

ARTICLE

# “Every Citizen a Sentinel! Every Home a Sentry Box!” The Sentinels of the Republic and the Gendered Origins of Free-Market Conservatism

Julia Bowes

*In the 1920s and 1930s, the Sentinels of the Republic, a conservative citizens’ organization, mounted a fierce campaign against the adoption of the federal Child Labor Amendment. The Sentinels were able to defeat the amendment by painting it as a threat to the sovereignty of the male-headed family. This appeal proved an effective rallying cry across sex, class, and faith lines, and galvanized significant opposition to the expansion of state power. Initially formed in 1922, the Sentinels, composed predominantly of elite businessmen, lawyers, and antifeminists, remained an active antistatist lobby throughout the following two decades, and formed a key part of the pro-business lobby that attacked the New Deal. Assessing the gendered political ideology and organizing strategies of the Sentinels reveals how patriarchal ideas about the traditional family played a core and constitutive role in the development of conservative free-market politics.*

On September 27, 1922, a group of wealthy Americans gathered at Faneuil Hall in Boston to launch a crusade for the defense of liberty, constitutional rights, and local self-government. Those gathered, an assembly of prominent businessmen and lawyers, disaffected Republicans and Democrats, and disappointed former antisuffrage activists, raised a toast to the founding of the Sentinels of the Republic. Self-consciously fashioning themselves as the direct descendants of the American revolutionary tradition, the Sentinels sounded a “call to arms” among the people about a new form of tyranny that threatened their liberty: “federal paternalism.” Formed in the wake of the Red Scare, the Sentinels affirmed that only a return to the “fundamental principles” of the Constitution would safeguard the republic from the threats of socialism, communism, and radicalism. The Sentinels were particularly alarmed and embittered by the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919, granting the federal government the power to prohibit the sale of alcohol, and the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, granting women suffrage. In 1924, when Congress submitted the federal Child Labor Amendment to the states for ratification, the Sentinels identified a very firm target for their first major battle. The proposed Twentieth Amendment would allow the federal government to regulate child labor, and the Sentinels waged war against it. The “so-called’ Child Labor Amendment,” the Sentinels charged, would “take away the sovereign rights of the states and destroy local self-government” by subjecting “your children and your home to inspection of a federal agent.”<sup>1</sup>

---

I would like to thank Ann Fabian, Jennifer Mittelstadt, Nancy Hewitt, and Patrick McGrath, who generously commented on numerous versions of this article over the years. I presented earlier versions of this article at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis and the 2018 OAH Annual Meeting, and I would like to thank the participants at both those forums for their insights and feedback, especially Seth Koven and Judith Surkis. Finally, I am grateful for the constructive feedback I received from the anonymous reviewers for *Modern American History* and particularly the keen editorial guidance of Sarah Phillips and Brooke Blower, who have helped improve this article greatly.

<sup>1</sup>Herbert Packer, “Pamphlet for the Citizens Committee to Protect Our Homes and Children,” Sept. 1924, folder 294, box 16, MC-360, Mrs. William Lowell Putnam Papers, 1862–1935, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA [hereafter Lowell Putnam Papers].

© The Author(s) 2019. Published by Cambridge University Press

Between 1924 and 1937, the Sentinels of the Republic led two successful campaigns against the adoption of the federal Child Labor Amendment by casting the amendment as a threat to the sovereignty of the home. A forerunner to the American Liberty League, the Sentinels were never much more than a small outfit of elite businessmen, lawyers, and politicians. Nonetheless, the organization's cozy relationships with industry and politics, the deep pockets of its backers, and in particular its ability to forge broad-based antistatist coalitions based on patriarchal ideas about the family made the Sentinels a political force. In 1924, they pulled off an upset victory in Massachusetts after the state's legislature referred the amendment to a people's advisory referendum. Bringing together a coalition of farmers, antifeminists, Boston Brahmins, the Catholic Church, old-stock Republicans, and ethnic Democrats under the banner of the "Citizen's Committee for the Protection of the Home and Child," the Sentinels' victory at the Massachusetts polls turned the tide against the amendment nationally in the 1920s. By 1925, thirty-four more states had voted to reject the amendment.

The onset of the Great Depression and election of President Roosevelt in 1932, however, revived the momentum to ratify the amendment. In 1934, the Sentinels formed a "National Committee for the Protection of the Child, Family, School and Church," operating out of an outpost in St. Louis, Missouri, to lobby against it once again. The Sentinels leveraged their connections with the American Bar Association, the Catholic Church, prominent Protestant leaders and public figures, and industry to present a unified message about the dangers the amendment posed to the rights of both family and state government. While the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act included provisions regulating industrial child labor, the federal Child Labor Amendment remained ten states short of the majority needed for ratification.

The Sentinels' crusade against the federal Child Labor Amendment reveals intimate connections between the economic and cultural roots of free-market conservatism. To the Sentinels, the amendment epitomized the threat of "federal paternalism" because it proposed to grant the federal government unprecedented powers over both industry and the family. Studying the politics and organizing strategies of the Sentinels also connects two separate stories about conservative activism in the 1920s and the 1930s. In the first story, as historians of gender and the Red Scare, especially Kim Nielsen and Kristen DeLegard, have shown, the mixed-sex Sentinels composed part of a tapestry of 1920s conservative activists, led by female antifeminists, who forged an antiradical politics based on the defense of the white patriarchal family.<sup>2</sup> In the second, as told by George Wolfskill, Robert Burk, and Marjorie Kornhauser, the Sentinels reappear in the 1930s as part of the nucleus of interlocking antistatist groups of elite businessmen, led by the American Liberty League, who attacked the New Deal.<sup>3</sup> But

<sup>2</sup>Kim E. Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare* (Columbus, OH, 2001); Kirsten DeLegard, *Battling Miss Bolshevik: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* (Philadelphia, 2012). Nielsen and DeLegard focus particularly on the antifeminist women behind the Woman Patriot Publishing Company who closely coordinated with the Sentinels, reflecting the general trajectory in the literature on gender and conservatism that has recovered the critical role that women played in the development of conservatism across the twentieth century. See Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ, 2001); Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage Through the Rise of the New Right* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006); Ronnee Schreiber, *Righting Feminism: Conservative Women and American Politics* (New York, 2008); Michelle M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton, NJ, 2012); and Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy* (New York, 2018). Building on that literature, this article instead emphasizes the role that gendered ideas about the family played as building blocks in the development of antistatist coalitions.

<sup>3</sup>George Wolfskill, *The Revolt of Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934–1940* (Boston, 1962), 228–41; Robert F. Burk, *The Corporate State and the Broker State: The Du Ponts and American National Politics, 1925–1940* (Cambridge, MA, 1990); Marjorie E. Kornhauser, "Shaping Public Opinion and the Law: How a 'Common Man' Campaign Ended a Rich Man's Law," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 73, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 123–47; Marjorie Kornhauser, "The 'Invisible Government' and Conservative Tax Lobbying, 1935–1936," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 81, no. 2 (2018): 167–201. In this literature, as with the literature

throughout the 1920s and the 1930s, the ideology of the Sentinels remained consistent; they viewed the expansion of the federal government as destructive to the “private initiative” of men in both the patriarchal family and private industry. What changed in the years between was simply the type of “paternalistic” legislation that the federal government pursued, from the maternalist policies of the Children’s Bureau to the economic relief programs of the New Deal.<sup>4</sup>

The influence of the Sentinels therefore exposes the importance of gendered ideas about the sovereignty of the male-headed family to both the ideological and organizational development of free-market politics. Recent histories on the long roots of free-market conservatism have traced its origins to the antiregulatory agenda of businessmen in the 1930s.<sup>5</sup> Yet the roles of gender and the traditional family have been almost all but absent in those accounts.<sup>6</sup> Existing interpretations therefore overlook the galvanizing role that patriarchal ideas played in propelling economic elites into antistatist activism.<sup>7</sup> The Sentinels of the Republic firmly believed that the male-headed family constituted the most local level of self-government, and deployed ideas about the sovereignty of the family to stitch together broad antistatist coalitions across sex, class, and faith lines.

While historians acknowledge that anti-New Deal lobbies generally failed to make much headway in selling free-market politics during the 1930s, the Sentinels successfully sold an anti-statist agenda in their campaign against the Child Labor Amendment. Fusing the causes of free industry and the freedom of the family, the Sentinels brought together businessmen, conservative lawyers, antifeminists, anticommunists, and conservative Catholics and Protestants in an alliance that foreshadowed the political alignment of the New Right by nearly half a century.

---

on gender and the Red Scare, the Sentinels’ activism is placed in either the 1920s or 1930s, while the personnel, ideology, and strategies of the Sentinels remained consistent across the two periods.

<sup>4</sup>In other words, not only do the roots of the New Deal welfare state lie in the maternalist reforms of the Progressive Era, but so too do the roots of the animus to New Deal liberalism. On the role of maternalists in building the New Deal welfare state, see Linda Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare, 1890–1935* (New York, 1994); Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942* (Ithaca, NY, 1995); Barbara Nelson, “The Origins of the Two-Channel Welfare State: Workmen’s Compensation and Mothers’ Aid,” in *Women, the State, and Welfare*, ed. Linda Gordon (Madison, WI, 1990), 123–50; Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in United States* (Cambridge, MA, 1995); and Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890–1935* (New York, 1991).

<sup>5</sup>Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen’s Crusade Against the New Deal* (New York, 2010); Julia C. Ott, “‘The Free and Open People’s Market’: Political Ideology and Retail Brokerage at the New York Stock Exchange, 1913–1933,” *Journal of American History* 96, no. 1 (June 2009): 44–71; and Kathryn Olmsted, *Right Out of California: The 1930s and the Big Business Roots of Modern Conservatism* (New York, 2015). On the long roots of conservatism generally, see Kim Phillips-Fein, “Conservatism: A State of the Field,” *Journal of American History* 98, no. 3 (Dec. 2011): 723–43.

<sup>6</sup>An important exception here is Olmsted’s *Right Out of California*, which explains that agribusiness fought back against the New Deal in California in the 1930s with arguments that women’s increased involvement in work and union leadership threatened the traditional, patriarchal family. Another work that fully integrates a gendered analysis into a history of free-market conservatism in the late twentieth century is Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Walmart: The Making of Free Christian Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA, 2009).

<sup>7</sup>For an example of the bifurcation of the cultural and economic explanations for the roots of modern conservatism, see Fein, *Invisible Hands*, where she argues that “if we shift the focus from cultural to economic issues, it becomes clear that the origin of modern conservative politics and ideology ... begins in the reaction against the New Deal” (xii). In contrast, Allan Lichtman, in *White Protestant Nation* (New York, 2008), argues that the core value of conservatism, dating from the 1920s, has been a commitment to an antipluralistic, white, Protestant nation, with ideas about the free market serving as a “dispensable” smokescreen (3). My argument here echoes Robert Self’s analysis of late-twentieth-century conservatism in *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York, 2010), where he proposes that, contrary to the portrayal of family values conservatives and neoliberals as strange bedfellows, there was a coherent ideological link between efforts to limit government intervention in the family and the private market.

