“Rome Rule or Home Rule” is a re-publishing of one of Jay’s papers read before NLPAI in Saratoga. In this paper, Jay writes that Catholics paying allegiance to the pope

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in Italy weakens their allegiance to America (a popular belief held at this time). Additionally, Jay believes the Catholic Church to be “the most remarkable, awry, dilapidated, foolish, and often corrupt” government on earth. And the “Roman Catholic Church is the most unwise, and foolish of human things.” Therefore, argues Jay, anyone with a respect to the United States should avoid any Jesuit system of education. Also, “school funds should be held sacred as the Constitution required, and no money should be given to any institution under sectarian or ecclesiastical control.” Jay’s beliefs here highlight the central fact to the argument that the NLPAI was truly anti-Catholic.

Although official work by the NLPAI didn’t commence until April of 1890, the League was still hard at work during interim period between December and April. The League started to advertise their objectives, and newspapers mentioning the work of the League sprung up across America. During this time, however, the League worked on its most important objective: drafting an Amendment to the United States Constitution that would prohibit public money for sectarian schools.

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17 This advertisement is best noted in the Pittsburg Dispatch. Here, Professor Boyesen likens the Parochial school system to foreign failures. Accessed: http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86088181/1890-01-30/ed-1/seq-3.pdf
On April 22, 1890, the Law committee of the NLPAI announced their proposed text for the sixteenth amendment to the United States Constitution.  

“No state shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or use its property or credit, or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used, for the purpose of founding, maintaining, or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses, or otherwise, any church, religious denomination or religious society, or any institution, society, or understanding taking which is wholly, or in part, under sectarian or ecclesiastical control.”

The proposed sixteenth amendment, however, was not a new objective. Former President Ulysses S. Grant fought for the same objective with the Blaine Amendment in 1876. The Blaine Amendment, remarkably similar to the NLPAI’s, reads:

"No State shall make any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and no money raised by taxation in any State for the support of public schools, or derived from any public fund therefor, nor any public lands devoted thereto, shall ever be under the control of any religious sect; nor shall any money so raised or lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or denominations.”

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Grant’s amendment was met with remarkable support in the House of Representatives, tallying a vote of 180 to 7, with 98 not voting. In the Senate, however, the vote count was 28 yeas to 16 nays, failing to reach the two-thirds requirement and be ratified to the Federal Constitution. The question would remain silent until the NLPAI brought it up again fourteen years later.

1890 would be a year that the league heavily advertised their objectives and tried to become a strong interest group on Capitol Hill. By the summer of 1890, the Law Committee of the League, composed of: Wm. Allen Butler, Dorman B Eaton, Cephas Brainerd, Henry E. Howland, and Stephen E Walker, wrote the proposed sixteenth amendment, as noted above. Additionally, the League began publishing pamphlets that would be distributed to superintendents of schools, governmental leaders, important men, and anyone else who could be persuaded on this subject. These pamphlets served as the “base” of all their work, highlighting objectives, victories, and ongoing work.

At the conclusion of 1890, the League’s major accomplishment was advertising their name and objectives in the United States. In the 1890 report to the NLPAI, James M. King announced that the NLPAI had published four documents, as well as drafted their proposed amendment to the Constitution. Additionally, the league sent out their objectives to 869 candidates for elective offices in the State of New York and the majority of these candidates received these letters with favor. The NLPAI was optimistic with these candidates and their views on the role of church and state and the future

legislation that will become of it. The League also found favor in the United States Senate when Henry Blair (R, New Hampshire) presented the League’s objectives on June 28, 1890, and Henry Dawes (R, Massachusetts) presented with favor to the League on July 24, 1890.

Lastly, the NLPAI built solid relationships with auxiliary leagues—leagues with different missions, but similar objections. The League was formally endorsed on May 28, 1890 by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and received strong support at the American Patriotic Orders Meetings.

1891 was “more of the same” for the NLPAI. While the League found support and mention in the House of Representatives, the League spent the majority of its time advancing its objectives, as well as endorsing candidates it felt would reflect its beliefs. Additionally, the league formally announced the officers of the league and listed important men that found favor with the league and expressed interest. However, it was the proposed sixteenth amendment that would dominate the work of the league during this year. By the end of 1891, the Law Committee for the League wrote the final draft of

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28 Mark Dunnell (Republican, Minnesota) spoke to the floor with great optimism and respect for the League. Speaking for at least seven minutes, Dunnell highlighted the League’s objectives and their proposed sixteenth amendment.

Unfortunately, due to the poor quality of the archival material, the lists of these men cannot be given with guaranteed accuracy. Therefore, I decided to omit the lists of these men from this footnote.
the proposed amendment, as highlighted above. At the end of December, James King spent a significant amount of time in Washington D.C. advocating for the passage of the amendment. The proposed sixteenth amendment was sent to Statesmen, Jurists, Lawyers, Publicists, College Presidents, Superintendents of Public Instruction and other representative citizens in all the States of the Union, and the response was mostly in favorable toward the League.28

The Leagues proposed sixteenth amendment would be formally announced to Congress when it convened in January 1892. According to King, six or eight energetic members of Congress would be in charge of sponsoring and announcing the amendment. While many State constitutions had formal amendments prohibiting the use of sectarian money, a formal amendment to the Federal Constitution would make this a nationwide initiative.29

On January 18, 1892, Orville H. Platt, Republican Senator from Connecticut, formally announced the Amendment in the United State Senate. Mr. Platt writes:

“To the honorable the Senate of the United States: The National League for the Protection of American Institutions presents to your honorable body the following form of a proposed sixteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and asks its passage and submission to the legislatures of the several states.”30

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30 Congressional Record. 52nd Congress, 1st Session. United States Senate. Published January 18, 1892. University of Montana Congressional Record Collections. Missoula, MT.
In the House of Representatives, Representative William Springer (D-Illinois) announced to the House the NLPAI’s proposed sixteenth amendment. After brief discussion, the amendment was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. The only representative to publicly object was Walter Butler (D-Iowa). The League was happy with the announcements, and held that “there has never been so great and widespread an interest in this subject as at present.”

As 1892 progressed, there was a sense of continued interest in the League and their objectives. The Record Union, a newspaper in Sacramento, wrote: “It seems to us that there is no reasonable argument to be advanced against the proposed amendment. The reasons for the amendment are not found in any antagonism, hatred or contempt for any religion; on the contrary, some of the best arguments for the amendment are based upon the undeniable truth that such a provision is the very best of protection for churches, insuring to each perfect freedom from political encroachment by another.”

The Omaha Bee writes that “prospects are good for its submission” and “is in favor of the amendment because it places in the supreme law of the land a principle expressed in detimite terms which is a part of the unwritten but nevertheless potent law

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31 Congressional Record. January 18, 1892. House of Representatives. The University of Montana Library. Missoula, MT.
32 Congressional Record. January 18, 1892. House of Representatives. The University of Montana Library. Missoula, MT.
35 The Omaha Bee. “Constitutional Amendments” The Omaha Bee. Omaha, Nebraska. Published March 2nd, 1892.
upon which the American republic founded. It ought to take religion out of politics entirely and forever.”

The league was flourishing, and although a small scandal hit the league in April of 1892, the League’s work and reputation was met with favor from the press and the public eye. While the League focused the majority of its attention to passing the proposed Amendment, the League did not ignore smaller legislative matters.

One of these “smaller” matters was the “Freedom of Worship” bill, a New York State Legislative initiative. This bill, originally introduced to the New York Legislature in 1891, “was simply a means to defeat and break down unsectarian benevolent and reformatory institutions, since it proposed to classify all wards in such institution upon denominational lines, and have the church introduced into these institutions upon that basis.” In other words, the bill was to promote sectarian institutions.

The Freedom of Worship bill was a clear mix of public money and religion, and the NLPAI strongly opposed the passing of this bill. The League writes that the bill “would destroy the character and overthrow the work of one of the oldest and most useful unsectarian institutions under the care of the State—the House of Refuge—by rendering discipline and moral instruction impossible because of the admission of sectarian

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37 This scandal was brought about from an anonymous letter that was sent out from the Methodist Convention. Unfortunately, what the letter contained or the nature of the scandal was not disclosed. Further, the committee investigating this matter stated that although the letter and handwriting was seemingly identical to that of the National League for the Protection of American Institutions, charges could not be made. See: The Evening World. “Anger in the Conference: Excitement follows the report on the Anonymous Letters.” The Evening World. New York, NY. Published April 4, 1892. Accessed: http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030193/1892-04-04/ed-3/seq-3.pdf
religious teachers not subject to the control of the managers.”39 Also, mentions the League, “if the provisions of the bill should be literally carried out, it would open asylums supported and controlled by private beneficence, and threaten every private charitable institution with ecclesiastical domination.”40

Over the next nine months, the Freedom of Worship bill was debated and heavily amended. The Hon. John Jay, Jr, the President of the League, wrote a letter to the New York Times scorning the bill, citing arguments similar to the ones noted above. Jay also called on Governor Flower to veto the bill, writing that “He [Gov. Flower] cannot afford to sign it and his party cannot afford to let it be signed.”41 TS Williams, Private Secretary to Governor Flower, responded to the League by announcing that Governor Flower will hold an additional hearing to the Bill and will be in direct contact with the League.42

Although the majority of the citizens’ opinions on this matter cannot be calculated, we know that there was support for the objections. One citizen, writing a letter to the editor, writes in favor of the League, noting that the Freedom of Worship bill's primary goal is to intersect religion and politics. Additionally, the anonymous writer charges that the Freedom of Worship Bill “owes its support wholly to one religious denomination, whose purpose is to force its teaching and its methods of worship into public institutions supported in whole or in part by public money.”43 The League would agree with this statement, in particular on the emphasis of the “one denomination.”

League write that the Freedom of Worship Bill “[demands] Roman hierarchy,” and forces Roman Catholic teaching and worship.44

The League’s efforts would pay large dividends. Despite the bill passing in the New York State Legislature, the bill was heavily amended and its “most offensive features [were] stripped off, owing to the labors and protests of the League.”45 Governor Flower, before signing the bill into law, made this statement: “You have robbed the bill of all its worst features, and now I will sign it to please the boys.”46 In addition to the freedom of worship bill, the League got some attention from the United States Senate. Henry Dawes (Republican, Massachusetts) presented a memorial of the League to the Senate, which was met with favor.47

1893 started out as a year in which the League started to gain national footsteps and attract attention from the Catholic Church. It was also during this year that the other protestant denominations started to support the league’s efforts in a more prominent way. In an article in February of that year, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, United Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists and others endorsed the proposed 16th amendment.48

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The attention by the Catholic Church is best exemplified with a series of letters between James King and Fr. James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore. In this letter, King highlights the work of the league — the sixteenth amendment, their vision, etc. Also, King writes that allowing denominations to accept federal funding is an “evil custom, so diametrically opposed of the fundamental principles of the Constitution, and so threatening to the peace of the community by introducing questions of denominational preference into our civil legislation…”

Furthermore, King asks Bishop Gibbons for his public approval of the sixteenth amendment, citing that the league has received over 250,000 signatures in support of the initiative and has received endorsement “by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the General Assembly of the United Methodist Church; the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church; the national Council of the Congregational Church of the United States, and other influential denominations, though smaller in membership.”

James King would hear back from Bishop Gibbons. Although not getting an answer to his concerns, Gibbons promised to give the issue “careful consideration.” The League would also write to Arch Bishop Satolli of Washington DC, citing similar

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concerns. However, the league did not publish whether or not they received a response from the Archbishop.\(^{52}\)

Shortly after the publication of the correspondences with the Bishops, the League (particularly James King) shifted focus to the Common School System — an unsectarian style of education.\(^{53}\) King writes that the current status of the government funding religious schools is killing the Common School System. While King doesn’t oppose private religious schools, the operation thereof must be at their own expense. Also, writes King: “The State cannot oblige the church to teach the rights and needs and duties of citizenship.” King signs off this letter by writing that when the relations between church and state reach perfect harmony, justice will follow. The League’s push for the American Common School System could be viewed as a reaction to Dr. Walsh’s education plan, which meant dividing funds amongst different sectarian schools, with a special emphasis among the Catholic parochial schools. This was a value, of course, contradictory to everything the League held true.\(^{54}\)

In addition to the common school debate, we see an interesting take on the pluralism of church and state in July 1893. Dr. Hamlin, pastor of the Church of the Covenant, writes that “Our Lord organized a church within a state and taught obedience


Keep in mind, however, the Common School System was often times Protestant in nature. (I thank DJ Cash, one of my readers, for pointing that out to me).

to the civil power.” Pronounced by Jesus as “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, render unto God what is God’s.” Dr. Hamlin holds that God inspired a separation of civil and divine matters, and in order to give glory to God, we should keep it that way.