Indeed, the Sentinels' campaign against the Child Labor Amendment reveals new ties between religious conservatism and free-market conservatism, and points to a longer history of alliances between conservative religious groups and business interests—alliances that coalesced around questions of gender and the family.<sup>8</sup>

### The Origins and Ideology of the Sentinels

The Sentinels of the Republic formed in the summer of 1922 to consolidate and reformulate conservative efforts to resist the expansion of the federal government after the ratification of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments. The founding members of the Sentinels, all wealthy, native-born white Protestants, included prominent men and women who had led the fight against Prohibition and women's suffrage in single-sex organizations such as the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, the Maryland League for State Defense, and the Constitutional League of Massachusetts.<sup>9</sup> The Sentinels sought to channel the single-sex, single-issue conservative activism of the 1910s into a mixed-sex, pan-conservative movement dedicated to a broader fight against centralization. The proliferation of federal bureaucracies and the growth of federal power that had marked the Progressive Era, the Sentinels warned, would continue to pervade President Warren Harding's administration unless checked by the citizen's watchful eye.<sup>10</sup> The group's fears about the dangers of "federal paternalism" were heightened by the Red Scare, a widespread panic of a creeping red menace triggered by a series of anarchist bombings on U.S. soil in 1919 in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution. For the Sentinels, the centralization of federal government powers demonstrated the insidious influence of both an internal and external communist threat.<sup>11</sup> In that context, they viewed federal paternalism as the "third crisis" facing the nation, charging that it behooved the "patriots of America" to rise up again "to battle for the preservation of constitutional government, the cornerstone of American liberty" that the patriots of 1776 and 1861 "built and cemented with their blood."<sup>12</sup>

The Sentinels fell far short of their stated goal of building a mass movement that would bring together all patriotic conservatives in the United States. After absorbing a few existing conservative groups into their ranks, the Sentinels announced the lofty goal of attracting a "million patriots" who would pledge to maintain "the fundamental principles of the constitution" of individual liberty, states' rights, and local self-government.<sup>13</sup> The Sentinels set about

<sup>8</sup>Moreton, *To Serve God and Walmart*; Kevin M. Kruse, *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America* (New York, 2015); and Darren E. Grem, *The Blessings of Business: How Corporations Shaped Conservative Christianity* (New York, 2016). On the long roots of the religious right, see Daniel Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York, 2010).

<sup>9</sup>The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage was an all-female antisuffrage organization, the Maryland League for State Defense was an all-male antisuffrage group, and the Constitutional League of Massachusetts was an all-male anti-Prohibition group. On the roots of the Sentinels in antisuffrage groups, see especially Susan E. Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage* (Madison, WI, 1997), 219–20. On Prohibition, see "Massachusetts Wets Sail under Piratical Flag," *Kansas Labor Review*, Jan. 6, 1923, 3; "Says Drys Should Control Sentinels of the Republic," *Boston Globe*, Sept. 17, 1923, 1.

<sup>10</sup>Louis Coolidge, "Sentinels of the Republic," *Tracts for Today*, no. 4, Feb. 1923 (New York, 1923), 3–6.

<sup>11</sup>As Kim Nielsen has argued, the activism of the Sentinels and their allies in the 1920s demonstrates that the political effects of the Red Scare continued to reverberate well after 1920; *Un-American Womanhood*, 4.

<sup>12</sup>William Whitehead, "The Story of the Sentinels of the Republic," 1936, folder 5, box 1, A-109, Alexander Lincoln Papers, 1919–40, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA [hereafter Lincoln Papers], 2–3; "To Arms! To Arms! The New Crisis," undated, folder 5, box 1, A-109, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>13</sup>"Unite to Support the Constitution: National Agencies Form 'Sentinels of the Republic' to Combat Radicalism," *New York Times*, Oct. 1, 1922, 33. Groups that the Sentinels incorporated included the National Association for Constitutional Government, the American Rights League, and the Public Interest League.

establishing “Committees of Correspondence” across the country, modeled on the shadow governments of the thirteen British colonies that had declared independence during the American Revolution. By 1923, the group claimed to have branches in more than 43 states and 480 cities and towns.<sup>14</sup> The leadership of the Sentinels, predominantly Northeast “wet” (anti-Prohibition) Republicans and converts to the states’ rights cause, did succeed in enlisting a number of Southern Democrats.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, the membership base remained piddling. Membership peaked at around 9,000 in the late 1920s after the Sentinels doubled its numbers at the height of the 1924–1925 antirratification campaign.<sup>16</sup> In the 1930s, as anti-New Deal organizations proliferated and discussions on merging with the newly founded American Liberty League fell through, the Sentinels’ membership base dwindled to around 3,000.<sup>17</sup>

Notwithstanding the organization’s opposition to highly centralized power, the Sentinels built its influence primarily through its executive committee, which was composed of around forty to fifty wealthy businessmen, elite lawyers, antifeminist activists, religious leaders, conservative politicians, and public figures. In building that core committee, the leaders held true to their founding promise that the Sentinels of the Republic knew “no sex, no party, no creed.”<sup>18</sup> Instead, what bound what bound the organization together was a common class background and shared aversion to the political developments of the Progressive Era—namely the enlarged role of federal government in public life driven primarily by female reformers and typified by the enfranchisement of women in the 1920s. Made up primarily of the patrician class of old-stock Northern Republicans, the key players on the Sentinels’ executive committee represented the overlapping interests of pro-business, antifeminist, antistatist, and religious conservatives who viewed the expansion of federal power as a fundamental threat to the nation.<sup>19</sup> The convergence of these interests shaped the ideology of the Sentinels that viewed “federal paternalism” as a threat to the independence of self-governing men.

The Sentinels’ inaugural president, Louis A. Coolidge, was a Boston Brahmin who traced his lineage back to Mary Chilton, the first person said to have set foot on Plymouth Rock. After graduating from Harvard, he worked in Washington, DC, between 1890 and 1909 as a political correspondent, private secretary to Republican senator Henry Cabot Lodge, and, later, assistant secretary of the treasury in Theodore Roosevelt’s administration. Returning to Boston in 1909, Coolidge became the director of the United Shoe Manufacturing Company. Coolidge’s antipathy to government intervention in industry hardened sharply during World War I, when he resigned from the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board, a voluntary partnership between business, labor, and government set up to resolve strikes over wages. Remaining disenchanted with Republican politics, but also active in anti-Prohibition campaigns in the 1910s Coolidge personified the relationship between business and politics the Sentinels sought to foster. Explaining his view in 1924 that “every businessman should be a politician, every politician a businessman,” Coolidge’s fears about federal paternalism were far from allayed by the

<sup>14</sup>Mrs. Katharine T. Balch, “Plan for the Organization of the Sentinels of the Republic,” June 1923, folder 2, box 1, A-109, Lincoln Papers; Mrs. Katharine T. Balch, “Report on the Sentinels of the Republic,” 1924, vol. 5, series II, MC 57, Sentinels of the Republic Records, Williams College, Williamstown, MA [hereafter Sentinels Papers].

<sup>15</sup>Whitehead, “The Story of the Sentinels,” 5, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>16</sup>U.S. Congress, House, *Division on Safety: Hearings before the Committee on Labor*, 71st Cong., 2nd sess., 1930, 17–26; Louis A. Coolidge, “Letter to Sentinels of the Republic,” Mar. 30, 1925, series I, box 5, J. Gresham Machen Papers, Montgomery Library Archives, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA [hereafter Machen papers].

<sup>17</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, *Investigation of Lobbying Activities: Hearings Before a Special Committee to Investigate Lobbying Activities*, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 1936, 2095 [hereafter Black Hearings].

<sup>18</sup>“Unite to Support the Constitution,” 33.

<sup>19</sup>Patrick Allitt, *The Conservatives: Ideas and Personalities Throughout American History* (New Haven, CT, 2009), ch. 4; Clyde Weed, *The Transformation of the Republican Party, 1912–1936: From Reform to Resistance* (Boulder, CO, 2012).

Republican deregulatory economic agenda of the 1920s. He urged businessmen to keep a closer eye on the expansion of federal government power.<sup>20</sup>

Lawyers and antifeminist activists also featured prominently in the Sentinels' leadership. After Coolidge died in May 1925, Bentley Warren, a Boston railway attorney and active Democrat, briefly assumed the leadership, and Alexander Lincoln, the former Massachusetts assistant attorney general, took the helm from 1927 to 1936. While the prominence of lawyers, Democrat and Republican in equal proportion, helped to explain the Sentinels' fixation on the Constitution as the instrument for achieving limited government, the outsized contribution of former antisuffragists and antiradical activists pointed to the importance of antifeminist ideas to the Sentinels' ideology. Most notably, Katharine T. Balch, the former president of the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association of Massachusetts, served continuously as the Sentinels' secretary, leading the organization to establish their headquarters in Milton, Massachusetts, where Balch was based.<sup>21</sup> Thomas F. Cadwalader, the chairman of the Sentinels' executive committee, reflected the overlapping interests of the two groups. A Democratic attorney from Baltimore, Maryland, Cadwalader had helped file an unsuccessful challenge to the Nineteenth Amendment in 1922.<sup>22</sup>

Conservative ideologues such as Nicholas Murray Butler and Reverend J. Gresham Machen sat on the executive committee, and publicly augmented the tight web of businessmen, lawyers, and antifeminists at the core of the Sentinels' leadership. Butler, the outspoken president of Columbia University, hailed from a middle-class Presbyterian New Jersey family, embraced Episcopalianism as he rose up the ranks of New York's high society and Republican politics, and injected himself into international politics in the 1920s. Despite his more modest roots, as the socialist (and a former student of Butler's) Upton Sinclair charged, Butler "considered himself the intellectual leader of the American plutocracy," making him the ideal public spokesman for the Sentinels' platform. Machen, a theologian at Princeton Theological Seminary, enlisted as a Sentinel in 1924, impressed by the group's antirratification campaign. Machen was a towering, if controversial, figure in fundamentalist circles, credited with leading the revolt against modernism. However, he deviated from most fundamentalist Protestants in the 1920s who strongly supported Prohibition. In his opposition to Prohibition and the establishment of a federal education department, he sympathized instead with the more antistatist politics of the Sentinels.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Whitehead, "The Story of the Sentinels," 2–3, Lincoln Papers; Sheldon Stern, "The Evolution of a Reactionary: Louis Arthur Coolidge, 1900–1925," *Mid-America* 57, no. 2 (1975), 89–105; Louis A. Coolidge, "Why Business Men Should Help Govern the Nation," *Forbes*, Mar. 1, 1924, 635–6; "Face to Face with Louis A. Coolidge," *Brooklyn Times-Union*, Aug. 6, 1924, 6.

<sup>21</sup>The Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women was renamed the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association in 1916. Balch also remained active on the five-woman board of the Woman Patriot Publishing Company, the leading organization of the remaining committed core of arch-conservative former antisuffrage activists, forging a close collaboration between the two organizations. The other four members of the Woman Patriot board were Mary Kilbreth, Mrs. Rufus A. Gibbs, Harriet Frothingham, and Margaret Robinson, all members of the Sentinels and involved in the group to various degrees. On the Woman Patriot in the 1920s and its links to the Sentinels, especially Kilbreth and Robinson, see Deleard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviks*, 64–76, and Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 61–72.

<sup>22</sup>Cadwalader was a member of the Maryland League for State Defense and one of two men who filed a constitutional challenge to the Nineteenth Amendment in *Leser v. Garnet*, 258 U.S. 130. *Leser v. Garnet* was one of two challenges to the Nineteenth Amendment, the second, *Fairfield v. Hughes*, emerged from a male antisuffrage group in New York; see Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 217–8. Cadwalader was also active in anti-Prohibition politics via the Thomas Jefferson League in Washington, DC. See "Concerning the Formation of the Thomas Jefferson League," n.d., Box 1, Sentinels of the Republic Collection, M.S. 1169, Maryland Historical Society, M.D [hereafter Sentinels Collection].

<sup>23</sup>D. G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Baltimore, 1994), see 137–41 on his involvement with the Sentinels; Warren L. Vinz, *Pulpit Politics: Faces of American Protestant Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Albany, NY, 1997). In his foreword to *Pulpit Politics*,

The Sentinels' opposition to federal intervention in family life was critical both to their formation and to their disproportionate influence as an antistatist lobby group in the 1920s and 1930s. As historians of antisuffragists have demonstrated, opponents of women's suffrage, especially male antisuffragists, held fast to a conception of the white male head of the household as the "individual" who governed and represented his family.<sup>24</sup> The Sentinels were one of a number of antiradical groups that carried that ideology into the post-suffrage era as part of a conservative opposition to social welfare programs.<sup>25</sup> Throughout the 1920s, the Sentinels limited their campaigns to attacking a suite of maternalist projects that would have extended the role of the federal government in family life; they opposed the nationalization of marriage and divorce laws, a federal department of education, the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Indeed, while the Sentinels privately reviled the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, they waited until 1931, when the movement to repeal Prohibition had gained sufficient force, to officially register their support.<sup>26</sup> Since its founding, a representative of the Sentinels reflected in the 1930s, the organization had been "engaged in an almost continuous contest with the Children's Bureau and its allies."<sup>27</sup> As Kim Nielsen has explored, while historians generally regard the policies emanating from the Children's Bureau as the product of maternalist politics, the Sentinels' and their allies' denunciations of "federal paternalism" were not a slip in language. They underscored the importance of the "politicization of patriarchal fatherhood" to their opposition.<sup>28</sup> The Sentinels' objection to maternalist programs was the entry point for the group's consistent opposition to federal aid programs, higher taxes, and government regulation of industry that carried into the New Deal era.

A widespread conservative cultural consensus about the importance of the sovereign, white, male-headed family propelled the Sentinels' efforts. They deployed the techniques of modern lobbying, running targeted campaigns that used print media, national radio, and experimentation with film to sell an antistatist agenda to the public at large.<sup>29</sup> In an era when the lines between liberal and conservative politics were more fluid, especially with regard to the family, the Sentinels used media appeals to reach broad cross-sections of the public without ever building a mass membership base.<sup>30</sup> Though the Sentinels had opposed the Nineteenth Amendment, for example, they assiduously courted women—well understanding that the newly expanded electorate had doubled in size—by elevating appeals to the home and family in their antistatist campaigns.<sup>31</sup> The group benefited from crucial injections of corporate and

---

Martin Marty notes that Machen at times "sounds almost anarchically libertarian ... but at others makes a fetish of earlier Christian American constitutionalism," capturing the overall philosophy of the Sentinels, ix.

<sup>24</sup>See, for instance, Aileen Krador, *The Ideas of the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1890–1920* (New York, 1965); Rebecca Ann Rix, "Gender and Reconstitution: The Individual and Family Basis of Republican Government Contested, 1868–1925" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2008); Reva Siegel, "She the People: The Nineteenth Amendment, Sex Equality, Federalism, and the Family," *Harvard Law Review* 115, no. 4 (Feb. 2002): 948–1046, and especially on the relative prominence of the unity of family government in male antisuffrage appeals compared to female antisuffrage appeals, Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 130–9.

<sup>25</sup>On the broader spectrum of antiradical, antifeminist activism in the 1920s, see Deleard, *Battling Miss Bolshevik*; Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*; and Erica Ryan, *Red War on the Family: Sex, Gender and Americanism in the First Red Scare* (Philadelphia, 2015).

<sup>26</sup>The issue of prohibition nearly tore the Sentinels' executive committee apart down gendered lines. The Woman Patriot members, especially Mary Kilbreth, temporarily resigned in disgust over the Sentinels' 8–4 vote to take a public position in support of repeal, whereas the male leadership, especially Lincoln and Cadwalader, strongly favored repeal. See, for example, the correspondence from Thomas F. Cadwalader to Alexander Lincoln Feb. 2, 1928 and Alexander Lincoln to Thomas F. Cadwalader, Feb. 4, 1928; box 1, MS 2451, Sentinels Collection.

<sup>27</sup>Black Hearings, 2062.

<sup>28</sup>Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 109–10.

<sup>29</sup>Kornhauser, "Shaping Public Opinion"; Kornhauser, "The 'Invisible Government.'"

<sup>30</sup>Brian Balogh, *The Associational State: American Governance in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia, 2015), ch. 3.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 69–86.

manufacturing money at key moments, most notably during its antirratification campaign in 1924 and anti-New Deal campaign in 1934, but otherwise survived on a skeletal budget. Always a small outfit whose views about state intervention remained to the right of even the Republican Party the Sentinels nonetheless profited from the broader milieu of conservative Protestant movements in the 1920s that professed to defend the white, patriarchal family.

While the Sentinels stood apart from most of its conservative compatriots by mobilizing the politics of the family in the service of an antistatist and antiregulatory agenda, the rallying cry of the “sanctity of the home” reverberated widely in the political culture of the 1920s. Defenses of the white patriarchal family fanned the flames of antiradical activism, drew millions of American men and women into the ranks of the second Ku Klux Klan, and animated support for Prohibition.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, family protection had long animated more state-centered and progressive campaigns such as the movements for temperance and Prohibition.<sup>33</sup> Since the late nineteenth century, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union had mobilized a mass movement of women around the banner of “home protection.” At the 1924 Democratic National Convention, William Jennings Bryan lit a fiery defense of Prohibition and claimed to lead the “defenders of the home” against the wet Al Smith.<sup>34</sup> In the 1920s, organizations such as the Klan sought to shore up the boundaries of a white Christian nation through state power, advocating for Prohibition and strong federal and state control over public schooling in pursuit of an anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant, and anticommunist agenda.<sup>35</sup> By contrast, the Sentinels argued that any expansion of federal government power imperiled the sovereignty of the white, male-headed family.<sup>36</sup>

Unlike other conservative Protestant organizations of the era, the Sentinels also avoided overtly nativist positions and forged close partnerships with leading conservative Catholics. While the Sentinels privately supported “Americanization” and remained suspect of “subversive influences,” the executive committee avoided taking a public position on such questions.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Ryan, *Red War on the Family*; Lichtman, *White Protestant Nation*.

<sup>33</sup>Prohibition is but one example of a reform movement that argued that state intervention would save and protect the male-headed family—a tradition that dates back to abolitionism and which structured and circumscribed maternalist welfare initiatives in the Progressive Era. The literature on this subject is vast; see, for instance, on abolitionism Michael Pierson, *Free Hearts, Free Homes: Gender and American Antislavery Politics* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2003). On the importance of protecting the white male-breadwinner model to maternalist reform movements and liberalism, see Muncy, *A Female Dominion*; Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood*; and Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th-Century America* (New York, 2001).

<sup>34</sup>Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873–1900* (Philadelphia, 1981); Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 11–2.

<sup>35</sup>On the politics and gendered ideology of the Klan, see Kathleen Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, CA, 1991); and Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York, 1999).

<sup>36</sup>On this point, I disagree with Kirsten Delegard, who argues that the antifeminist women who formed part of the Sentinels differed only from the Women of the Ku Klux Klan in their class background. While I agree that the two groups shared a belief in white supremacy, antifeminism, and antiradicalism, I argue that their politics differed greatly on the role of the state. Delegard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviki*, 53–5. On the antistatist outlook of antifeminists, see also Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*.

<sup>37</sup>As discussed below, the Sentinels viewed conservative constitutionalism as the cure to all of the threats posed by socialism and radicalism, stating in 1926: “We do not believe that foreign agitators, preaching forcible overthrow of our institutions, should be entitled to admission to the United States, but we do believe that our true safety lies in an enlightened public opinion and an understanding of the right of local self-government as the basis of our Federal compact.” Special Legislative Policies Recommended by the Executive Committee and Adopted by the Sentinels of the Republic at the Annual Meeting, Jan. 13, 1926. In addition to questions on immigration and sedition laws, the Sentinels also repeatedly voted not to take a position on the League of Nations and a World Court; see Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Sentinels of the Republic at Hotel Biltmore, New York City, May 8, 1925, vol. 1, Sentinels Papers.

To be sure, many Sentinels had formerly been part of the Massachusetts Immigration Restriction League, but Butler opposed highly restrictive immigration laws because of their potential economic impact—a view likely shared by other Sentinels with interests in manufacturing.<sup>38</sup> Mobilizing public opinion against the Child Labor Amendment, especially in places like Massachusetts where the Sentinels acknowledged the heterogeneity of the population and the importance of winning over ethnic and immigrant workers, would have been difficult with nativist positions.<sup>39</sup> The limits of their ethnic and religious tolerance, however, were exposed during Congressional hearings into anti-administration lobby groups in the 1930s, when the Sentinels were censured and widely discredited for the anti-Semitic pronouncements of its president, Alexander Lincoln.<sup>40</sup>

Additionally, while many conservatives in the 1920s relied on religious fundamentalism as a fulcrum, the Sentinels instead championed a near-fundamental reverence for the U.S. Constitution as a bulwark against social change and communism. They vowed to honor the “original intent of the framers” and maintain the “fundamental principles” of the Constitution by opposing federal amendments, legislation, and bureaucratic agencies that “encroached on the reserved rights of the States and the individual citizen.”<sup>41</sup> Here the Sentinels anticipated the language of the American Liberty League, whose stated founding aim in 1934 was to “defend and uphold the Constitution,” espousing what Jared Goldstein has aptly described as “constitutional nationalism” and a “political analog to originalism.”<sup>42</sup> Like the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, a parallel 1920s organization, the Sentinels wrestled with something of a paradox regarding recent constitutional amendments as “betrayal[s]” that were “destructive” to the true purposes of the Constitution.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, there was a certain irony in their historical reading of the Constitution—whereas their forbearers in the early republic had aligned with the Federalist party and championed a strong national administration to protect their financial and class dominance, by the early twentieth century, the aristocratic elite behind the Sentinels channeled more Jeffersonian ideals of radically decentralized government towards the same end.<sup>44</sup> The Sentinels’ slogan—“Every citizen a Sentinel!