By December of 1893, the NLPAI published document number nineteen of their pamphlets – a manifesto on the Common School System. The league warns that states “for their own preservation [must establish] and maintain the American free common school system of education.” This system of education is crucial because it is the only way to convert our homogeneous elements of our population into a safely homogenous citizenship—a statement that is suggestive of anti-Catholicism.

The League cites three questions that future legislation needs to address. They are:

(1) “Shall the whole principle on which the common schools rest, i.e., the right and duty of the state to educate impartially its own children for intelligent citizenship be surrendered to its enemies?; (2) Shall the common schools be disintegrated and destroyed by the dispersion and use of their funds for sectarian ends?; (3) Are our citizens in favor of the union of Church and State in the most dangerous possible feature of such union., viz., in the fundamental and

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56 Mark 12:17.
57 Mark 12:17.
elementary education of our future citizens?”

The league ended their publication with their typical optimism and listed four positive consequences that their proposed sixteenth amendment would produce. They are:

(1) “[The document will] preserve the integrity of the funds, and the fair and impartial character of the American Free public school system; (2) eliminate religious controversy from political questions and issues; (3) Secure and perpetuate essential separation of Church and State; and (4) destroy the intimidating power of ecclesiasticism over both citizens and law-makers.”

The league signed off 1893 by asking for the support and cooperation of the American citizens in this battle for the American free public school system, on which the “safety of the republic and the peace and prosperity of its citizens so largely depend. In addition to the league focusing their attention to the American Common School System, there was a significant change in leadership within the League. The Hon. John Jay, the man responsible for much of the early creation of the League, stepped down as president and William H Parsons took his place. This was probably because of Jay’s declining health issues (he would die the next year). How involved Jay was with the League during this time cannot be known for certain, but the shift in leadership led the way to the years

of prosperity ahead.61

In January 1894, the League wasted no time in making noise on Capital Hill. The league petitioned to the 53rd Congress to have all appropriations for Indian sectarian schools removed.62 Additionally, several senators received pamphlets from the League; the pamphlets outlined their general goals as well as the League’s opinion on the topic of the Common School System.63 While initially it looked like the league would push for progress at the national level, the League dedicated most of their time and resources to the New York State legislature.

The League, in its address to the citizens, writes that New York, “more than others, has suffered from politico-religious alliances based upon enormous sectarian appropriations to institutions and undertakings under sectarian control. These have introduced religious questions into politics, have debased both religious and civil life, have encouraged a scramble for spoils, and have discouraged political reform.”64 The

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69 The National League for the Protection of American Institutions. “To Protect in New York State the Free Common Schools And to Prohibit All Sectarian Appropriations.” Pamphlet/Document Number Twenty-
League believes that New York will prosper when their proposed amendment is combined with the organic law of the state. The advantages of the amendment passing include: a lessening of religious controversy, the better integrity of the state, and the intimidating power of ecclesiasticism would disappear if this amendment is passed.\textsuperscript{65} However, if New York ignores the League’s amendment, the state will fall into a perpetual arrogance, a disturbance of civil peace, religious faith decided by political majorities, an overwhelming burden on the state to provide for religious matters, and the destruction of the Common School System.\textsuperscript{66}

New York was to meet in May 1894 to revise the State Constitution, and the League did not hesitate to lobby for their proposed amendment to be ratified to the New York Constitution.\textsuperscript{67} The League’s efforts were immediately documented and supported. On May 23, 1894, Mr. Holls, a state legislator, presented the memorial and petition for the protection of the common free schools and the prohibition of sectarian appropriations.\textsuperscript{68} The petition was met with favor from members of the legislature.\textsuperscript{69}


In the middle of the Constitutional Convention, the League was hit with the death of the former president and founder of the League, the Hon. John Jay. Jay passed away at the age of 77 at the Hotel Savoy, at 12:45 PM. His death was not unexpected, as his health had been failing for years. Although not citing exact reasons for his death, Jay was hit by a taxi cab four years earlier, and intense rheumatism could have accelerated his failing health. Jay was remembered as having sharp opinions and passionate patriotism. Jay was involved in many interest groups during his tenure; the National League for the Protection of American Institutions being the group he devoted the last years of his life to. Jay at the time was survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.\textsuperscript{70} It is unknown how involved with the League Jay was at the time of his death—William H Parsons took over as president the year before. Despite the loss, the League had to move on with the convention, and they did with the same vigor that Jay would have.

While the League was met with support at the convention, there was backlash – exclusively from the Catholics and Hebrew sources.\textsuperscript{71} Father Young, in a lengthy letter to \textit{The Sun Newspaper}, called the National League for the Protection of American Institutions a “pharisaical hypocrite,”\textsuperscript{72} when compared to the American Protective Association (A.P.A.).\textsuperscript{73} Father Young, although acknowledging the importance of

\textsuperscript{72} Pharisaical is defined as “marked by hypocritical censorious self-righteousness” (Webster Dictionary).

The American Protective Association was a “secret” anti-Catholic group that formed within Congress. The APA was very vocal about their catholic opposition. Father Young charges the NLPAI for being
separating church and state matters, complains that the League is truly an anti-Catholic league, hiding its beliefs under the name of “sectarianism.” It wasn’t just Father Young that brought up the concern that the NLPAI was anti-Catholic. Lawyer Wheeler Peckham, whose name was sent to the Senate for associate justice of the Supreme Court by President Cleveland, was criticized for having his name on one of the League’s pamphlets. However, Peckham denied that he (or the League) is anti-Catholic. Peckham states: “I am in favor of spending the public funds for the purposes for which they are voted, and I am opposed to all sectarian and denominational appropriations of these funds in the matter of education. As I said before, I am not a Catholic, but I repeat. I have no antipathy against the church or its members.”

Despite the criticism, there was a saving grace for the League. The New York Times published favorable articles of the League right after the criticism and during the Constitutional Convention hearings, which began on June 6th. The Times strongly emphasized that the League is not modeled after the American Protective Association (A.P.A). The A.P.A, according to the Times, “conducts its campaign in the dark, like assassin’s order of Mafia. Its platform is the overthrow—social, business, and religious—of the Roman Catholic citizens of the country. Its ‘declaration of principles’ is the most cruel, bigoted, narrow-minded, that has ever been written.” On the contrary, the Times praised the League, writing that the League “conducts its fight in the open. There are no

hypocritical because he believes the NLPAI to be very anti-Catholic in their beliefs. This whole “no funds for any religion” is just a cover to push funding for catholic institutions out the door.


oaths, no secrecy, no boycotting, no persecution of any religious sect, no personal warfare on religious grounds.”

Unlike the A.P.A, Catholics can unite with the League and fight for justice and a prosperous democracy.

The Times reignited the flame for the NLPAI, and with the criticism behind them, the League went to judicial hearings. The League was represented by William Allen Butler, Dorman B Eaton, Cephas Brainerd and Henry E. Howland—all members of the Law Committee of the League. The members of the League were to “speak in favor of the proposed amendment to the constitution, withdrawing state and municipal assistance to sectarian schools. They also favor the taxing of churches and church property.”

After two hearings to the committees on education, charities, and powers and duties of the legislature, the general election was held on November 6, 1894. In October, the League published a letter to the citizens of New York, appealing for the amendment to be passed, and cites four reasons:

“(1) A Constitutional recognition of the American principle of the separation of the functions of Church and State; (2) This principle is applied without qualifications to the free public school system by the adoption of sweeping provisions which will thoroughly protect the common school fund from division; (3)

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Sectarian and private charitable institutions which receive public money are subjected to a State Board possessing absolute powers, limited only by legislative action; (4) The State Legislature is not required, but permitted, under restrictions, to make appropriations to these sectarian and private charities, but such appropriations, if made, must be not by special legislation, but by the enactment of general laws.”

The League closes their article by asking all “those who favor these principles aid [us] by their money and votes, … and in pressing forward for their complete expression and establishment in the organic law of this and other states, and in the Constitution of the United States.” The citizens responded with favor to the league. By a vote of 410,697 for the Constitution, and 327,402 against, the Constitution and the League’s amendment was ratified in the State of New York. This was a monumental victory for the League, and would be the start of multiple victories in State Legislatures.

In November 1894, the League held their annual meeting. In addition to their victory in New York, James King reported that religious groups Unitarians and the Friends decided to reject all forms of government funding for education purposes. At this time, the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, and Lutherans were the only religious organizations to accept money for Indian

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education.\textsuperscript{85} It was also reported that Congress was planning “to abolish [Indian] contract schools as rapidly as possible and make provision for the education of children in public schools.”\textsuperscript{86}

1895 was a year in which the League largely stayed out of the public eye. On January 12, the Board of Managers of the League met to discuss the amendment they would be submitting to Congress later that week. The amendment changed only slightly from before, the changes highlighted in brackets; the league writes:

“No state [neither Congress nor State] shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or use its property or credit [the property or credit of the United States or of any state], or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used, for the purpose of founding, maintaining, or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses, or otherwise, any church, religious society [religious denomination or religious society], or any institution, society, or undertaking, which is wholly, or in part, under sectarian or ecclesiastical concern.”\textsuperscript{87}

In addition, the League chose to disapprove of the Secretary of Interior’s plan to allow for a five-year grace period before cutting funding from Indian Contract Schools. At this time, it was only the Catholic Church that is accepting governmental


appropriations for their Indian schools—the Protestant denominations had been cut away from federal funding since the issue had been discussed the year before. Later in January, Representative William Linton, Republican from Michigan’s 8th district, presented to the House of Representatives the League’s proposed sixteenth amendment. However, the Amendment would not come to a vote in the House. This will be covered in the next chapter.

Work in Congress did not progress to the League’s satisfaction; but, nevertheless, during this year the League greatly impacted individual states and their constitutions. In New York, the League successfully lobbied for a school census to be conducted. The bill, drafted by James King, mandated that “the State Superintendent of Public Instruction should take, or cause to be taken, every two years, in all towns and cities of the State having a population of ten thousand or upwards, a census of all persons between the ages of four and sixteen, which should furnish the necessary date for perfecting the School System of the Date.” The bill was met with almost unanimous support, and was signed into law on May 7th, 1895 by Governor Morton.


In addition to New York, the League was very influential in the State Constitutions of Utah and South Carolina. In Utah, there was a Constitutional Convention, and the League “appealed to the Convention, by memorial and by personal letters and documents to all delegates, for the incorporation of the principles we advocate in the new Constitution.”

The result was a favorable one for the league. On May 8, 1895, consistent with the values the NLPAI holds, the Utah Constitution was amended to read:

“There shall be no union of Church and State, nor shall any church dominate the State or interfere with its functions. No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or for the support of any ecclesiastical establishment.”

A similar result occurred in South Carolina. Like Utah, South Carolina was rewriting their State Constitution, and the NLPAI appealed to the Convention to consider their amendment. The result was a favorable one for the League, South Carolina adopting this amendment:

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“The property or credit of the State of South Carolina, or of any county, city, town, township, school district, or other subdivision of the said State, or any public money, from whatever source derived, shall not, by gift, donation, loan, contract, appropriation, or otherwise, be used, directly or indirectly, in aid or maintenance of any college, school, hospital, orphan house, or other institution, society or organization, of whatever kind, or in part under the direction or control of any church or any religious or sectarian denomination, society or organization.”

The League, also during 1895, published pamphlet twenty-six – “The attitude of the Press Toward the Principles and the Work of the League.” The point of this document was to “convey some idea of the estimate put upon the principles and work of the National League for the Protection of American Institutions by the press of the country.”

The League noted forty newspapers and cited articles that praised the League. The League signed off the document by noting that the League had pursed its career on unsectarian and non-partisan lines, with the support and work by successful and scholarly

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The point of this article was to build up their reputation and presence before approaching 1896, the most important and significant year of the League’s existence. While 1895 would be a year that the League would stay out of the public eye, 1896 would be the year that the League showcased its presence on Capitol Hill and changed the course of future legislation.

1896 started out with a bang for the League. In January, the League published its most influential pamphlet: “A Condensed Statement of Its Accomplished Work and Future Purposes.” The pamphlet is a small history of the League – highlighting its major accomplishments from the incorporation of the League in 1889 until December of 1895. In addition, the League quotes extracts from 13 notable state constitutions that are compatible with the values of the League. They are: California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Montana, New York, Texas, Utah, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming. Last, the League highlights six future purposes of the League. They are:

“(1) Show the necessity for the XVI Amendment, and press it on the attention of Congress and of the American people; (2) Form State Leagues in all the States as rapidly as opportunity affords, and seek the amendment of State Constitutions wherever they are defective in their

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97 1896 and the debate in Congress and the pass of legislation that would significantly alter Catholic Indian Mission Schools will be the main topic of chapter three. Chapter three won’t concern the League as much, but because of flow, 1896 does need to be written about here. However, keep in mind, I am leaving out important information and will be only giving information that directly concerns the National League for the Protection of American Institutions.
provisions for protecting religious liberty and the schools; (3) Use every legitimate means within its power to protect the American Free Common School System; (4) Gather and publish statistics concerning sectarian appropriations by the National and State Governments, and expose the peril of such action; (5) Strenuously resist every effort to consummate the union of Church and State on educational or any other lines; (6) Keep the public apprised of the sources of our peril, and organize the patriotic sentiment of the country among native born and naturalized citizens for the defense of our distinctively American Institutions.”

This left only the Catholics receiving financial support from the Federal Government in educating Indians on their missions. The League realized that they would have to go after the Federal Government giving aid to Catholics in support of their missions to make the strongest impact. The League was ready to do this as their support and membership soared to 1,500,000, second only to the American Protective Association reaching 3,500,000.

The League would publish a small statement on their views of the relationship between the National Government and sectarian Indian education. The League points attention to a table that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs published, highlighting the history of aid to different religious groups dating from 1886-1896. The Catholics led the

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way, receiving $3,430,157 in 11 years. In addition, as stated before, all other religious organizations received nothing in 1896, except the Catholic Church.\footnote{102}

The League pointed out that Congress had already passed a clause “prohibiting the Secretary of the Interior from making any new contracts, and restricting him to a sum not to exceed 80 percent.”\footnote{103} Additionally, “the Government shall, as early as practicable, make provision for the education of Indian Children in Government Schools.”\footnote{104} The League writes that this is a huge step forward for America, as all religious funding for sectarian purposes has been abolished for every denomination except the Catholics and Congress is seeing the peril in this. Finally, the League “[hopes] that the present Congress will abolish at once the entire system, which is antagonistic to the spirit of the Constitution, repugnant to public opinion, and which has been, heretofore, productive of so much contention, and which has in it the certainty of so many evils if continued in the future.”\footnote{105}

The League’s hopes and dreams of this reality would come true. On April 9, 1896, by a vote of 134 ayes to 21 nays, Congress made provisions “that no contract provided for in the clause relating to charities should extend beyond the 30th day of June,

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1897.” The Record Union in Sacramento, California, a long-time supporter of the NLPAI, writes that the League “began [this] battle seven years ago, and at no time has tired in the effort. It sees victory perching upon its banners at last, and is warranted in shouting hallelujah!”

Hallelujah the League would shout, but it was not the end of the League’s efforts. The League would push forward with the ultimate goal of passing the proposed sixteenth amendment to the Federal Constitution. This would occupy the work of the League between 1896 and 1900, approximately when the League quit their efforts.

The next four years are years where the work of the League isn’t very well known. In 1897, Secretary James King quit his job as pastor of the Union Methodist Episcopal Church in New York to devote full time to the work of the NLPAI. King tried desperately to pass the proposed sixteenth amendment, but support for the amendment fizzled and a vote was never taken on it in Congress.

In the end, we cannot conclude exactly when the National League for the Protection of American Institutions suspended their activities. However, the evidence we do have points to the League quitting their efforts between 1899-1900. I make this claim on three facts, two of them financially related. First, in 1899, the League published

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110 I give special thanks to Carroll College Librarian, Terence Kratz, for his assistance in researching this section of the paper.
their last pamphlet. In this pamphlet the League showcases their accomplishments: cutting all funding for Indian Sectarian schools, aiding the effort to amend fourteen state constitutions to prohibit funding for religious purposes, and enlightening many citizens to the potential goodness of their work and ideals.\textsuperscript{111} The League asks for full support of the proposed sixteenth amendment, and the League’s ideals as a whole. Lastly, the League would outline future goals of the League, including: passage of the proposed sixteenth amendment, perfecting the Common School System, and keeping citizens informed of the work of the League. Interestingly, the League indicated that they were in financial trouble. The League writes, “Owing to the unfavorable business conditions of the country for the last few years, lack of means has restricted the work of the League.”\textsuperscript{112} The League would ask for additional financial contributions, stating: “If the reader of this note will contribute any amount to aid in pushing the great and indispensable work we have in hand, a check may be sent to our offices to the order of the Treasurer of the League.”\textsuperscript{113}

Second, we find that the donations of John Rockefeller, a major donor of the League, stopped in 1899. Over the course of fourteen years, Rockefeller donated $4,900 – roughly $120,000 today when accounted for inflation.\textsuperscript{114} Third, we find no mentioning of the League in Newspaper Archives and the League published no pamphlets after 1899.

If the League had continued working, even with minor influence, the League’s work would have been published.

It is important to consider why the League failed after 1896, especially when the League had such an influential year. I hypothesize that the citizens – the only financial supporters of the League – lost interest after many of the primary goals of the League were met. Fourteen state constitutions were amended to eradicate all sectarian funding and the Catholic Church lost all federal funding for their mission schools. Although the ultimate goal of amending the federal constitution was not met, the citizens were happy with what the League did, and financially supporting the League would bring no benefit to them.

The National League for the Protection of American Institutions had an enormous impact on the State Constitutions in the United States, the abolition of funding for sectarian schools – especially Indian sectarian schools, and the discourse and beliefs of the role of government and religion. The League wasn’t secret or against religion in the private form, and this fact allowed for a safe haven for politicians and citizens to express their views and not be labeled an “anti-Catholic,” a feat the American Protective Association could not accomplish.

Although the League in a sense failed, the League’s accomplishments both at the state and federal level would forever change the way we look at the relationship between church and state. The League’s efforts in New York, for better or for worse, would have massive implications for Montana over 2,000 miles away. This is something we will explore in the next two chapters.
A rare look at the founders and officers of the league; these men served as the League’s most important and influential members of the group. From left to right, starting at the top: William H Parsons—President of the League after John Jay’s Passing. William Eaton – notable member of the League’s Law Committee John Jay—the league’s first president, the office he would hold until his death in 1894; James M King - General Secretary of the league; and W.M. Strong – another notable member of the Law Committee.

(Pictures accessed from: James M King “Facing the Twentieth Century”)
The Morse Building as it looked in 1893. From what we know, this was the first and only building that the National League for the Protection of American Institutions conducted their work. At the time, the Morse Building was one of the largest in New York.\textsuperscript{115}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{morse_building_1893}
\caption{The Morse Building as it looked in 1893. From what we know, this was the first and only building that the National League for the Protection of American Institutions conducted their work. At the time, the Morse Building was one of the largest in New York.\textsuperscript{115}}
\end{figure}

The Morse building as it looks today. Currently, the building is an apartment complex.\textsuperscript{116}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{morse_building_current}
\caption{The Morse building as it looks today. Currently, the building is an apartment complex.\textsuperscript{116}}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.
Chapter Three: The Sectarian Debate and Anti-Catholicism

My previous chapter looked at the chronological history of the National League for the Protection of American Institutions and my goal was to show how they started, their goals and accomplishments, and their eventual dissolution from politics. In this chapter, I want to focus on the debate in Congress that led to the decision to cut funding from Indian Sectarian schools, a decision the NLPAI heavily influenced.

The debate to abolish sectarian funding is a massive topic with a deep history. It is not the point of this chapter to simply restate what has already been said about the history of the tumultuous relationship between the Federal Government and Catholic Indian Education. However, jumping right into debates in Congress to abolish sectarian Indian education funding from 1895-1896 would be confusing because the history leading up to this event hasn’t been covered. Therefore, to give proper context I will briefly discuss the history the tumultuous relationship between Government and Catholicism started; and how this issue eventually evolved into a debate over funding for religious schools. I will look at the major people involved in this issue, as well as their reasoning to continue funding or to cut funding. However, the bulk and importance of this chapter will center on the debates in Congress from 1895-1896 and the legacies thereafter.

Anti-Catholicism started during and after the Protestant Reformation, which was a revolution designed to mend the shortcomings and corruption of the Catholic Church. When Congregationalists and Puritans fled England to settle in America, “a Universal anti-Catholic bias was brought o Jamestown in 1607 and [was then] vigorously cultivated in all the thirteen colonies from Massachusetts to Georgia.” In fact, anti-Catholicism

became so extreme that in the mid 1600’s, many colonies banned Catholics from holding office and even banned Priests from serving in that area. Finally in 1774, the Quebec Act was passed which granted Catholics the freedom to worship and other religious liberties.

With a cloud of anti-Catholicism in the air, it is important to consider the Founding Fathers’ opinion on the matter when they were constructing the framework of the United States. Generally, the Founding Fathers weren’t optimistic about Catholicism and some outwardly hated it. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, considered himself a “pure Episcopalian” and publicly hated the Church. Thomas Jefferson also shared criticism and concerns about the Catholic Church. Writing to his friend Horatio G. Spafford, reflecting on the Catholic Church in France, Jefferson writes: “In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own.”

Furthermore, tensions between Protestants and Catholics escalated during the Constitutional Convention. John Adams recommended that Catholics not be allowed to hold public office, which didn’t pass, but the requirement to not pledge allegiance to foreign powers did hold. This reflects a common criticism amongst Catholic Americans—they allegedly pledged allegiance to the Pope, ignored American patriotism and “clung to feudal hierarchy—a corrupt foreign leviathan [of] popes, bishops, and

priests.”

Tensions between Catholics and Protestants spiked in the middle of the 19th century, when a large amount of Catholic Irish immigrants met a multitude of Protestant Americans. Many Protestant Americans detested these new Catholic immigrants. They were seen as lazy and drunk, and pledged allegiance to the Pope, a “social sin” as explained previously.

However, the issue of funding for Catholic Schools escalated in 1869 when Tammany Hall—a major Political Machine in New York with deep Catholic roots—successfully lobbied to have millions of dollars of state money injected into Catholic Schools. This angered anti-Catholics and those who felt this violated the First Amendment’s clause that Government cannot promote one religion over another.