<sup>38</sup>Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 64; and Nicholas Murray Butler, “A Rational Immigration Policy,” *Tracts for Today*, no. 5, Feb. 1923 (New York, 1923).

<sup>39</sup>Bentley Warren, “Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of the Sentinels of the Republic at the Third Annual Convention held at the Willard Hotel,” Washington, DC, Jan. 13, 1926, vol. 2, series I, Sentinels Papers. On the Sentinels’ cooperation with Catholics, see Lynn Dunemil, “‘The Insatiable Maw of Bureaucracy’: Antistatism and Education Reform in the 1920s,” *Journal of American History* 77, no. 2 (Sept. 1990): 499–524. The organization remained mum on the Klan’s antiblack violence and opposed the nationalization of marriage and divorce laws because they feared giving the federal government the power to limit the rights of states to prohibit miscegenation. Thomas F. Cadwalader, “Statement of the Sentinels of the Republic on the Proposed National Marriage and Divorce Amendment Law,” [n.d.] box 1, M.S. 2451, Sentinels Collection.

<sup>40</sup>The Sentinels’ anti-semitic politics were already evident in the restrictive admission policies for Jewish students at Columbia and Harvard implemented by Sentinels Nicholas Murray Butler and Abbott Lawrence Lowell; see Michael Rosenthal, *The Amazing Career of the Redoubtable Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler* (New York, 2006); and Marcia Graham Synott, *The Half-Opened Door: Discrimination and Admissions at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1900–1970* (Westport, CT, 1979).

<sup>41</sup>Nicholas Murray Butler, “Address on the People’s Constitution in Observance of Constitution Day,” Sept. 17, 1924, vol. 6, Sentinels Papers; Letter from Louis Coolidge to the Sentinels of the Republic, Sept. 15, 1924, vol. 5, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>42</sup>Jared Goldstein, “The American Liberty League and the Rise of Constitutional Nationalism,” *Temple Law Review* 86, no. 2 (2014): 287–330, here 289.

<sup>43</sup>To resolve this tension, the Sentinels argued that the ratification process for the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments by state legislatures was an anti-democratic process that had been hijacked by “lobby groups.” The Sentinels first political project in 1922 was the never-adopted Wadsworth-Garrett Amendment, which would have required each state to hold a popular referendum on constitutional amendments.

<sup>44</sup>For example, the Sentinels held their launch party to coincide with the 200th birthday of Samuel Adams, the “progenitor” of independence.

Every home a sentry box!”—made clear the ideological relationship between the liberty of the individual and the freedom of the home.

### The 1924 Campaign in Massachusetts

The federal Child Labor Amendment was first floated in Congress in June 1922. For its supporters, it represented the final resolution to a decade-long effort to grant the federal government the power to regulate child labor. Congress had passed two federal child labor laws: the Keating-Owen Act of 1916 prohibited the interstate trade of goods produced by children under fourteen years, and the “Child Labor Tax Law” of 1919 imposed a ten percent tax on the profits of companies that used industrial child labor. But the Supreme Court struck down both laws as an unconstitutional exercise of the interstate commerce clause and the taxing power in *Hammer v. Dagenhart* (1918) and *Drexel Furniture Co. v. Bailey* (1922), respectively. The proposal for a constitutional amendment surfaced two days after *Drexel* was handed down. Twenty-five organizations, made up predominantly of labor unions and national women’s organizations, formed a committee to draft it. In 1924, after two years of debate, the would-be Twentieth Amendment was introduced in Congress, proposing that the federal government “limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age.”<sup>45</sup>

The broad scope of the amendment reflected both the optimism and anxiety of its backers. After decades of attempting to devise enforceable child labor laws, reformers set the age limit at eighteen, not sixteen, which then defined the end of childhood in the census, so that seventeen-year-olds in hazardous industrial occupations would not be beyond reach. The word “labor” as opposed to “employment” was adopted at the insistence of the National Child Labor Committee, who feared that parents would define the work their children performed in farms, homes, and tenements as “chores.”<sup>46</sup> The construction of the amendment also reflected the changing character of child labor. The 1920 census showed that the number of children employed between ages ten and fifteen had dropped from two million children as recorded in the 1910 census to just over one million.<sup>47</sup> As reformers complained, the 1920 census concealed the more accurate numbers of laboring children because it was taken during a brief period when the second national child labor law was in effect and in mid-January before any agricultural labor resumed. Nonetheless, the rates of industrial child labor, performed predominantly by white children, had declined, as reflected in the decision of the National Child Labor Committee in the early 1920s to turn its attention to agricultural labor for the first time.<sup>48</sup> The opponents of the amendment would interpret and exploit this broader framing to argue that it gave Congress the power to interfere with family farms, the domestic chores of teenagers, and the education of youth.

At the time, however, the amendment enjoyed a broad base of support. Over the past decade, four amendments had altered the Constitution to meet the governing needs of the day. Much to the Sentinels’ chagrin, in 1922 Republican president Warren Harding urged Congress to adopt the Child Labor Amendment on just those grounds, arguing that the

<sup>45</sup>Walter I. Trattner, *Crusade for the Children: A History of the National Child Labor Committee and Child Labor Reform in America* (New York, 1970), 163–6.

<sup>46</sup>National Child Labor Committee, “Handbook on the Federal Child Labor Amendment,” prepared by the Department of Research and Publicity, no. 368, revised May 1936, 13-5, box 42, Samuel Lindsay McCune Papers, Columbia University, New York, NY.

<sup>47</sup>*The American Child* 4, no. 4 (Nov. 1922): 1–2.

<sup>48</sup>“The Child Labor Amendment,” *Editorial Research Reports* 1924 2, no. 524 (Washington, DC, 1924), 192. For a contemporary criticism of the National Child Labor Committee’s silence on black agricultural child labor, see Katharine DuPre Lumpkin and Dorothy Wolff Douglas, *Child Workers in America* (New York, 1937). On the importance of whiteness to industrial child labor reforms, see Shelly Sallee, *The Whiteness of Child Labor Reform in the New South* (Athens, GA, 2004).

Constitution ought to be amended “to meet public demand when sanctioned by deliberate public opinion.”<sup>49</sup> In 1924, with the support of newly elected Republican president Calvin Coolidge, the amendment easily secured the necessary two-thirds majority in both houses, with the House of Representatives passing it by a vote of 297 to 69 and the Senate approving it shortly thereafter. Thirty-six states now needed to ratify it.<sup>50</sup>

Numerous antirratification organizations cropped up around the country to campaign against the proposal, but, based in Boston, the Sentinels quickly found themselves at the front-line of the war.<sup>51</sup> Massachusetts was expected to be the first state to ratify the amendment, with the state’s General Court moving to ratify the amendment on June 5. The Sentinels scored an early victory, however, when the last-minute intervention of Lincoln, who offered “sober second counsel,” led the General Court to instead refer the amendment to an advisory referendum to be held in conjunction with the state’s election in November.<sup>52</sup> Later that month, the amendment squeaked through in Arkansas by one vote. Over the summer, Louisiana, Georgia, and North Carolina rejected the amendment, well representing both the Southern mill industry and a zealous Southern states’ rights tradition.

Much of the nation looked to Massachusetts, then, as the bellwether for the amendment’s fate. The Sentinels knew the task of defeating the amendment would be a “formidable” one. “Public opinion, at the outset, moved by the appealing nature of the subject, was almost uniformly for the Amendment,” they admitted.<sup>53</sup> Considered a natural home for approval, the Bay State had led the nation in introducing child labor regulations and compulsory schooling laws since the mid-nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, the lax regulation in Southern industrial states supposedly disadvantaged Massachusetts’s mills. The amendment had the support of Massachusetts’s leading representatives, notwithstanding their small government leanings, including Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and David Walsh, along with U.S. president Calvin Coolidge. For these reasons, the supporters of the amendment actually assembled more slowly than its opponents. As the National Child Labor Committee conceded, they were “lulled to sleep, or at least into a state of semi-slumber,” because they “blundered in presuming” that because all of the politicians from Massachusetts had supported it, “the people would too.”<sup>54</sup>

By contrast, after securing the advisory referendum, the Sentinels quickly swung into action, and, in line with state campaign laws, set up a campaign committee named the “Citizen’s Committee to Protect Our Homes and Children.”<sup>55</sup> Sentinels president Louis Coolidge

<sup>49</sup>“President Harding: Message to Congress,” Dec. 8, 1922, as reported in *American Child* 4, no. 4 (Dec. 1922): 1.

<sup>50</sup>“Amendment on Child Labor Goes to State Legislatures,” *New York Times*, June 22, 1923, X12. Based on the votes of state representatives in Congress, the National Child Labor Committee expected that thirty states could be easily relied on to ratify the amendment, including Massachusetts.

<sup>51</sup>Manufacturing organizations were even more explicitly involved in the fight in rural and Southern states; see Marjorie Wood, “Emancipating the Child Laborer: Children, Freedom, and the Moral Boundaries of the Market Place, 1853–1938” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2011), ch. 5.

<sup>52</sup>The vote to refer the Child Labor Amendment to an advisory referendum derived from a “Public Opinion Law” introduced in the state in 1920 at the urging of anti-Prohibition forces, presumably including Coolidge and Lincoln, who were unhappy with the ratification process. Warren, “Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting,” Jan. 13, 1926, Sentinels Papers; Dorothy Kirchwey Brown, “The Child Labor Amendment Campaign,” Chicago, Apr. 29, 1942, folder 40.2, A-119, M763, Papers of Dorothy Kirchwey Brown, 1917–1957, Schlesinger Library, Cambridge, MA [hereafter Brown papers].

<sup>53</sup>The Sentinels of the Republic, “Partial Record of Accomplishments, 1931,” folder 2, box 1, A-109, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>54</sup>Wiley Swift, “Massachusetts Referendum Votes Disapproves Amendment,” *American Child* 6, no. 12 (Dec. 1924): 1.