The answer to this conflict was the Blaine Amendment in 1875. The Blaine Amendment, as noted in my previous chapter, looked to amend the Federal Constitution by making it unconstitutional to fund religious schools. The amendment reads:

“No State shall make any law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and no money raised by taxation in any state for the support of public schools, or derived from any

public fund therefore, nor any public lands devoted thereto shall over be
under the control of any religious sect, nor shall any money so raised or
lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or denominations.”\textsuperscript{126}

The Amendment came to a vote in the US Senate on August 14, 1876, with
Senator Frederick Frelinghuysen (R, New Jersey) giving a short speech in favor of the Amendment. Although the Amendment received a majority of favorable votes, the vote count did not meet the two-thirds requirement to be added to the US Constitution.\textsuperscript{127} However, this doesn’t mean the Blaine Amendment was a failure. The Amendment sparked interest in the minds of Americans and can be attributed to how individual states handled their relationship with funding religious schools.\textsuperscript{128}

Following the failure of the Blaine Amendment, Congress focused their attention on how Catholic Missions were educating Native Americans and whether or not they should be funded through the Federal Government. However, while this was an issue, newspaper archives show that this issue was given little attention both by the government and by the general public between 1876-1889. However, interest began to pick up again the very next year, 1890. Why was this? Chris Rodda holds that this issue was reignited because “Catholics started getting more of the funding than the Protestants and the Protestants didn’t like this.”\textsuperscript{129}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[127] Congressional Records. “August 14, 1876.” Find Full Source
The vote count was 28-16 in favor of the Amendment.
\end{footnotes}
However, how did Catholic Indian schools get more funding if the culture is predominately anti-Catholic? Chris Rodda again writes that there are three major factors that contribute to this: “First, the Catholics were able to build more schools than any other denomination; second, many of the Protestants lost interest in the whole business; and third, the Catholic schools were just better.”

Another reason as to why the issue over funding Indian Sectarian schools escalated was the appointment of Indian Commissioner Thomas J Morgan. Morgan was known as being a man “with strong convictions about the need to Americanize the Indians and absorb them into white society.” In other words, Morgan was against Sectarian education and for government forms of education. Rather than educate Native Americans on Reservations in their homeland (like the Reservations in Montana), Morgan wanted them to be shipped off to government-sponsored schools such as the one in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Morgan, although serving only for a few years, presented a system of education that was “practically the public system adapted to the special requirements of the Indians.” The schools were to be non-sectarian and nonpartisan in nature. In all, Morgan is responsible for redefining Indian education in the United States.

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131 Prucha, Francis. “Documents of United States Indian Policy.” University of Nebraska Presss. Find Full Citation.
However, there was support for Indian Sectarian Schools among notable members of Congress. The most vocal member to support the schools was George Graham Vest (Democrat, Missouri), who served in the US Senate from ... Vest had a special relationship with Montana, as he visited Indian Reservations and was very impressed with the quality of the Catholic Reservation schools. Vest writes:

“Today the Flathead Indians are a hundred percent. Advanced over any other Indians in point of civilization, at least in Montana. Fifty years ago the Jesuits went amongst them, and today you see the result. Among all those tribes, commencing with the Shoshones, the Arapahoes, the GrosVentres, the Blackfeet, the Piegans, the River Crows, the Bloods and Assiniboines, the only ray of light I saw was on the Flathead Reservation at the Jesuit Mission Schools, and there were boys and girls – fifty boys and fifty girls. They raise cattle; the Indian boys herd them. They have mills; the Indian boys attend them. They have blacksmith-shops; the Indian boys work in them. When I Was there they were building two school-houses, all the work done by the scholars at the mission. They cannot raise corn to any extent in that climate, but they raise enough vegetables and enough oats to support the whole school, and I never saw in my life a finer herd of cattle or horses than they had at that mission.

Five nuns, sisters, and five fathers constitute the teachers in the respective schools. We had a school examination there which lasted through two days. I undertake to say now that never in the States was there a better examination than I heard at that mission, of children of the same age with those I saw there. The girls are taught needlework; they are taught to sew and to teach; they are taught music; they are taught to keep house. The young men are taught to work upon the farm, to herd cattle, to be blacksmiths and carpenters and millwrights.”

Further, on the topic of the quality of education, Vest writes:

“I do not speak with any sort of denominational prejudice in favor of Jesuits. I was taught to abhor the whole sect; I was raised in that good Old-School Presbyterian Church that looked upon a Jesuit as very much akin to the devil; but I now say, if the senator from Massachusetts, the chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, will find me any tribe of ‘blanket’ Indians on the continent of North America – I do not speak of the five civilized tribes, because they got their civilization in Georgia and Alabama, and by immediate contact with the whites – but if he will find me a single tribe of Indians on the plains, ‘blanket’ Indians, that approximate in civilization to the Flatheads who have been under control of the Jesuits for

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fifty years, I will abandon my entire theory on this subject. I say that out of eleven tribes that I saw – and I say this as a Protestant – where they had Protestant missionaries they had not made a single, solitary advance towards civilization, not one.”

George Vest saw Native American Education one way and Thomas Morgan saw it completely differently. Commissioner Morgan ordered that Indians be taught English and be educated in a non-sectarian way and Vest saw no reason to change their Catholic identity and Catholic education. Also during this time, as discussed in my previous chapter, the National League for the Protection of American Institutions was underway and looked to cut funding for all religious education—regardless if they were Catholic or Protestant. This issue was being pulled in three different directions and in turn a debate of this in Congress ensued.

On July 10, 1890, Senator Henry Dawes presented a memorial “organized for the defense of public schools and American Institutions.” The memorial looked to protest against the support of funding for Indian sectarian schools, as well as the establishment of new sectarian schools. However, it wasn’t until July 24, 1890 that this clause in the

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Indian Appropriation Bill was aggressively debated. On July 24, 1890, there were many amendments introduced to the Indian Appropriation Bill that directly pertained to the issue of “Sectarian funding.” Senator Davis began this debate by demanding that $12,500 be restored “for the education and support of one hundred Indian children at the Holy Family Indian school at Blackfeet Agency, Montana.”  

From there a debate ensued about increasing the appropriation of Indian schools from $100,000 to $150,000, including building a new school at the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana. Senator George Vest strongly urged for passage of this Amendment, stating “I do not care what denomination they belong. That is not the question. If the Catholics are teaching these Indians better than any other denomination, I am for the Catholic schools. If the Presbyterians or the Baptists are doing it better, I am for the Presbyterian or the Baptist school.” However, Vest also states that the Catholics are just better at educating the Indians in Montana, and the system of education there should continue. 

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Senator Davis concurred with Vest’s statements.

Mr. Teller also agreed with Vest, stating that the Catholics are the most successful educators of Indians and public government schools are much more expensive and unnecessary. The Catholic form of education places an emphasis on “domestic learning,” skills such as farming, building houses, cattle raising, etc. They are less worried about teaching Indians on becoming “leaders of thought” than teaching them things they actually need. This is a style of education, states Teller that we should be supporting.\(^\text{142}\)

Mr. Dawes wasn’t nearly as optimistic as Vest, Teller, and Davis. Dawes pointed out that Catholic Indian schools were already getting appropriations far larger than other denominations--$356,000 to $204,000. Likewise, the current Indian Bureau was in favor of cutting all support from sectarian schools, but that debate hasn’t ensued because he believes it won’t do anyone any good. Therefore, holds Dawes, we should not enlarge appropriations to Catholic Indian schools, but keep it at the same. Senator Reagan was more blunt than Dawes and believed that all appropriations to Catholic Indian schools should cease and the job of educating the Indians should be carried out in nonsectarian public schools by the government. Senator George would concur with Reagan’s opposition of the Government appropriating any money to a specific denomination.\(^\text{143}\)

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Mr. Davis refuted Reagan’s acquisition by acknowledging that this is “a business, and business of a serious character.”

“From the beginning of time…it is only when the influence of Christianity has been brought to bear upon them that they have made the least progress towards civilization.”

“When I See any man reaching down to elevate that degraded race from the abyss of barbarism…I shall not look to see whether he wears the miter or the surplice or the simpler garb of the Protestant clergyman.”

Mr. Call, a member of the Committee on Appropriations, agreed with Senator Davis stating that “[Church Organizations] are the very life of our free government, and [our] free institutions.” Senator Jones of Arkansas presented a hybrid opinion, stating that Indians should be allowed to select whatever denomination they want and the Government should contribute to support all denominations’ cause.

In the end, numerous votes were taken on different amendments. The first was an Amendment to cut funding for certain Catholic Mission Schools. Much to the joy of those supporting Sectarian appropriations, the Amendment was defeated by a vote of 19 to 27. Additional funding for Rensselaer, Indiana, Banning, California, and Blackfeet Agency, Montana was passed. Senator Pettigrew’s amendment appropriating $45,000 for

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144 Us Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 24, 1890.” *US Governmental Collections.* University of Montana Library. Missoula, Montana.


146 Us Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 24, 1890.” *US Governmental Collections.* University of Montana Library. Missoula, Montana.

147 Us Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 24, 1890.” *US Governmental Collections.* University of Montana Library. Missoula, Montana.


See Voting Records for complete voting list.
a tribe in South Dakota was also passed.\textsuperscript{149}

The debates and work of Congress this day was a huge win for the Catholic Mission schools and supporters of Indian Sectarian education. However, these victories also lit a fuse in those that were against these appropriations. This started the first of many debates in Congress about their role in funding sectarian education, as well as their role in educating the Native Americans.

Although Congress contained a lively debate in 1890, discussion of this topic in Congress remained stagnant for the remainder of the year. In 1891, Congress again avoided this issue, but Commissioner Morgan was very public about his problems with these sectarian forms of education.\textsuperscript{150} Furthermore, many newspapers came to Commissioner Morgan’s rescue and published long articles in support of his policies.\textsuperscript{151}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\textsuperscript{149} Us Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 24, 1890.” \textit{US Governmental Collections.} University of Montana Library. Missoula, Montana.
\end{thebibliography}
However, not everyone was for secularizing Native Americans. One group that was particularly unhappy with Commissioner Morgan was the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions was pro Catholicism and for the funding of sectarian schools. The Bureau was very unhappy to hear of Commissioner Morgan’s desire to create a “nonsectarian” public form of education, accusing Morgan of “falsehood, bigotry and dishonor.” Further, the Bureau tried to pressure the Senate to vote against his confirmation, an effort that failed.

The conflict between Morgan and the Church seemed to heal a little bit in the beginning of 1892. Commissioner Morgan met with Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul to discuss the relationship between the Church’s strict Sectarian form of education and the departments desire to abolish all forms of sectarian education. In the end Archbishop Ireland and Commissioner Morgan made some amends with the Church and the New York Times reported “the trouble between Indian commissioner Morgan and the authorities of the Catholic Church has been amicably adjusted, without injury to the dignity of either party.” Further, “there has been established heartier co-operation than


ever existed before between the Catholic schools and the Government.”\textsuperscript{155}

However, cooperation between Morgan and the Church had to extend into cooperation with Congress and the Church, which didn’t happen. On March 1, 1892, the House of Representatives discussed the Indian Appropriation Bill and “The Catholic Church and the charge that it maintains a lobby at Washington to manipulate appropriations in behalf of Indian sectarian schools was the subject for three hours of discussion.”\textsuperscript{156} This was a controversy raised by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, superintendent of the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Captain Pratt criticized the Catholic Church for “paying Congressmen to attack the National Schools because they are detrimental to their parochial schools, which are given three times the amount by the Government that other denominations receive.”\textsuperscript{157}

However, Captain Pratt’s statement was not well received. Congressman Mansur (R, Missouri) demanded that because of Captain Pratt’s remarks, his annual $1,000


\textsuperscript{156} The Record Union. “Captain Pratt Punished.” \textit{The Daily Record Union}. Sacramento, California. Published March 2, 1892. Accessed: \url{http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82015104/1892-03-02/ed-1/seq-6.pdf}


\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
stipend for being in charge of the Carlisle Indian School be stricken out of the Indian appropriation bill. Oddly, Congress concurred with Mansur’s amendment and voted to abolish Pratt’s salary.158 Ultimately, appropriations for sectarian education were included in the Indian Appropriation Bill and critics of this were once again disappointed. The remainder of 1892 was relatively quiet on the issue of Sectarian appropriations, with the issue only being brought up again when the American Missionary Association declared that they are against all appropriations for sectarian Indian schools.159

In January of 1893, Thomas Morgan would resign as Commissioner of Indian Affairs to become the corresponding secretary of the National Baptist Home Missionary Society, citing that “The salary is the same as I receive now, and the labors quite as near to my heart as the present.”160 Whatever cooperation Morgan restored in January of 1892, it was certainly gone by the time he left. Senator Vest, a strong proponent of Sectarian education, called Morgan a “narrow minded bigot, who knows nothing about the Indian, and whose chief idea seems to be that all governmental powers should be used to prevent their being made Catholic.”161 Morgan did not take the statement personally, stating, “I

158 Ibid.
care nothing for Senator Vest.”¹⁶²

With the resignation of Thomas Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs was vacant and in need of a new man to take Morgan’s place. Later that spring, in an interview with the New York Times, Morgan gave his opinions on what it would take to continue his previous work. Morgan writes that the new Commissioner should be ready for work both great in volume and in stress and “should be a man thoroughly interested in the real welfare of the Indians and one who would be willing to promote those plans already in operation which tend to make the Indian self-supporting.”¹⁶³ Morgan would elaborate on the issue of Indian education, stating that “Government schools as now organized and conducted are admirable in all respects, and are doing an invaluable work. They are under the operation of the civil service rules placed there at my request. They are superintended and taught by intelligent, experienced and successful men and women, and they ought to be maintained in their efficiency. Any effort to introduce partisan politics or sectarian narrowness into the management of this Government Institution ought to be sternly rebuked by an enlightened public opinion.”¹⁶⁴

Further, Morgan praised Senator Henry Dawes for his contributions to the reform of the Indian and said that we should place the responsibility on him to lead these issues going forward. Morgan states: “He has consistently and persistently advocated the education of the Indian, and it was through his efforts that that first twenty-thousand

dollar appropriation for schools was made in 1876. God in his wisdom called a Moses for the Exodus and a Luther for the Reformation and a Lincoln for the Emancipation and a Henry L. Dawes for the citizenship of the Indian.”

On April 12, 1893, Daniel Browning, a judge from Illinois, was nominated to succeed Thomas Morgan as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Initially, the Catholic Church was very optimistic about the appointment of Commissioner Brown with Archbishop Ryan giving this statement: “The new Commissioner [Browning] has none of Gen. Morgan’s theories in this line” and “Some of Mr. Morgan’s theories and plans for the red man have been quietly dropped by his successor [Browning].”

Despite the optimism, Commissioner Browning turned out to be silent on the issue of “Sectarianism” and allowed for Congress to settle this matter. After a long period of silence, the Senate addressed the issue of sectarian funding on July 18, 1894. The discussion started with Senator Matthew Quay (R, Pennsylvania) who presented a memorial from the Patriotic Order of Sons of America stating that they are against all appropriations for Indian sectarian schools. Further, the Patriotic Order asks that a “yea-and-nay vote be taken, [as they believe] that the citizens of the country have the

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168 Senator Call did state in the Senate on July 18, 1894 that “The present Commissioner of Indian Affairs...have endeavored to prevent any increase in appropriations for what are termed denominational schools.”
right to know what Senators favor this class of education for the nation’s wards.”\textsuperscript{170}

Senator Quay asked that further considerations of this bill be postponed for two weeks so that the Patriotic Order could do further work on this issue. However, his plea was rejected.\textsuperscript{171}

Senator Thomas Platt (Republican, New York) concurred with Senator Quay and was particularly upset about the $1,095,000 appropriation for Indian schools. Senators Platt and Quay’s beliefs were supported by Jacob Gallinger (R, New Hampshire) who stated that “The Congress of the United States [should] return to the doctrines which were laid down by the fathers of the Republic when they demanded that there should be a separation of church and state in this country.”\textsuperscript{172} Further, Mr. Gallinger points out that the Catholic Church has received significantly more money than other churches, which he believes to be unfair.\textsuperscript{173} Mr. Gallinger also predicted that “There was a gathering storm in this country against appropriating money for sectarian purposes, and that storm would break before long on the people and the Congress of the United States.”\textsuperscript{174} Senator Call also agreed that governmental schools should eventually pass sectarian schools, but


proclaimed much less urgency for this to occur.\textsuperscript{175}

In the end of the long discussion, there was an agreement to continue appropriations for Indian Sectarian schools, as well as pass other amendments to further advance these schools.\textsuperscript{176} In November, major changes occurred when the Secretary of the Interior Department (of which the Bureau of Indian Affairs is a part) stated that while the Department is against the appropriation of money for sectarian institutions, “it would be better not to do away with them abruptly or altogether.”\textsuperscript{177} Rather, writes the Department, the government should decrease appropriations 20% each year, until appropriations cease all together. This way the sectarian institutions can have time to make necessary changes to continue operations free from the Government.\textsuperscript{178}

The Indian Commission immediately began 1895 by trying to convince Congress to make the Departments’ plan a law. The Commission presented to Congress resolutions that “set forth the duty of the government to furnish the Indian children of school age with adequate educational facilities.”\textsuperscript{179} Further, the resolutions proclaimed that “the Government should not throw the burden of this work on the churches through their missionary schools and the churches should not attempt to shoulder this responsibility by

\textsuperscript{175} Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 18, 1894.” \textit{US Congressional Record.} University of Montana Governmental Collections. Missoula, Montana.


\textsuperscript{176} Congressional Record. “Congressional Record – Senate, July 18, 1894.” \textit{US Congressional Record.} University of Montana Governmental Collections. Missoula, Montana.


accepting subsidies from the government to this end.” Therefore, “all remaining subsidies should be withdrawn.” Representative Linton was impressed with the Indian Commission’s boldness and immediately presented to Congress a Constitutional Amendment that would prohibit all funding for sectarian schools. The Amendment he was quoting was the National League for the Protection of American Institutions’ proposed 19th Amendment.

The Departments plan was debated in Congress rather quickly. On February 21, 1895, the Senate met once again to discuss the legitimacy of appropriating money for Indian Sectarian schools. The controversy began with Senator Cockrell, chair of the Appropriations Committee, proclaiming that it is the Department of Interiors plan to “[take] out of the bill everything that is Catholic and everything that is Protestant.” In other words, church and state ought to be completely separate. Mr. Cockrell also struck up controversy by writing out appropriations for Indian Sectarian schools in Philadelphia and Hampton, arguing that they are Protestant and that we shouldn’t have anything to do with them. However, Mr. Cockrell’s amendment to cut appropriations for these schools was defeated by a vote of 21-32.

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From there, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (Republican, Massachusetts) presented an amendment that would gracefully and gradually abolish all funds from sectarian schools. However, Lodge’s Amendment didn’t come to a vote that day, and was set aside for further consideration. However, Lodge’s Amendment was fully considered by the Senate the very next day, February 22, 1895. A vote was taken “on the amendment of the appropriation committee striking out the House provision that the secretary of the Interior should reduce the expenditures 20 per cent annually so that at the end of five years the expenditure for sectarian Indian schools shall be at an end.” The result was to the satisfaction of all those who aggressively labored to completely separate church and state,


and the Amendment was passed 31-23. Immediately, Senator Pettigrew offered an Amendment that would not abolish funding for Sectarian schools, but his amendment was defeated 13-36.

Congress went silent on the issue of “Sectarianism” until exactly a year later when they convened to discuss the annual appropriations for Indians. This was an opportune time for those in support of sectarian education to reverse the cut that was put into law the year before. However, supporters of this measure would be disappointed again in 1896.

In a fight led by Representative Linton, those against appropriations for Sectarian schools were passionate and uncompromising. In a speech to the House, Linton proclaims:

“Mr. Chairman, a little less than two years ago from this same place I said that it was time to call a halt in the expenditure of the Nation's money toward any sectarian institution. Since then a great change has taken place in this class of legislation. No longer do you see the schools of St. Boniface, the Holy Family,


188 Ibid.

or St. Ignatius specifically provided for by Congress, and even the so called charities of the District of Columbia under sectarian control and for which our whole people have been taxed, thereby becoming unwilling contributors to a taxation without representation, have been swept from legislative bills. This has been brought about by an outraged, indignant public sentiment created by the knowledge that Congress has for years, contrary to public policy, contrary to the principles of good government, and in direct contravention of the Constitution, appropriated vast sums of money that have been devoted to sectarian purposes. Every member upon the floor at this moment is aware of the fact that the pending bill carries in round numbers a quarter of a million dollars, every penny of which will go into the coffers of one church to be used for the education of 4,000 children in schools where creed, and one creed only, is taught. I will not, and never have attacked or abused any religion or creed, and will endeavor to refrain, in my own remarks, from even mentioning the name of any sect, but I believe this whole religious controversy should be forever eliminated from the arena of politics, and the only way to bring it about is to absolutely divorce church and state, as intended by the founders of our Government, and stop here and now pandering to any church influence or demand by ceasing at once making this class of appropriations.”

Despite Linton’s fierce opposition, there were proponents of restoring all aid to Sectarian schools. Senator Gamble (Republican, South Dakota), Senator Eddy (Minnesota) and Senator Walsh (Dem, New York) to name a few, were all senators that deeply sympathized with Catholic Missions and the work they were doing. Additionally, they charged Representative Linton for mingling with the American Protective Association (APA)—a secret anti-Catholic group that was prominent at this time. However, Mr. Linton denied this charge.

After a long discussion in the House and Senate, on April 20, 1896, Senator Cockrell’s amendment was agreed to: “And it is hereby declared to be the settled policy

\footnote{Congressional Record. “House – February 24, 1894.” \textit{Congressional Record}. University of Montana Governmental Collections. Missoula, Montana.}
of the government to make no appropriations whatever for the education of Indian children in any sectarian school, just as soon as it is possible for provision to be made for their education otherwise, and the secretary of the Interior is hereby directed to make such provision the earliest practical day, not later than July 1, 1898." In other words, Cockrell’s amendment would give sectarian schools two more years of appropriations, rather than an immediate abandonment.

Cockrell’s Amendment was a compromise to the original policy of the Government making it “the settled policy of the Government to make no appropriations whatever for the education of Indian children any sectarian school.” With the help from Senators Gray and Pettigrew the Amendment passed 38-24 with a surprising increase in the appropriation from $1,135,000 to $1,335,000. However, as noted, it was with the provision that all appropriations would cease after 1898. This caused some

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tension amongst members in the Senate and Senator Lodge led an effort to recede
Cockrell’s Amendment, but this was defeated 17 to 31.196

For the remainder of 1896, Congress remained quiet on this issue and Cockrell’s
Amendment was not challenged again after Lodge’s attempt in June. Congress would
bring up the issue again the next year—February 1897—when the Indian Appropriation
bill was up for consideration. The Sectarian debate was revived when Senator Lodge
“asserted that the Senate committee had reported an amendment reversing the policy of
sectarian schools.”197 The Amendment, endorsed by Senator Pettigrew reads: “Provided,
that the secretary of the Interior may make contracts with Contract Schools, appropriating
as near as may be the amounts so contracted for, among schools of various
denominations for the education of Indian pupils during the fiscal year 1898, but shall
only make such contracts at places where non-sectarian school cannot be provided for
such Indian children, and to not ascending forty percent of the amounts used for the fiscal
year 1895.” Mr. Lodge vehemently opposed the amendment stating that this

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amendment would reverse the work already done.\textsuperscript{199}

Senator Teller, although opposed to sectarian schools, supported the amendment because it would be better to continue appropriations for a year or two and not have to worry about where to educate the Indians.\textsuperscript{200} Senators Pettigrew and Gallinger concurred with Teller.\textsuperscript{201} The next day, February 22, 1897, amendments were passed that found favor in supporters of Indian Sectarian schools. By a vote of 51-8, the government was allowed to make temporary contracts with sectarian schools that have no public schools available. Additionally, by a vote of 28-22, an amendment endorsed by Senator Gallinger allowed for appropriations with sectarian schools to extend until June 30, 1898.\textsuperscript{202} Further, this was declared “to be the settled policy of government hereafter to make no appropriations whatever for the support of sectarian schools.”\textsuperscript{203}

The Appropriation Bill, however, received attention from sectarian supporter


Senator Vest. Vest criticized the abolition of sectarian schools and spoke in favor of the Catholic Mission schools and the Jesuit way of education.\textsuperscript{204} However, Vests’ complaints were not answered and it became the policy of the Government that “the Secretary of the Interior may make contracts with contract schools apportioning as near as the amounts contracted for among schools of various denominations for the education of Indian pupils during the fiscal year of 1898, but shall only make such contracts at such places where nonsectarian schools cannot be provided for such Indian children, and to an amount not exceeding 40 percent of the amount so used for the fiscal year 1895.”\textsuperscript{205}

1898 was a year in which Congress literally went silent on the issue of “Sectarianism.” The silence finally cracked in December when Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul and Bishop O’Gorman of South Dakota asked William Jones, Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Commissioner Browning resigned in 1897)\textsuperscript{206} to reconsider the issue of Indian sectarian schools.\textsuperscript{207} However, the Bishops’ plea returned no dialogue in Congress


\textsuperscript{207} The Omaha daily Bee. “In Favor of Sectarian Schools.” \textit{The Omaha Daily Bee}. Omaha, Nebraska. Published December 13, 1898. Accessed: \url{http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn99021999/1898-12-13/ed-1/seq-1.pdf}


and there was no further discussion on appropriations. Rather, the government portioned out 20 percent of the appropriation, as agreed upon the previous year.