<sup>55</sup>Letter from Hebert Parker explaining the reasons for forming the Citizen’s Committee to Protect Our Homes and Children, Oct. 25, 1924, folder 294, box 16, MC-360, Lowell Putnam Papers. Coolidge was the brainchild behind the committee that brought together the Sentinels and the Massachusetts Public Interest League, a reformulation of the women’s antisuffrage association led by Margaret Robinson. On Robinson and the Massachusetts Public Interest League, see Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 61–7; Delegation, *Battling Miss Bolshevik*, 121–3.

recruited Clifford Anderson, Associated Industry president, to finance the campaign. Coolidge himself took charge of the organizational strategy and public relations sides, employing the services of the Hunt-Luce advertising agency.<sup>56</sup> Throughout the campaign, the Sentinels vociferously denied that the Citizen's Committee was a mere front for industry. Coolidge and Cadwalader would go so far as to suggest the influence worked in the opposite direction. Coolidge feared the business community had "undermined its own freedom" in blithely accepting government aid.<sup>57</sup> Cadwalader argued that while farmers had previously held questionable economic views on the role of government, farmers' associations were ripe for conversion to the Sentinels' cause because they were filled with "patriotic minded men."<sup>58</sup>

So the Sentinels deliberately created a degree of distance between the manufacturing industry and its public facing campaign, emphasizing instead the dangers that the amendment posed to the family. The Citizen's Committee, chaired by Hebert Packer, a former Massachusetts attorney general, presented itself as a moderate, respectable, and impartial organization, boasting the names of prominent lawyers, statesman, religious leaders, and the presidents of Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Boston College. Speaking directly to parents, the committee urged: "If you would defend your hearthstone from centralized bureaucratic control ... if you believe in local self-government, if you would preserve the foundation stones of democracy—vote NO on Referendum No. 7."<sup>59</sup>

The charge that the child labor regulations would invade parental rights and individual liberty were, of course, not new arguments. Since the late nineteenth century, conservatives and antistatist activists had fomented opposition to compulsory schooling, child labor, and mandatory vaccination laws at the local and state level by arguing that such legislative innovations overrode the natural and common law rights of fathers.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, as late as 1916, the sovereign rights of fathers figured prominently in the decision to grant an injunction against the first national child labor law. A federal court judge in North Carolina held that the Keating-Owen Child Labor Act exceeded the powers of Congress in regulating the internal labor conditions of the states and violated the economic rights of men. It was an enduring, timeless, natural right, the judge opined, beyond dispute, that in "the family government the father has the right to control of his children and the right to support by service of his children."<sup>61</sup> The Sentinels updated this long-standing proprietary conception of fatherhood, as the proposed constitutional amendment shifted the political debate from whether the states possessed the right to regulate child labor to whether the federal government possessed it.

Capitalizing on the backlash to the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, the Sentinels cast the expansion of federal government power over children as yet another incursion on the rights of self-governing men.<sup>62</sup> George Stewart Brown, a Sentinel and lawyer from Baltimore, explained that the amendment threatened his "fundamental individual right" to decide whether his "seventeen year old" would work or go to school, or what kind of religious instruction he should receive. Brown, who had argued that women's suffrage was unconstitutional because it

<sup>56</sup>Stern, "The Evolution of a Reactionary," 99–100; Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 96.

<sup>57</sup>Coolidge, "Why Business Men Should Help Govern the Nation," 635–6; Stern, "The Evolution of a Reactionary," 94.

<sup>58</sup>Cadwalader, "Minutes of Executive Committee," Jan. 13, 1926, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>59</sup>Henry Shattuck, "Vote NO on Referendum 7," Oct. 31, 1924, carton 3, Henry Lee Shattuck Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.

<sup>60</sup>On the role that arguments about paternal sovereignty played in fomenting opposition to state regulations of children from the mid-nineteenth century onward, see Julia Bowes, "Invading the Home: Children, State Power, and the Gendered Origins of Modern Conservatism, 1865–1932" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 2018).

<sup>61</sup>Owen Lovejoy, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the General Secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, 1916–1917* (New York, 1918), 5; Wood, *Constitutional Politics*, 78.

<sup>62</sup>On this point, see also Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, who quotes a Nevada legislator complaining: "They have taken our women away from us by constitutional amendment; they have taken our liquor away from us and now they want to take our children" (90).

changed the composition of state electorates, declared that individual rights were the provenance of men who retained rights of governance over their children until eighteen years of age (Figure 1). Positioning family government as the most local form of self-government, Brown objected that the amendment “usurped” his rights, and, if adopted, would destroy his “precious right of local-self-government.”<sup>63</sup>

While the Sentinels held reservations about women’s enfranchisement, they also needed to take advantage of the expanded voter base and to appeal to women’s authority as mothers. Indeed, they viewed the enfranchisement of women as having created the conditions for the Child Labor Amendment as well as a critical part of the strategy for scotching it. As Warren explained, the whole mess of the Child Labor Amendment had come about because nothing appealed to women “more instinctively, more intuitively than the family.” Women’s innate interest in domestic life, Warren reflected, often led to their political betrayal, because when it was suggested to women that “children need protection,” women were so blinded by maternal instinct and political inexperience that they assumed the only way to protect children was to change the Constitution. So the Sentinels needed to communicate in an “affirmative way” that they really stood for the “preservation of the family.”<sup>64</sup>

Anti-ratification materials directly appealed to maternal authority. As Butler affirmed in a radio address, “No American mother would favor the adoption of the constitutional amendment which would empower Congress to invade the rights of parents and to shape family life.”<sup>65</sup> The Citizen’s Committee disseminated a voter card that mocked the inability of a teenage son to step in as the breadwinner and save his widowed mother from the indignity of laboring for her family (Figure 2). Taking advantage of the expanded voter base, the Sentinels mixed appeals to men’s individual rights as citizens with appeals to women’s moral authority as mothers in a gendered discourse that converged around a defense of the sovereign home.

The Sentinels rightly concluded that the politics of the family could cut across class, faith, and partisan lines to mobilize broad opposition to the amendment. While they waxed lyrical about states’ rights elsewhere, the antiratification materials in Massachusetts often drew a direct line between the expansion of congressional power and the diminishment of family government.<sup>66</sup> An oft-quoted statement from Reverend Warren Candler, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Georgia, omitted states’ rights from the equation altogether: “This ‘Child Labor’ amendment proceeds on the absurd assumption that Congress will be more tenderly concerned for children than their own parents.” It was a troublesome assumption in the bishop’s mind because “this assumption appraises congressional government far above its worth and puts home government far below its value.”<sup>67</sup> This savvy strategy not only downplayed arguments about states’ rights, but also diverted attention away from questions of economic regulation and even the morality of child labor itself. As the *New Republic*, a bastion of Progressivism and loyal friend of the amendment, explained in 1924, “In the current

<sup>63</sup>Letter by George Stewart Brown, Oct. 24, 1924, folder 294, box 16, MC-360, Lowell Putnam Papers. On the traditional common law roots of the concept of “local self-government” and its role in antisuffrage campaigns, see Siegel, “She the People,” 1000, and specifically on Brown’s constitutional arguments against the Nineteenth Amendment, see footnote 177 on 1005.

<sup>64</sup>Warren, “Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting,” Jan. 13, 1926, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>65</sup>“Says Amendment Would Invade Home: Dr. Butler, in Letter to Sentinels of Republic, Opposes Child Labor Proposal,” *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 1924, 19.

<sup>66</sup>The defense of states rights, for example, figured prominently in the testimony the Sentinels gave at congressional hearings throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Unlike Southern states, Massachusetts was not home to a political tradition that valorized states’ rights. Another reason might have been the view the Sentinels expressed in the 1930s that “states’ rights are a colorless, pedantic issue until it becomes amalgamated with individual rights.” Whitehead, “The Story of the Sentinels,” 14, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>67</sup>National Industrial Council, “The Proposed Twentieth Amendment to the Federal Constitution: A Cross-Section of American Sentiment in Opposition to the Revolutionary Grant of Power Sought by Congress from the Several States,” 2, folder 294, box 16, Lowell Putnam Papers.

Advance proof from Farm and Home for October, Chicago  
and Springfield, Mass.



*Uncle Sam Doesn't Like It*

He trusts the American people to reject the proposed 20th amendment by electing state legislatures that will defeat it.

**Figure 1.** Cartoon mocking the proposed Twentieth Amendment. Advance proof from the October 1924 issue of *Farm and Home*, a national farming magazine that coordinated with the Sentinels. Box 3, Folder 14, A109, Lincoln Papers. Courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.



Figure 2. Citizen's Committee Voter Card, 1924. Box 3, Folder 14, A109, Lincoln Papers. Courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

propaganda against the Child Labor Amendment, the economics of the issue are strangely subordinated. We are gravely assured ... that what is at stake is our sacred liberty, the sanctity of our homes."<sup>68</sup> Reformers, of course, were deeply frustrated by the argument that the amendment would invade individual rights and the home. The amendment did not grant Congress any powers that states had not already relied upon. Its supporters struck back at this misrepresentation. But it mattered little; what mattered were the rights that the citizens imagined were under threat, and these included the "natural rights" of parents.

By painting the amendment as a threat to the sovereignty of the home, the Sentinels predicted that they would be able to motivate diverse sectors of the community to go to the polls to vote it down. They linked the causes of federalism and "fundamental" parental rights, and deftly bundled together the interests of mill owners, farming families, and working-class families. In this frame, the amendment also threatened the political and cultural interests of middle-class families and religious minorities. In the Massachusetts referendum, the Sentinels were therefore able to quickly forge important coalitions between existing organizations and institutions with significant clout within the state.

They started first with the Catholic Church. While the Sentinels' own leadership ranks brimmed with Boston Brahmins, they secured the support of Cardinal William O'Connell, the archbishop of Boston. O'Connell's decision to speak out against the federal Child Labor Amendment was no sure bet. Before the 1920s, O'Connell had held to the official church position to keep out of politics, refusing to reveal his personal political positions on partisan questions or women's suffrage.<sup>69</sup> But both the pro- and antirratification campaigns were keen to secure the archbishop's support. The prorratification committee met with O'Connell in September and felt confident it had swayed him.<sup>70</sup> Amid the resurgence of anti-Catholicism in the 1920s, however, the Child Labor Amendment was one of numerous proposals that potentially threatened Catholic interests, with long-standing tensions over state and parochial schooling reaching a boiling point as the proposal for a federal education department reached the floor in Congress.<sup>71</sup> When O'Connell made his decision in early October, he concurred with the Sentinels' argument that the amendment would give Congress unlimited powers over the education and labor of children, constituting an "unprecedented threat to the natural rights of parents."<sup>72</sup> After O'Connell made his stance public, James Curley, the Irish Catholic mayor of Boston, promptly rescinded his support for the amendment. By late October, the Sentinels' Citizen's Committee contained the names of both O'Connell and Curley.<sup>73</sup>

Cardinal O'Connell made use of the Catholic Church's extensive institutional reach within Boston to motivate voter turnout against the amendment. Throughout the month of October, the pages of the diocesan paper the *Pilot* were filled with discussions of the amendment. The cardinal urged the clergy of Boston to dedicate their sermons to warning the parishioners of the dangers of the amendment. He further encouraged lay Catholics to organize against the amendment by targeting female parishioners. O'Connell invited over 600 Catholic women, representing Boston's 300 parishes, to meet with him on October 6, 1924, one month prior to the referendum, to hear a host of speakers led by Frances Slattery, the president of the League of Catholic Women.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>68</sup>"Child Labor, the Home and Liberty," *The New Republic*, Dec. 3, 1924, 32.