In 1899, the last appropriation was given to Indian Sectarian schools. The amount of the amendment was reduced to 15 percent of the amount used in 1895 and Congress reports “this shall be the final appropriation for sectarian schools.” The next year, 1900, “The Indian appropriation bill as it passed the house all government aid for Catholic and all other sectarian Indian schools will end July 1 of this year.”

Following 1900, the issue of “Sectarianism” was hardly brought up again. After twenty plus years of hard work, the US entered into a new era of the relationship between Church and State. However, this wasn’t without consequence. It’s important to consider how defunding all Indian Sectarian schools actually affected the missions and the communities they were apart of. Montana is the perfect case study for this and will be explored in the next chapter.

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Thomas Nast, a famous political cartoonist, described Roman Catholic Bishops as “crocodiles invading America's shore to devour the nation's schoolchildren—white,
black, American Indian, and Chinese.”

This cartoon titled “The Shadow in Our Schools” shows the common fear of foreign powers (Roman Catholicism and the Pope) corrupting the minds of school kids and spreading “un-American ideals.”


212 Unknown Author. Unknown Publisher and Date. Accessed: http://m-francis.livejournal.com/53211.html
Thomas J Morgan – Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1889-1893.\textsuperscript{213}

\textsuperscript{213} Photo Accessed: http://warbetweenthestates.com/517/PictPage/3924058862.html
James Blaine (Republican, Maine). Blaine served as Speaker of the House, as a US Senator, and as the 28th and 31st Secretary of State. He is well known for the Blaine Amendment in 1875. This Amendment was Congresses first attempt at amending the Federal Constitution to prohibit state funding for all religious schools. The Amendment failed to be ratified, and wouldn’t be taken up again until the National League for the Protection of American Institutions a decade and a half later.
George Graham Vest (Democrat, Missouri). Vest served in the US Senate from 1879 until 1903. Vest was a friend to Catholic Indian Education. A Protestant, he considered the mission schools to be far superior to public methods of education (Picture Accessed from Missouri Governmental website).
Chapter Four: The Rise and Fall of Missionary Schools in Montana - A Case Study

My previous two chapters explored the decision in Congress to abolish sectarian funding and the interest group—The National League for the Protection of American Institutions—and the political thought that led to this decision. This decision in Congress greatly affected the Catholic Missions in Montana and the work they were doing in providing schools for Native Americans. Montana is a great case to study how Congress’s decision impacted a community. First, the first traditional modes of education in Montana—schools as we see them today—were established on Catholic Missions in Montana. Second, these schools were heavily dependent on private donations and government funding. Third, Montana became a state in 1889 and following the abolition of sectarian funding in Congress, Montana could have easily bailed the Mission schools out and provided funding for their operations. However, and thanks to a lot of the influence that the NLPAI had on State Constitutions, Montana’s State Constitution in 1889 strictly forbade funding for religious purposes—and mission schools were not immune to this clause.

What we have here is an opportunity to study Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) on a local, small scale level. PET will be covered in depth in the final chapter.

St. Ignatius

In the winter of 1844, Fathers Peter De Vos, S.J., and Adrian Hoecken, S.J., established the original St. Ignatius Mission on the Clark Fork River in Northeastern
Washington. By 1849, the mission looked prosperous and contained a church, two wooden houses, a barn, and a stable. Despite what looked promising, poor conditions and famine forced Father Hoecken and De Vos to move the Mission to a new location.

On September 24, 1854, Fathers Adrian Hoecken and J Menetery moved the St. Ignatius Mission to what is now the Jocko Reservation. Upon arriving, Father Hoecken was amazed by its beauty:

“... I arrived at the place designated on the 24th of September and found it such as it had been represented—a beautiful region, evidently fertile, uniting a useful as well as pleasing variety of woodland and prairie, lake and river—the whole crowned in the distance by the white summit of the mountains, and sufficiently rich withal in fish and game. I shall never forget the emotion of hope and fear that filled my heart, when for the first time I celebrated Mass in this lovely spot, in the open air, in the presence of a numerous band of Kalispels, who looked up to me, under God, for their temporal and spiritual welfare in this new home.”

Father Hoecken, filled with a fire and zeal for educating the young Native Americans sought to open a school for Indian boys. Later that year, Governor Isaac Stevens arrived to negotiate treaties with the Indians. Father Hoecken stood on the council and signed the Hellgate Treaty on July 16, 1855. This treaty set the Flathead reservation apart for the exclusive occupancy of “the confederated tribes of Flatheads,

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215 Woodstock Letters.
217 Woodstock Letter, Vol 9, 98.
Pend d’Oreilles and Kootenais.” Also noted was that the Flatheads were allowed to remain on their traditional lands so long as the government did not require them to move to Jocko. However, it is articles four and five that directly relate to the school at St. Ignatius. In article four, the United States “agreed to pay to the said Confederated tribes the sum of $120,000.” All of this money “shall be applied to the use and benefit of the said Indians.” Article five requires a closer look and reads in part:

“The United States further agree to establish at suitable points within said reservation within one year after the ratification hereof, and agriculture and industrial school, erecting the necessary building, keeping the same in repair, and providing it with furniture, books and stationary, to be located the agency, and to be free to the children of the said tribes, and to employ a suitable instructor or instructors.”

By these stipulations, the mission was to have school teachers and carpenters, as well as brothers and priests overseeing the day-to-day work. In turn, the government was to pay the mission $120,000, and chiefs would receive annual salaries of $500, as well as a comfortable home. The next year, 1856, Father Hoecken opened up a school for boys. However, the stipulations promised to them by the treaty were never kept. In a letter to Father De Smet, Father Hoecken writes: “We have done and shall continue to do

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all in our power for the Government Officers...Still, our poor Mission has never received a farthing from the Government.”

Despite Father Hoecken’s zeal for educating and evangelizing the young Native Americans, financial burdens became too great and the school wouldn’t make it a year. The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 was a great lie to the Indians. It would take eight years, a letter to a convent, and four sisters for a school to flourish at the St. Ignatius Mission.

In 1863, Father De Smet saw the need for a school at the St. Ignatius Mission. In a letter to the Mother Superior of the Convent of the Sisters of Charity of Providence in Fort Vancouver, Desmet requested three or four sisters to join the St. Ignatius mission. De Smet assured the mother superior that “they would decide upon the method of education and the work to embrace.” That same year, De Smet would make a personal appeal to the Mother Superior in Vancouver. De Smet’s prayers and petitions were answered, and in 1864, four courageous sisters would make a journey to St. Ignatius and become the first nuns in Montana, as well as the founders of Indian education.

This little colony of sisters included Sister Mary of the Infant Jesus, Sister Mary Edward, Sister Paul Miki and Sister Remi. Traveling by horseback across the rugged mountains, the journey was filled with laughter, mass, and prayer. Finally, on October 17th, 1864, the sisters arrived at St. Ignatius with their hearts enkindling a fire for evangelizing and educating the young Native Americans. Their mission, however, would not come without trials. Father Giorda remarked to the sisters, “The trials and

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228 Flaherty, Cornelia. “Go With Haste into the Mountains.” Pp. 12.
You have thus far encountered and endured are not to be compared with those that await you.”

The sisters wasted no time when they arrived at St. Ignatius. Although a permanent school building was still under construction, the sisters taught the Native Americans how to sweep, clean, wash, scrub, and set things in order. These early “lessons” laid the foundations for functional living.

By Christmas of that year, the sisters were settling well into their roles at St. Ignatius. According to a newspaper article from the Montana Post in Virginia City, the school would be open the following spring, 1865. Parents were “anxious to have their female children brought up in the sound moral principles, to a proper training of the mind, and to laborious habits.”

The article reported that the sisters would teach academic disciplines such as writing, grammar, composition, arithmetic, history, and geography. Additionally, the sisters would teach sewing, embroidery, knitting, cooking, washing, all that is understood under the word of “housewifery.” It was also made clear that all students would participate in religious exercises. However, this service would not be free of charge. Students were required to pay a $5 entrance fee, $25 board per month, and $5 for washing and ironing.

Boys were also included in the mix. Although a formal boarding school for boys had not been established at this time, a day school was eventually developed. For the

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boys there was a carpenter and blacksmith shop, gardens, barns, and fields where they learned manual arts while the more intellectual pursuits were kept at a minimum. The schools proved to be a huge success. A government official inspecting the school greatly admired the work of a young Indian girl. Asking the girl to write him a letter, he was delighted with the fluency and ease of her work. The inspector would send this letter with his official report to Washington, DC.

Despite the academic success of the young Native Americans, the financial toll of the school became too great to bear alone. Because government assistance was non-existent at the time, the sisters had to literally beg for money. Accompanied by Father Giorda, two sisters traveled to wealthy mining camps, such as Alder Gulch and Last Chance Gulch. Seeing the good work and nature of these men and women, the miners contributed generously, and the school could progress. This begging for funds would progress for several years.

Although a single subsidy of $1,800 was received from the federal government in 1864, it wasn’t until 1874 that the school finally received a break from the government. The school became a contract school and was given a yearly $2,100 subsidy for that year and three years thereafter. In 1878, the subsidy was raised to $4,000 -- $40 per child, up to 100 children, which the mission easily filled. The decade of 1880-1890 is one of growth and prosperity. Peter Ronan, a United States Indian agent was especially impressed with the children's spiritual and academic growth. In an excerpt dated August

http://www.jstor.org/action/doBasicSearch?Query=Ignatius+Mission+MOntana&acc=on&wc=on&fc=off

235 Bischoff, William., "Jesuits in Old Oregon." Pp 75-76.
20, 1880, he writes, “The Indian church at the mission is next to the largest church edifice in Montana, and on Sundays and feast days is hardly capable of holding the throng of Indian worshippers.”239 “The boarding school for boys and girls is carried on in separate buildings, and the progression of the youths is wonderful. A large number of the children can read and write the English language understandingly...”240

Further praise from the government continued during this time. In a letter dated December 26, 1881, from Fr. Luigi M. Folchi to Fr. Piccirillo, Folchi says, “An inspector of Indian affairs (a man of no religion)...has visited many Indian schools, but has never seen one to equal that of our Mission in the improvement of the scholars.”241 The year 1883 began with peril for the mission. In an inspection report dated July 10, 1883, B. Benedict, US Indian Inspector, writes, “the mission as managed is a money making institution. They have seven hundred cattle and three hundred horses upon the reservation, and their annual sales amount to much more than the expense of running the school. My opinion is that a school should be built for these people at or near the Agency and be run free from sectarianism.”242 However, Benedict’s views were not held by the masses. In a letter on the same day by Senator George Graham Vest, St. Louis, MO, he writes “I examined into this matter fully, and Mr. B’s recommendation of a Non sectarian school is all stuff and nonsense.”243

Despite Senator Vest’s recommendations, a back-and-forth battle between Indian

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inspectors occurred for much of 1883. For the first time, the quality of the schools were in question. C.H. Howard noted, “It is a mistake to say as stated by the late Senatorial delegation that the recitations ‘are equal to those of the white children in the States of the same age.’”244 Despite Howard’s criticisms, he does recommend that the reservation should increase the number of scholars, thereby increasing support by the government.245

With the struggles of 1883 behind them, 1884 proved to more optimistic. U.S. Indian Inspector Henry Ward was impressed with the construction of new buildings. He notes that “the instruction is thorough and effective and the discipline is good.”246 Additionally, the government began funding more pupils, going from 40 to 75.247 1885-1888 proved to be “more of the same” as the earlier parts of that decade. Inspection reports remained both positive and negative, filled with praise and criticism.

1890 through 1896 were seen as the “Golden Years” for the mission. With the arrival of the Ursuline nuns in 1889, a new kindergarten was built for the children. At that time, there were 320 children in the St. Ignatius schools; 120 boys in the Jesuit school, 130 in the Providence Sisters’ school, and 70 children in the Ursulines kindergarten.248 Additionally, a more liberal funding policy was adopted. Going from a flat rate of $4,000 per year, the government spent $12.50 per pupil and increased the number of contract

pupils to three hundred.\textsuperscript{249}

A significant blow hit the St. Ignatius schools in 1896, when Congress declared that all further assistance to the Indian sectarian schools would stop. Although an amendment was added to continue funding through 1901, funding was cut by twenty percent each year until it ceased.\textsuperscript{250} Adding insult to injury, a male pupil trying to get out of class, lit a mattress on fire and burned down the dormitory and school. Although classes were able to continue uninterrupted in another building, the event led to even more financial and emotional stress.\textsuperscript{251} Going back to old roots, Father Cataldo started a begging tour through the eastern United States, beginning in October, 1900:

“It was a pitiful sight to see the aged Father Cataldo, S.J., recently collecting in the city of Washington that he might help to save the magnificent schools of the Jesuit missions from utter ruin. After toiling for nearly forty years among the tribes of the Northwest and sustaining untold dangers and sufferings, it would seem that he and others of his noble type might have been spared, by a generous Catholic public, the fatigue and humiliation of begging from door to door.”\textsuperscript{252}

Father Cataldo managed to collect $3,000, but that was not enough.\textsuperscript{253} In addition to Cataldo’s efforts, the American Bishops asked the catholic population of the United States to help the missions and Indian schools. However, like Cataldo, the sum of these gatherings would be insufficient.\textsuperscript{254} In the next twenty years, two more fires would cripple the already struggling mission schools. On December 19, 1919 the establishment

\textsuperscript{249} Woodstock Letters. Vol 58, 282..
\textsuperscript{250} Woodstock Letters. Vol 58, 282.
\textsuperscript{254} Letter to Reverend Father Provincial, April, 1901. Accessed: \url{http://www.jstor.org/stable/40169164}
of the Sisters of Providence was lost by fire and forty-five years of fruitful labor was
gone in just a few hours.\textsuperscript{255} To the Jesuits’ surprise, the sisters decided not to rebuild, but
to devote their efforts to the hospital work in which they were already engaged.\textsuperscript{256} Thus, the responsibilities of educating the Indians went solely to the Ursuline order.

In 1920, Mother Perpetua Egan, superior at St. Ignatius, began a $10,000
renovation project on the buildings. However, these improvements would go up in
smoke. On February 19, 1922, the Ursuline buildings burned to the ground, destroying
everything and taking the life of Sister St. John.\textsuperscript{257}

Despite such significant setbacks, the sisters decided to rebuild. With the cost
estimated between $80,000 and $100,000, appeals for money went out in all directions.
By 1924, a new boarding school was open, and was considered one of the finest of its
kind in Montana.\textsuperscript{258} However, with the increase of day schools and the relocation of the
native people, the boarding school was no longer necessary, and in 1962, the boarding
school was changed to a day school. In 1972, the day school was no longer needed; the
school closed for good, and the land was returned to the natives.\textsuperscript{259}

**St. Peter’s Mission**

The third Jesuit mission in Montana was St. Peter’s among the Blackfoot tribe. In
1859, Father Hoecken and Brother Magri were assigned to follow these Indians and find
a suitable spot to build the mission.\textsuperscript{260} That next year, 1860, two cabins were erected on

\textsuperscript{256} Mahoney, Irene. “Lady Blackrobes.” Pp. 300.
\textsuperscript{257} “Nuns Bones Found in Montana Debris.” \url{http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85058393/1922-02-21/ed-1/seq-4.pdf}.
\textsuperscript{258} Mahoney, Irene. “Lady Blackrobes.” Pp. 303.
\textsuperscript{259} Mahoney, Irene. “Lady Blackrobes.” Pp. 303..
the banks of Sun River, close to the future Fort Shaw. Father C. Imoda joined Hoecken and Magri and taught the rudiments of Christianity to a few Indian children. However, for reasons unknown, this sight proved unsatisfactory, and Father Nicholas Congiato ordered the suspension of further operations.

The following year, 1861, Fathers Giorda and C. Imoda, with Brother Francis De Kock were instructed to look for a suitable location for a permanent mission. On February 14, 1862, a new mission was born six miles above the mouth of the Sun River and was named “St. Peter.”

At about the same time the mission opened, the “gold rush” to Montana began. The greatest number of searchers were attracted to Sun River, but many drifted to the Missouri, near the mission. This angered the Indians, and Guerilla warfare between the Indians and the whites was a daily affair. In addition to the gold rush conflict, 1862-1865 measured harsh winters and dry summers. Worse, however, were the government’s broken promises. In 1855 (the same year that the Hellgate Treaty was signed), the Blackfeet Treaty of Fort Benton was signed. Articles IX and X promised agricultural goods to the mission. When St. Peter’s was established, they awaited the ploughs, cattle, harness, seed, and so forth, promised in their treaties. However, according to Father Kupans: “An abundance had been promised again and again, but nothing had been

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In April 27, 1866, the mission closed temporarily after the Blackfeet Indians killed two white men.\textsuperscript{268} The Jesuits packed their belongings and unrest continued for four years, escalating during the 1869-1879 Piegan war.\textsuperscript{269} Between 1866 and 1874, the mission was visited temporarily by the Jesuit fathers, but the mission did not officially open until 1874.\textsuperscript{270} The man in charge this time was Father C. Imoda, with companions Brother F. De Kock and Brother L.D’ Agostino.\textsuperscript{271} However, work on the mission was difficult because of President Grant’s Peace Policy of 1870. This policy divided Indian territories into different religious denominations. The Blackfeet belonged to the Methodists, and the Jesuits were not included in this mix.\textsuperscript{272} Thus, “the Indians were now placed on a reservation some sixty miles away from the Mission.”\textsuperscript{273} Nevertheless, work carried on.

In 1879, a school for boys was built. However, it wasn’t until 1884 that education really took off. At the request of Bishop Brondel, Mother Amadeus, two postulants, Sisters Martha Geehan and Mary Magdalen Golden, arrived at the mission to open a school for girls.\textsuperscript{274} During 1884-1885, the sisters worked hard to continue building and furnishing the schools. By 1886, the girls’ school was run by the Ursuline Sisters while

\textsuperscript{268} Cornelia, Flaherty. “Go With Haste into the Mountains.” Pp. 15.
\textsuperscript{269} Cornelia, Flaherty. “Go With Haste into the Mountains.” Pp. 15. 16.
\textsuperscript{270} Bischoff, William. ”Jesuits in Old Oregon.” Pp.90.
\textsuperscript{271} Indian and White in the Northwest. Pp. 214.
\textsuperscript{272} Flaherty, Cornelia. ”Go With Haste Into the Mountains.” Pp.16.
\textsuperscript{273} Palladino, Laurence. ”Indian and White in the Northwest.” Pp. 217.
\textsuperscript{274} Schrems, Suzanne. ”Uncommon Women, Unmarked Trails.” 49.
the boys’ school was run by the Jesuits. The mission of the girls’ school was to “afford the young girls every advantage for obtaining a solid and useful education.” Tuition was free, and board cost $10 per month. The mission of the boys school was to “afford means of a solid, moral, mental, and physical education.” Like the girls school, tuition was free, and board cost $10 per month.

By the end of 1886, great strides toward educating the Native Americans were made. Ninety pupils were educated that year, and the mission contained four boarding schools--two for the white children and two for the Indians. The next decade marked years of progress for the mission. Funds were tight, but the Sisters and Fathers made due. However, the schools would face a crisis in the summer of 1896.

As discussed before, the Indian Appropriation Act of 1896 forbid funding for educating indians in sectarian schools. Thus, St. Peter’s would receive no governmental support starting in June of 1896. The Jesuits in general were not as optimistic about the mission. Father Francis Andreis, superior of St Peter’s, writes: “This is a dreadful place in every regard. Debts have accumulated to a frightful amount, winds blowing constantly with an intense fury, and no neighborhood.”

By the end of 1896, the Jesuits decided to abandon the mission, close the boys’ schools, and leave all the buildings and responsibilities to the Ursuline order. Two

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277 Woodstock Letters .319.
278 Mahoney, Irene. “Lady Blackrobes.” 165.
years later, 1898, the Jesuits withdrew from the mission for good.281 The schools continued, but struggled. A significant blow hit the mission when, on January 17, 1908, the main stone building burned to the ground.282 According to a report in the River Press, the fire was probably caused by a defective flue, and the loss was estimated at $25,000.283

With support from Bishop Lenihan, the sisters continued their work at St. Peter’s but moved their activities to Great Falls. A new elaborate building was built, with costs estimating between $100,000 and $150,000.284 The construction of the buildings was oddly fast, and on August 15, 1912, the school was dedicated with the pontifical High Mass. With a new name—Mount Angela Ursuline Academy—the doors were opened to educate the first pupils.285 They say fire strikes twice, and this was the case for the St Peter’s Mission. At 2:30 AM on November 15, 1918, the school building burned to the ground.286 St Peter’s Mission closed for good and the students transferred to other mission schools.287 With the closing of St. Peter’s Mission, another era of Indian education came to a close.

St Paul’s Mission

Located in the Little Rockies, on the reservation of the Gros Ventres and

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Assiniboines, lies the St. Paul Mission. In 1885, Father Cataldo requested permission from the government to start a new mission, close to St. Peter’s. The government agreed and St. Paul’s Mission is considered to be an “offspring” of St. Peter’s. Father Frederick Eberschweiler, a priest at St. Peter’s Mission was put in charge and responsible for overseeing the mission and its construction. However, it was decided that spring that the original site lacked the basic commodities to run a mission and Father Eberschweiler wanted the mission moved to the Little Rockies, where it is located today. The request to move was petitioned to President Grover Cleveland, and after finding much support from Senator George Graham Vest, the request was granted. However, the tribes had to succeed any land they considered theirs by tradition, and accept “some 40,000 square miles adjacent to the little Rockies. The negotiations were agreed upon and the mission moved to its present location. On September 15, 1886, construction of a school, convent, and main building began and concluded in the spring of 1887.

During the summer of 1887, arrangements were made for the school to be recognized by the government as a “contract school.” This means that the government would allot $100 per child, per year. Instruction wise, the students were taught a “plain English education going hand in hand with varied manual exercises.”

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290 Flaherty, Cornelia. “Go With Haste Into the Mountains.” Pp. 44.
When the school opened in the fall of 1887, sisters Martha Gahan and Francis Seibert from the Ursuline order were assigned to run the girls’ school. The first day of school was September 15, 1887, and the sisters, with great zeal, welcomed twenty Indian pupils. The mission, however, was geographically isolated and the sisters’ struggled to adjust to this reality. Nevertheless, work continued and the Indian children were afforded an education in reading, writing, arithmetic, catechism, and other practical skills.

On October 1, 1888, Sister Santa Clara from St. Peter’s joined sisters Martha Gahan and Francis Seibert to help with educating the Indians, which had grown from 20 to 49. By 1889, the mission added three more pupils and despite the mission’s geographical isolation, the mission was remarkably successful. The mission continued to flourish, and by 1894, there were 160 Indian children that attended school. The record number of pupils in attendance would reach two hundred.

Despite such significant progress, the mission was setback in 1900 when the government stopped providing subsidies. Nevertheless, the school could continue with funds from the Catholic Indian Bureau and private donations. Additionally, the mission was not as in dire need, as they “escaped many of the problems that dogged the other missions.”