<sup>69</sup>The only other issue the archbishop took a public stand on was birth control in the 1930s. See Thomas H. O'Connor, *Boston Catholics: A History of the Church and Its People* (Boston, 1998), 228–30.

<sup>70</sup>Stern, "The Evolution of a Reactionary," 102.

<sup>71</sup>Dumenil, "The Insatiable Maw of Bureaucracy," 499–524. At the same time, more than eleven states debated proposals to make public schooling compulsory, which would have effectively outlawed parochial schooling in those states. Paula Abrams, *Cross Purposes: Pierce v. Society of Sisters and the Struggle over Compulsory Public Education* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2009).

<sup>72</sup>*Pilot*, Oct. 4 1924, folder 195, box 15, Lowell Putnam Papers.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid. Curley's name had initially appeared on the stationery for the ratification committee.

<sup>74</sup>O'Connor, *Boston Catholics*, 228–30.

Slattery, an enlisted Sentinel and member of the Citizen's Committee, threw herself behind the anti-ratification campaign. A devout Catholic, she claimed that the Sentinels were the "only organization" outside the church deserving of her affiliation because the Sentinels' campaign transcended politics in defense of the "moral cause" of the family. After the election, Slattery bragged before a meeting of the Sentinels that she had registered 162,000 women to vote in fewer than ten days. Warren praised her contribution, noting that, if women in other churches did the same work, the Nineteenth Amendment could be judged to have greatly increased the "safety of the nation."<sup>75</sup> While Slattery may have exaggerated her role, the Sentinels undoubtedly benefited from the church's influence among Boston's large working- and middle-class Irish Catholic population.

The Sentinels also convinced Protestant leaders to take positions against the amendment, appealing to common Catholic and Protestant beliefs about the autonomy and hierarchy of the family. The Episcopal bishop of Massachusetts, William Lawrence, joined O'Connell in lending his name to the distinguished citizens who supported the Citizen's Committee. Reverend Joseph Shepler, the presiding elder over 59 Methodist churches, also came out against the amendment.<sup>76</sup> In a radio address broadcasted on October 10, Coolidge himself appealed to the "Christian men and women of Massachusetts" to "carefully and prayerfully" study the amendment. He painted a domestic scene of a family gathered around the hearth with "benediction of a home-loving Christian mother." The children, he described, were "flushed and happy" from the "wholesome labor" they had completed around the house and farm on return from school.<sup>77</sup> The Child Labor Amendment threatened that scene—the home life of respectable, middle- and upper-class families along with the working-class families whose children labored in factories and mills.

The Sentinels enlisted the help of antisuffragists, who still held some influence in the state. Boston had been a hotbed of antisuffrage activism in the early twentieth century, reflected in the membership of the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association of Massachusetts, which reached 40,000 women in 1917.<sup>78</sup> While broad-based antisuffrage activism receded quickly after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, a committed core of Northeastern antisuffrage (turned antifeminist and antiradical) activists might have lost the war but were determined to win the peace. A group of five women, including Sentinels secretary Balch, consolidated their efforts in the Woman Patriot Publishing Company, based in Washington, DC, refitting their antisuffrage newspaper the *Woman Patriot* to this new purpose, with the updated byline "Dedicated to the Defence of the Family and the State AGAINST Feminism and Socialism."<sup>79</sup> Fanning the flames of antiradicalism, they doused the pages of the *Woman Patriot* from May through November with redbaiting appeals, fixating on the friendship between Florence Kelley, a key backer of the amendment, and Frederick Engels as proof that a "socialist dictated the draft of the amendment" and charging that an "interlocking" web of radical women at the Children's Bureau now intended to "organize a revolution through women and children."<sup>80</sup> While the circulation of the *Woman Patriot* had shrunk to around 3,000 in the early 1920s, its pages provided plenty

<sup>75</sup>Slattery and Warren, "Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting," Jan. 13, 1926, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>76</sup>"Don't Ratify the Federal Child Labor Amendment! Arguments Used Against Broadcast to Sentinels of the Republic," Radio Address by Louis A. Coolidge and Margaret Robinson, broadcast Dec. 30, 1924, on WYJ, vol. 7, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>77</sup>"The Child Labor Amendment: An Appeal to the Christian Men and Women of Massachusetts," Radio Address by Louis A. Coolidge, Oct. 10, 1924, folder 14, box 2, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>78</sup>Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 173.

<sup>79</sup>For background on how female antisuffrage groups reformulated into the more conservative, antiradical Woman Patriot Publishing Company, see Susan Goodier, *No Votes for Women: The New York State Anti-Suffrage Movement* (Urbana, IL, 2013), 133–41.

<sup>80</sup>*Woman Patriot*, June 1, 1924, 1. On the backlash against the women behind the Children's Bureau more generally, see Muncy, *A Female Dominion*, ch. 5.

of ammunition to alarm anticommunists and antiradicals of the subversive nature of the amendment.<sup>81</sup>

The final weapon in the Sentinels' arsenal was the claim that the amendment would place a federal agent on every farm in the country—an appeal that goaded both farmers and middle-class urbanites who held romantic ideas about the white farm child. By the 1920s, most Americans, and even most mill owners, would have conceded that industrial labor injured the health and development of young children. But in a moment when the U.S. population became predominantly urban instead of rural, many Americans valued farm work for precisely the opposite—the fresh air of the farm was the perfect laboratory for developing healthy bodies and healthy minds, instilling children with skills and a sense of responsibility for the family economy. Another Citizen's Committee voter card pictured the popular antiratification argument that the amendment would prevent healthy, white teenage sons from helping out independent farmers (Figure 3).

The Sentinels coordinated with the conservative newspaper editor of the *Springfield Union* and with the Phelps Company, which published the weekly *New England Homestead* and monthly national *Farm and Home* newspapers, all based in Springfield in the west of the state, to pump out antiratification materials.<sup>82</sup> In the lead-up to the Massachusetts referendum, the American Farm Bureau Federation voted to oppose the amendment, with its news services heavily circulating antiratification materials thereafter.<sup>83</sup> While the Sentinels would claim credit for having a “great deal to do with setting the farm organizations right” on the amendment, they were one of a number of manufacturing interest groups clambering to sway farm groups (if the economic self-interest of commercial agriculture had not led them to oppose the amendment already).<sup>84</sup> Nonetheless, sensing how the farm propaganda was playing out in antiratification campaigns, the National Child Labor Committee suspended its investigations into the conditions of agricultural child labor in 1924.<sup>85</sup>

On November 4, 1924, the voters of Massachusetts rejected the proposed Twentieth Amendment to the Constitution 697,563 votes to 241,461. The defeat in Massachusetts precipitated a swift and sharp turn in public opinion and political will. In New York, another state considered a reliable stalwart by amendment advocates, Governor Al Smith, who had supported the amendment, immediately flinched, suggesting that an advisory referendum be held there as well.<sup>86</sup> In December, the Sentinels held a meeting in Philadelphia of sixteen antiratification groups, putting itself forward to lead the nationwide campaign against ratification as manufacturing groups, farm bureaus, and patriotic organizations flooded other states with the antiratification appeals the Sentinels had honed in Massachusetts.<sup>87</sup> Like dominoes, the support of Northeast, Midwest, and Western states fell. By the summer of 1925, only three more states,

<sup>81</sup>Delegard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviki*, 75–6.

<sup>82</sup>Maurice S. Sherman, editor of the *Springfield Union*, attended and addressed meetings of the Sentinels, describing his opposition to the amendment as “instinctive” because his “forbearers threw tea overboard” in the Boston Tea Party and he did “not like the Soviet.” Remarks of Maurice S. Sherman, at the Sentinels of the Republic Meeting, Dec. 6, 1924, Bellevue Stratford Hotel, Philadelphia, PA, vol. 2, Sentinels Papers. The Phelps company, based in Springfield, purchased the *New England Homestead* in 1921, and sent the Sentinels advanced copies of its materials for review.

<sup>83</sup>“American Farm Bureau Federation Urges Rejection of Proposed Twentieth Amendment,” Press Release Sept. 18, 1924, box 16, folder 294, MC-360, Lowell Putnam Papers.

<sup>84</sup>Cadwalader, noting that the Sentinels were invited to speak in front of the meetings of the Farm Bureau Federation and the National Grange, “Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting,” Jan. 13, 1926, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>85</sup>Jeremy P. Felt, *Hostages of Fortune: Child Labor Reform in New York State* (Syracuse, NY, 1965), 208.

<sup>86</sup>In New York, Sentinel William “Daddy” George set up a parallel New York “Committee for the Protection of our Home and Children” to campaign against ratification. *Ibid.*, 203–7.

<sup>87</sup>Groups present at the meeting included the National Association of Manufacturers, the Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association, the New York Commercial, the Woman Patriot, the Moderation League, the Constitutional Liberty League, the American Constitutional League, the Women's Constitutional League, the National Security League, and the American Defense League. Lumpkin and Douglas, *Child Workers*, 234.



Figure 3. Citizen's Committee Voter Card, 1924. Box 3, Folder 14, A109, Lincoln Papers. Courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

Arizona, California, and Wisconsin, had ratified, while a total of thirty-four states in quick succession voted against its adoption.

In the aftermath of the election, the supporters of the amendment complained that they had been defeated by a deliberately deceitful campaign financed by the manufacturing industry.

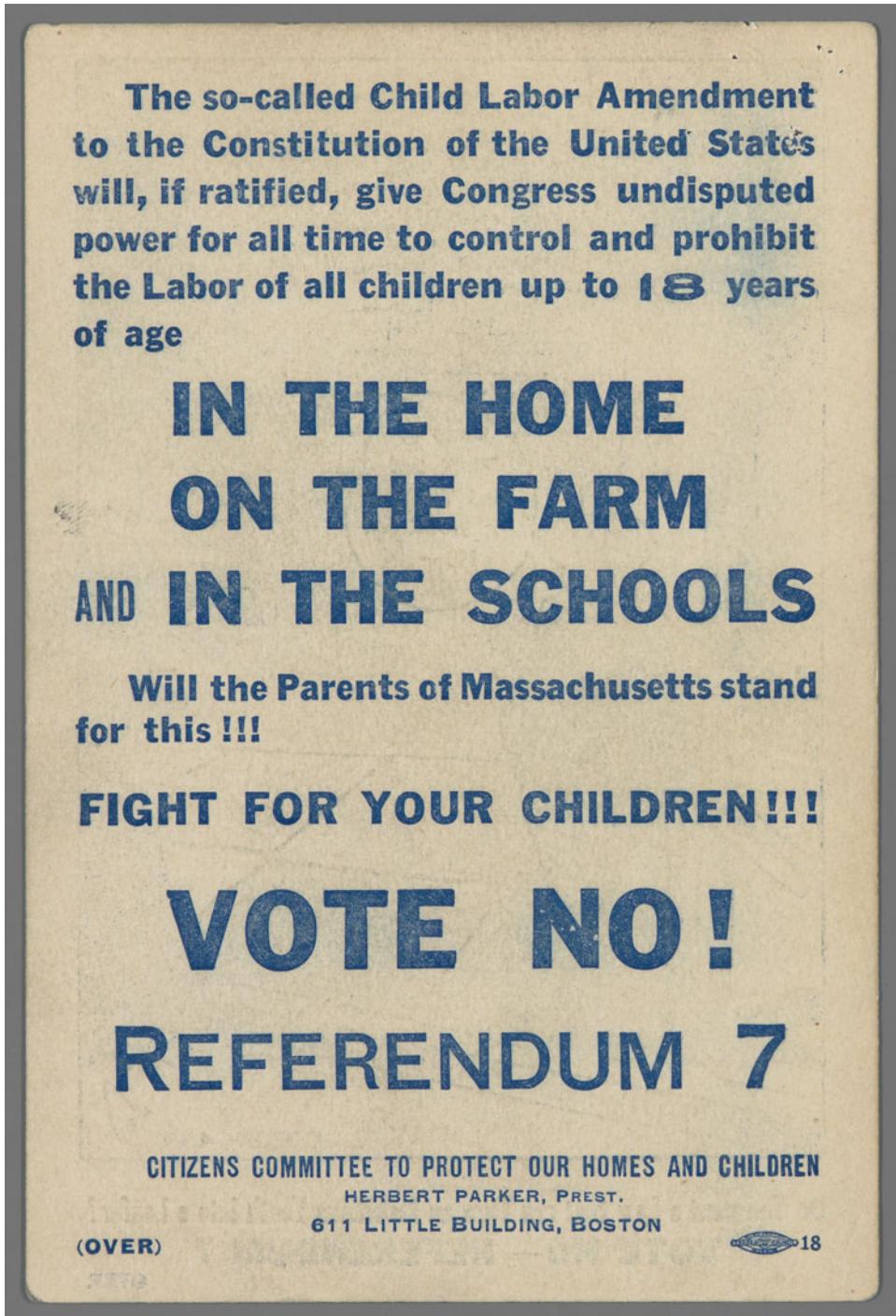


Figure 3. Continued.

Indeed, the Citizen's Committee had outspent the proratisation committee in Massachusetts by a ratio of five to one.<sup>88</sup> Lincoln strongly denied the charge that the National Association of

<sup>88</sup>Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 95. See also footnote 21 on 183 for Nielsen's efforts to trace where the Citizen's Committee money came from. She notes the largest contributions were \$1,300 from the Massachusetts

Manufacturers had financed the campaign. Anderson, however, was also a member of the National Association of Manufacturing's antiratification committee, which had circulated strikingly similar materials. Lincoln pointed to the high caliber of upstanding men and women who formed the Citizen's Committee as proof of its impartiality, alleging that the \$15,000 spent by the committee had been raised by donations, none of which exceeded \$200, from concerned citizens.<sup>89</sup>

In truth, the prominent members of Boston's high society, whom Lincoln held up as examples of the Sentinels' impartiality, actually revealed a Citizen's Committee awash in manufacturing money. Lincoln singled out Elizabeth Lowell Putnam, for example, a matriarch of a Boston Brahmin family and a formidable antisuffragist. Lowell Putnam styled herself an expert on maternal and infant health, but she was also an heir to the Lowell textile fortune her father had amassed from owning Pacific Mills, the largest combine of its era. She was also related to two of the other prominent "disinterested" members of the committee; her brother was Abbott Lawrence Lowell, the president of Harvard University, and their first cousin, the Episcopal Bishop William Lawrence, had grown up in the neighboring town of Lawrence, where his father owned Ipswich Mills.<sup>90</sup> After the Supreme Court struck down the first child labor law in 1918, a number of Massachusetts mills had also extended their operations in the South and invested in new mills there.<sup>91</sup>

Nonetheless there existed an ideological coherence among the prominent backers of the Citizen's Committee that coalesced around the private property rights of men and limited government.<sup>92</sup> As Coolidge explained, after quitting his role at the United Shoe Manufacturing Company to dedicate himself full-time to the antiratification fight, he opposed all forms of "government ownership, no matter what its guise may be."<sup>93</sup> Long before joining the Citizen's Committee, Bishop Lawrence was renowned for preaching about the compatibility of *laissez-faire* capitalism and Christianity, while Cardinal O'Connell was a conservative force within the Catholic Church, lecturing on the importance of "limited state activity."<sup>94</sup> After the Massachusetts campaign, Lowell Putnam remained steadfast in her antisuffrage convictions about the importance of male-headed family government, joining the Sentinels in Congress in opposing the nationalization of marriage and divorce laws and the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act.<sup>95</sup> Just as social reformers such as Florence Kelley had long viewed protective labor laws for women and children as an opening wedge

---

Public Interest League, \$500 from the Sentinels of the Republic, and \$150 from the National Association of Manufacturers.

<sup>89</sup>Alexander Lincoln, "Letter to Arthur W. Page, Editor of the *World's Work*," Mar. 10, 1925, box 2, folder 13, A-109, Lincoln Papers. The National Association of Manufacturers gave only \$150 directly to the Citizen's Committee, but it is impossible to know how many of the small donations came from manufacturing or were channeled through the Massachusetts Public Interest League and Sentinels of the Republic donations. At the National Meeting in December, it was disclosed that the Sentinels were responsible for producing and coordinating the antiratification materials, which were in turn circulated by the National Association of Manufacturing's publicity bureau, the New York Commercial's special service and the *Woman Patriot*. Lumpkin and Douglas, *Child Workers*, 234.

<sup>90</sup>Ferris Greenslet, *The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds* (Boston, 1946); "Bishop Lawrence Viewed Pageant of a Nation," *Boston Globe*, Nov. 7, 1941, 10.

<sup>91</sup>Trattner, *Crusade for the Children*, 165.

<sup>92</sup>On this point, see also Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 103.

<sup>93</sup>Whitehead, "The Story of the Sentinels," 2–8, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>94</sup>William Lawrence, "The Relation of Wealth to Morals," *The World's Work* 1 (Jan. 1901): 289–92; William Henry O'Connell, "The Reasonable Limits of State Activity," *Catholic Education Association Bulletin* no. 16 (Nov. 1919): 62–6.

<sup>95</sup>On Lowell Putnam's politics and activism, see Robyn L. Rosen and Sonya Michel, "The Paradox of Maternalism: Elizabeth Lowell Putnam and the American Welfare State," *Gender and History* 4, no. 3 (Sept. 1992): 364–86. Despite their common politics, Lowell Putnam did not get along with the women behind the *Woman Patriot* but did join the Sentinels' Massachusetts Committee; Delegation, *Battling Miss Bolshevik*, 62–4.

for the protection of all laborers, the Sentinels viewed the “nationalization” of children under the Child Labor Amendment as the opening wedge for federal control of industry, religion, and education.<sup>96</sup> As Reverend Machen put it, “If we give the bureaucrats our children, we may as well give them everything else.”<sup>97</sup>

Moreover, their arguments about the Child Labor Amendment had enabled the Sentinels to build a broad-based antistatist coalition. Machen publicly struck back at the idea that the Sentinels’ success could be reduced to the propaganda of “fat business men and windy professors who prate about the sacredness of the home.” Instead, he charged that the explanation for the defeat was much simpler: the American people had become increasingly “disgusted” with the tendency to place “intimate details of family life in the hands of a centralized Washington bureaucracy.”<sup>98</sup> There was much to Machen’s assessment that a wide range of Americans found themselves politically invested in the sovereignty of the home. This fact had allowed the Sentinels to forge common ground among unlikely allies, using churches and public figures to transcend traditional political divides. The head of the Massachusetts ratification committee, Dorothy Kirchwey Brown, conceded that the “combination of reactionary Yankee Republicans and reactionary Irish Democrats” who rallied to the Sentinels’ cause was insurmountable. While the antiratification campaign remained virtually silent on the interests of industry, it still primed the public to view state intervention as a dangerous and destructive force.

Indeed, in the campaign in Massachusetts, the Sentinels of the Republic had found an effective way to fight the expansion of the state—one that undergirded its lobbying efforts for the rest of the 1920s and also prevented the ratification of the same amendment in the 1930s. Between 1922 and 1929, the Sentinels joined forces with the National Catholic Welfare Council to defeat repeated proposals to establish a federal department of education.<sup>99</sup> In 1926, they appeared again in Congress to broker the repeal of the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act, which had provided federal funds to states for prenatal and children’s health services on a matching basis. On this occasion, the Sentinels aligned themselves with the American Medical Association and continued their standing partnership with Woman Patriot Publishing Company.<sup>100</sup> By the late 1920s, the Sentinels had helped defeat numerous proposals to expand the purview of the federal government; gendered ideas about the sovereignty of the family had enabled the organization to forge important alliances in each instance.

### The Sentinels in the New Deal

As the nation fell into an economic depression after the stock market crash of 1929, the Sentinels broadened their focus beyond the Children’s Bureau, opposing any congressional proposal that included federal aid to the states or economic relief to the public at large. They opposed the dole throughout the winter of 1930–1931—a time when the unemployment rate doubled to nearly 16 percent.<sup>101</sup> The organization displayed a tenacious and unwavering commitment to its antistatist principles during the depths of the downturn. In February 1931,

<sup>96</sup>Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Florence Kelley and the Nation’s Work: The Rise of Women’s Political Culture, 1830–1900* (New Haven, CT, 1995), 258–9.

<sup>97</sup>J. Gresham Machen, “Shall We Have a Federal Education Department,” Address Delivered Before the Sentinels of the Republic, Jan. 12, 1926, 25–6, vol 2, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>98</sup>J. Gresham Machen, “Prof. Machen Discusses the Reasons for the Massachusetts Vote,” *New York Times*, Nov. 18, 1924, 2; J. Gresham Machen, “A Communication: Child Labor and Liberty,” *New Republic*, Dec. 31, 1924, 145.

<sup>99</sup>Dunemil, “The Insatiable Maw of Democracy.”