301 Jesuits in Old Oregon., 109.
303 Flaherty, Cornelia. "Go with Haste into the Mountains." Pp. 44.
For the next few decades, the mission continued but struggled immensely. Disaster struck on November 5, 1931 when a fire started in the kitchen destroyed the refectories, the girls’ dormitory, and the stone church. There was very little was saved from the fire, and everything in the girls’ school was lost. Following the fire, plans were made to rebuild, but it would the Sisters of St. Francis that would continue work on the mission. Five years later, 1936, the Ursuline sisters permanently left the mission.

The School Sisters of St. Francis oversaw all activities at the mission from 1936-1985. After the Sisters dedicated nearly five decades to the mission, Jesuit priests, Jesuit volunteers, and Dominican Sisters staffed the school and oversaw the operations. Despite the St. Paul’s geographical isolation, the school is still up and running in Hays, Montana (a city within the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation). St Paul’s was one of the very few mission schools to continue its operations into the present day.

St. Labre’s Mission

The St. Labre’s Mission is located seventy-five miles south of Miles City on the banks of the Tongue River and serves the Cheyenne Indians. Until 1878, brutal wars between the Indians and white settlers plagued Montana. The Northern Cheyennes struggled to cope with their losses and Bishop Brondel demanded a mission to be established to evangelize and reach out to these struggling Indians.

Bishop Brondel sent out a request to the Ursuline Sisters to assist the Jesuits and open a new school for the children. Mother Amadeus accepted the offer and escorted

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Sisters Heart, Ignatius, and Angela to the mission in March, 1884. The journey took four days of brutal travel, but the sisters and their belongings arrived safely on April 2, 1884. The mission contained a log cabin “divided into three compartments: a Sisters’ residence, a priest’s residence, and a schoolroom.”

The beginning years of the mission were fraught with difficulty. The sisters largely ran the mission on their alone, as Fr. Peter Barcelo was forced to leave due to health problems. Also, local white settlers largely hated the Indians and incited violence against them. A local supporter of the mission, George Yoakum, was kidnapped by four masked cowboys, tied to a tree and beaten, and left with a warning that said: “leave the mission, stop helping the Indians, or the next time would be his last.” Nevertheless, work carried on and that next year, 1885, Bishop Brondel was able to raise enough money to build a new school.

The beginning of educating the children was challenging, as nearly all of the students were illiterate. Additionally, the parents of the children expected their children to be fed twice a day, and the sisters struggled financially to keep everything afloat. By February of 1886, it was clear that the mission had to receive financial assistance from the government to stay alive. Their prayers were answered, and on March 24, 1886, the

There is some dispute about the precise day the sisters arrived. Some scholars such as Lawrence Small, author of “Religion in Montana” say the sisters arrived April 1, not April 2nd. Nevertheless, the sources do not stray from being one-two days apart.
311 Flaherty, Cornelia. “Go With Haste Into the Mountains.” Pp. 42
312 Flaherty, Cornelia. “Go With Haste Into the Mountains.” Pp. 42.
government contract was granted and the mission was given $25 dollars per quarter, per child, for thirty children.  

Despite such prosperous conditions, the mission was hit by a religious revival known as the “Ghost Dance.” The Cheyennes believed that by honoring this dance, the buffalo would return and the white settlers would leave. This philosophy caused the Indians to withdraw from the mission and from all white contact. Over the next four years, 1888-1892, the mission was forced to close for two brief periods of time.  

The years between 1892 and 1932 are confusing and wrought with difficulty. Perhaps no mission was as humiliated by the government than the Cheyennes. The money promised to them by contract from the government was often late or undelivered. The disputes between the white settlers and Indians resulted in violence and injustice towards the Indians. Last, with such grave problems, by 1897, the school closed. However, with the Indian Appropriation Bill cutting all financial aid to sectarian schools, the school would have already been heading down that way. 

On August 10, 1897, the Jesuit fathers left the mission for good. As they departed, Father Van der Velden told the sisters, “Sisters, God bless you for your heroic devotion and your many examples of virtue. I leave Our Lord with you, may He be your consolation.” 

After the departure of the Jesuits, Diocesan priests administered to the mission. In 1917, fire destroyed the mission, but was later rebuilt. In 1932, the Ursuline Sisters withdrew from the mission and was replaced by the School Sisters of St. 

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316 Mahoney, Irene. "Lady Blackrobes." Pp 51.  
317 Flaherty, Cornelia. “Go With Haste into the Mountains.”, 43.  
318 Schoenberg, Wilfrid. "Jesuits in Montana." Pp. 60
Francis.  

From 1928-1938, St. Labre’s established a high school, but closed for almost a decade following the school year of 1938. The school was re opened in 1947 and remains in operation today. In 2001, Catholic elementary schools were established at St. Charles on the Crow Reservation and became branch campuses of St. Labre.  

There are other mission schools in Montana affected by the 1896 Appropriation—Holy Family Mission, St. Francis Xavier’s Mission, St. Charles Mission, and St. John Berchmann’s Mission. However, there stories are generally the same as the missions written about here and it would be superfluous to include the details of their demise.

**Chapter Five: Punctuated Equilibrium Theory and Test**

Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) is a political science theory developed by Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones in their influential study “Agendas and Instability in American Politics (1993).” Baumgartner and Jones look at policy evolution and come up with a simple conclusion: public policy enjoys great lengths of time with little to no change, but then experience short times of intense change. As Scott Robinson and Flounsay Caver put it, PET operates under the notion that “policy change proceeds

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through a punctuated equilibrium process rather than a smooth, evolutionary process.”

Baumgartner and Jones use this theory to understand policy change in major, broad areas: public health/smoking, federalism, and nuclear power to name a few. However, Baumgartner and Jones did not test PET on local issues, such as the closing of Missionary Schools in Montana. I would argue, however, that my thesis provides substantial evidence to confirm Baumgartner and Jones’ theory of PET.

**PET Test**

Punctuated Equilibrium Theory starts with a major issue. In this case, I will use the question of whether or not it is constitutional to support mission schools with federal aid. Through my analysis of the history of church and state in America, as well as the fact that Indian Mission schools were receiving aid from the Federal Government, it is obvious that the consensus before 1896 was that it was acceptable to fund some forms of religious education (See Below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Issue</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funding for Indian Sectarian Schools</td>
<td>Constitutional for much of history (stagnant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This policy issue was going along fine (remained stagnant) until the National League for the Protection of American Institutions saw a need to eliminate federal aid.

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funding for Indian Sectarian schools in 1889. However, as stated before, it was not until 1896 that the NLPAI was able to lobby for this change. While the change to completely eliminate funding took four years, 1896-1900, this effect is still fast and confirms Baumgartner and Jones’ theory that this policy change was not a gradual evolutionary change, but a rapid hit in a major policy.
Mission Schools and Effect of Punctuated Policy Change\textsuperscript{324}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission School</th>
<th>Years of Operation</th>
<th>Years that major “hit” on schools occurred</th>
<th>Result of “hit” on school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Ignatius</td>
<td>1864-1972</td>
<td>1896-1900</td>
<td>Closed in 1972; hit in 1896 led to decreased significance of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peters</td>
<td>1879-1896</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>News of decrease of Federal funding led to Jesuits leaving and school continuing with very little money. The school was moved to Great Falls and was closed in 1921.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Labre’s</td>
<td>1887-1897</td>
<td>1896-1897</td>
<td>Closed in 1897; Mission opened a high school later in 1938 and remains open today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul</td>
<td>1887-1936</td>
<td>1896-1900</td>
<td>Closed in 1936; struggled immensely after the Federal government pulled funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Francis Xavier</td>
<td>1887-1921</td>
<td>1896-1900</td>
<td>Closed in 1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles</td>
<td>1890-1898</td>
<td>1896-1898</td>
<td>Closed in 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John Berchman</td>
<td>1890-1897</td>
<td>1896-1897</td>
<td>Closed in 1897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Family</td>
<td>1890-1941</td>
<td>1896-1900</td>
<td>Closed in 1941</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{324} Dates for the timelines of some of these schools was accessed from: Mahoney, Irene. “Lady Blackrobes.” Preface.
Concluding Remarks and Opportunities for Further Research

Reflecting on this research project as a whole, I set out to contribute to some “big questions.” These questions range from: “Why did the Mission schools in Montana abruptly lose steam following 1896?” “Why is there inequality amongst Native Americans, especially when it comes to education?” “Why was there anti-Catholicism in America and how did it manifest itself in issues such as equality and education?” “How does the ‘status quo’ relate to issues of fairness, equality, and justice?” “What is the role of interest groups in politics and how do you get Congress to make an issue a big deal?” “If you amend enough State Constitutions and pass laws forbidding certain practices, does it really matter if you amend the Federal Constitution?”

These are all interesting questions and there are no definitive answers. However, it is important to consider these questions, analyze them, and come up with research questions that contribute to this field. My hope is that this research project can contribute to these interesting questions and provide new light to a history of Montana that hasn’t seen much attention.

To synthesize what I wrote about in the previous 89 pages, I started this research project by looking at the National League for the Protection of American Institutions (NLPAI), an interest group dedicated to forbid the practice of appropriating money to all schools. The NLPAI, I argue, has roots in anti-Catholicism and while they publicly denounced this statement, their willingness to follow the “status quo” is evidence that the group looked to defund and impact Catholic schools across America.

The NLPAI’s mission was to amend the Federal Constitution—a goal that they failed at. However, they were influential in amending State Constitutions (Montana
included) and were central to getting Congress to debate this topic and eventually defund all Catholic schools across America. If it wasn’t for the NLPAI, I argue that it would be doubtful that this question would have been considered in Congress.

The next chapter goes back in time and aims to show that the founding of America has solid roots in anti-Catholicism. However, the crux of the chapter focuses on the debate to cut funding for sectarian schools. This debate started between 1892 and 1893, but was in full force by 1895. It took just two years for the final decision to be made: funding for sectarian schools would be cut by 20% each year and would dissolve entirely by 1900. Backed by the passion and influence of the NLPAI, America entered the 20th century with a new attitude on church and state relations.

My third chapter looks at the history of the Missions in Montana with a focus on the schools and modes of education. My goal here is to provide a story of how it was started, the ways Native Americans were educated, and most importantly, what happened to the schools during and after funding was cut. I make the argument that the missions were doing well, Native Americans were being educated and things were moving along smoothly. However, following the cut, mission schools were set back significantly. Further, I make the argument that the Missions could have easily received funding from the state of Montana. However, because Montana’s State Constitution strictly forbid such practices (much to the thanks of the influence of the NLPAI), the missions in Montana were left unfunded and had to rely on private donations. Private donations were not enough and Mission schools either closed or lost significance.

In my final chapter, I bring in Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET) to understand where this falls in the world of Political Science. PET, developed by
Baumgartner and Jones, holds that policy change is not a process of a long, evolutionary change but a short punctuated hit. I show that this theory best fits my analysis as Congress made the decision to cut funding rather quickly. Further, this punctuated hit had a direct and sudden impact on the Mission schools in Montana because they either closed shortly after or lost significant influence following.

Further research in this topic can go many directions. I think a pertinent question is considering how this impacted Native Americans in Montana and how education in general was impacted. After the closing and impact following 1896-1900, where did the Native Americans go to school? How was the quality of these schools compared to the Mission schools? Is there any data that shows comprehension levels before and after the closing of these schools? Further, how were other missions in other states affected by the cut in funding? Could we do a comparative study of two missions?

Research topics in the area of policy making and the psychology of Congress could focus on the influence of interest groups both on Congress and the public, as well as the process it takes for Congress to debate and consider something a “big deal.” Other research questions could focus on the topic of Church and State and how policy on this has evolved over time and why.

Future research in this area is endless and can be touched upon in many disciplines of study—Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, etc. This research project looks to highlight an area of history that I think has been forgotten and bring to light new ways of thinking about our history in Montana and our history with the Native Americans. It is not a thesis that argues for one thing over another, but rather a thesis to better understand both how and why policy changes the way it does.
the consequences of policy change and the implications of change both at the state and federal level.
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