<sup>100</sup>On the downfall of Sheppard-Towner and the political casualties of antifeminism more generally, see J. Stanley Lemons, “The Sheppard-Towner Act: Progressivism in the 1920s,” *Journal of American History* 55, no. 4 (Mar. 1969): 776–86; Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion*, ch. 5; Deleard, *Battling Miss Bolshevik*, ch. 4; and Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, ch. 5.

<sup>101</sup>“Sentinels of Republic,” *Anniston Star*, Dec. 1, 1931, 4.

Frank L. Peckham appeared before Congress on behalf of the Sentinels to oppose a proposal for federal cooperation with the states for the rehabilitation and vocational training of disabled people. "I am not here in favor of crippled children," Peckham clarified, stating, "I am here opposed, however, to further crippling American principles of government."<sup>102</sup> The states, the Sentinels explained, were now "beggars" who needed to be "saved from themselves."<sup>103</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt's presidency and the full roster of New Deal economic relief programs left the Sentinels in despair. The principles of government they had fought to maintain for over a decade, Lincoln bemoaned in a July 1933 letter, had been "thrown into the discard." In a public statement to Roosevelt, the Sentinels urged that he show restraint in his response to the economic crisis, which they argued had been largely brought about by "over centralized control of business and industry." It behooved the president to respect private property rights, stop Congress from passing any new taxes, and stay out of labor relations, as the right to work was sacrosanct, and no government was entitled to impair it. The Sentinels reminded the president that he had taken an oath to uphold the Constitution, "not to overthrow it."<sup>104</sup>

In the early years of the Depression, the Sentinels made a determined effort to sell their anti-statist agenda but struggled to survive as an organization. In 1932, they sponsored twenty national radio addresses and made concerted attempts to attract more prominent speakers to raise their profile. Despite this outreach, neither the executive committee nor membership base drew in many new recruits. A notable exception was the addition of the first prominent Catholic to the executive committee, Father Edmund Walsh of Georgetown University, who would come to be known as one of the most vociferous anticommunist warriors of the mid-century. Walsh's rousing radio address brought in more letters of inquiry than did any other address. But while the Sentinels claimed to have 10,000 subscribers in 1931, only 1,000 members paid nominal dues, and the executive committee admitted that it lacked the resources to follow up on the interest the radio talks had generated.<sup>105</sup> A lack of funds saw the Sentinels' long-standing partner, the Woman Patriot Publishing Company, cease publication in 1932. But Balch, who had long served both organizations, and Mary Kilbreth would continue their antistatist activism through the Sentinels. The Sentinels found renewed energy in 1933 when proratification forces capitalized on the changing political mood to make a new effort to ratify the federal Child Labor Amendment.

Indeed, as the New Deal revitalized new threads of antistatist activism, the Sentinels jostled to define their place in this new political landscape. Many business leaders initially supported the election of Roosevelt, and the president's support for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment handed a welcome victory to the Sentinels' 1920s anti-Prohibition compatriots. The businessmen and prominent Democrats behind the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, however, quickly soured on Roosevelt after he introduced the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1933, and they resolved to found the American Liberty League.<sup>106</sup> The League's goals clearly echoed those of the Sentinels', and in June 1934, William H. Stayton, the secretary of the Liberty League, wrote to Lincoln to propose a merger.

<sup>102</sup>Testimony of Frank L. Peckham, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Rehabilitation and Vocational Education of Crippled Persons: Hearing Before the Committee on Education and Labor*, 71st Cong., 3rd sess., 1931, 2095.

<sup>103</sup>"The States as Beggars," *Elizabethtown Chronicle*, Nov. 27, 1931, 2.

<sup>104</sup>Letter from Alexander Lincoln to Sentinels of the Republic, July 6, 1933, vol. 5, Sentinels Papers; Whitehead, "The Story of the Sentinels," 10–1, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>105</sup>Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., and the Politics of American Anticommunism* (New York, 2005); Meeting of the Executive Committee, Oct. 17, 1931, and Annual Meeting of the Sentinels of the Republic, Jan. 9, 1932, both at Hotel Biltmore, New York, N.Y., vol. 1, Sentinels Papers.

<sup>106</sup>Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York, 2016), 246–8; Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, ch. 1.

The idea of a merger appealed to Lincoln, who strongly supported the League's goals and worried about the Sentinels' ability to attract funds and publicity in the League's shadow. The national director of the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment, Raymond Pitcairn, the son and heir of John Pitcairn, a Gilded Age industrialist, had already assumed the national chairmanship of the Sentinels and begun to pour in money. Both Lincoln and Stayton worried that the duplication of efforts would diminish the effective pursuit of the two groups' common cause. For Lincoln, however, the Liberty League's undetermined position on the Child Labor Amendment proved a sticking point—a cause the Sentinels were unwilling to abandon. While Stayton strongly identified with the Sentinels' opposition to the Child Labor Amendment, Jouett Shouse, a leading anti-Prohibition Democrat and founding member the Liberty League, had voted for the Child Labor Amendment in 1924 and had yet to reverse his support. The Liberty League's primary backers, the du Pont brothers, ultimately came out against the amendment. But in October 1934 with the League's position unresolved, Stayton advised that the Sentinels should remain its own entity to continue its campaign against the revived effort to ratify the Child Labor Amendment, noting the momentum the organization had already built.<sup>107</sup> In the end, the Sentinels formed the nucleus of anti-New Deal groups that supported the more prominent Liberty League's goals. The group shared the same principles, the same small overlapping membership base, and an even smaller base of financial backers, with the same businessmen and corporations providing 90 percent of all anti-administration funds.<sup>108</sup>

The National Industrial Recovery Act had rekindled the fight over the federal Child Labor Amendment by including provisions that outlawed industrial child labor. Seeking to cement the gains made under the act and to extend protections to children in agriculture, Grace Abbott, Lillian Wald, and Florence Kelley, three driving forces behind the Children's Bureau, led a renewed push to ratify the amendment in 1933. With little ado, fourteen states ratified the amendment that same year. Twelve of those fourteen states reversed a previous vote by the state legislature to reject it.<sup>109</sup> By 1935, the battle erupted more fiercely when the Supreme Court struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act and Roosevelt joined the fight for ratification, leaning on all Democratic governors to pursue it. Cracks in the once bipartisan support for the federal Child Labor Amendment, first introduced in a Republican Congress in 1924, were now fully opened, as the Republican opposition became uniform.<sup>110</sup>

Before President Roosevelt had even entered the ratification fight, however, the Sentinels had already done significant damage, lobbying thirteen states to reject ratification in 1934.<sup>111</sup> In late 1933, the Sentinels used their executive committee to establish the National Committee to Protect the Child, Home, School and Church, which operated out of St. Louis, Missouri. The National Committee's executive included Balch, Kilbreth, and Lincoln. Sterling Edmunds, a new member of the Sentinels, headed the committee. A prominent Missouri lawyer and member of the American Bar Association, Edmunds was an anti-New Deal Democrat who led a Democratic campaign against Roosevelt as a member of the Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>107</sup>Black Hearings, 2058–67. Another reason why the two groups did not merge was the du Pont brothers' desire for control and personal dislike of Raymond Pitcairn; Burk, *The Corporate State*, 172–7. On the du Ponts' opposition to the Child Labor Amendment, see Philips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, 4.

<sup>108</sup>Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives*, 228.

<sup>109</sup>Lumpkin and Douglas, *Child Workers*, 87.

<sup>110</sup>On the internal divisions within the Republican Party at this time, and the growing clout of conservatives, see Elliot A. Rosen, *The Republican Party in the Age of Roosevelt: Sources of Anti-Government Conservatism in the United States* (Charlottesville, VA, 2014).

<sup>111</sup>National Committee for Protection of Child, Family, School and Church, "News Bulletin," July 23, 1934, box 78, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University, New York, NY [hereafter Butler Papers].

<sup>112</sup>Burk, *The Corporate State and the Broker State*, 262–8.

The final member of the executive committee was William Dameron Guthrie, a *laissez-faire* constitutional lawyer, lifelong Republican, and devout Catholic who had long shared the Sentinels' worldview about the threats that progressivism posed to private property rights and the patriarchal family. Guthrie had first risen to national prominence in 1895, when he appeared before the Supreme Court in *Pollock v. Farmers Loan Trust Co.* in a successful challenge to the constitutionality of the national income tax. (The decision in *Pollock* had been superseded by the ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment in 1913. In the 1930s, the Sentinels added the repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment to their platform.) Over the next thirty years, Guthrie dedicated his legal work to challenging Progressive Era reforms, culminating in his successful challenge to an Oregon school law on behalf of the National Catholic Welfare Council in the Supreme Court case *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925). The Oregon law, struck down before it came into effect, would have made attendance at public schools in Oregon compulsory, effectively outlawing parochial education. Echoing the political rhetoric of the Sentinels, Guthrie had argued that family government, like state government, had its own separate sphere of jurisdiction beyond the reach of the state. Striking down the law as unconstitutional, the court declared that the "child was not a mere creature of the state," and held that parental rights were a fundamental liberty protected by the Fourteenth Amendment.<sup>113</sup> Guthrie's role in the National Committee again aligned the Sentinels with the Catholic Church in the antiratification fight.

In the 1930s, the Sentinels argued once again that the amendment posed dire threats to individual liberty and to the American home. In February 1934, the National Committee kicked off its campaign with four national radio addresses delivered by Butler; Clarence E. Martin, the former president of the American Bar Association; Lawrence Lowell, the former president of Harvard University; and James Reed, a former U.S. Democratic senator from Missouri. Reed stated that he could imagine "nothing more inimical to our country or destructive of our civilization" than the proposed Child Labor Amendment: "Our American civilization and the civilization of the Anglo-Saxon race has been based upon the home, upon the authority of the parent, upon the discipline of the family, upon the industry and common effort of the family."<sup>114</sup> The amendment, he warned, would replace the authority of the parent with the authority of Congress.

The Sentinels leveraged their extensive connections within the legal community to lean on the American Bar Association to come out against the amendment. Since its inception, the ranks of the Sentinels' executive committee had been filled with lawyers, including Lincoln, its congressional spokesmen Peckham, and Cadwalader, who had long dueled with leading progressive lawyers, such as Roscoe Pound and Ernst Freund, over the constitutional wisdom of the amendment. In the 1930s, Guthrie and Edmunds convinced the American Bar Association to throw its professional heft behind the antiratification campaign, persuading the association to form a Special Committee Against the Ratification of the Child Labor Amendment in early 1934. Guthrie was appointed chairman and authored an influential report, relying on his victory in *Pierce* as a constitutional bedrock to argue that the amendment invaded the rights of parents. "The Amendment should be actively opposed as unwarranted invasion by the Federal Government in the field in which the rights of the individual states and of the family are and should remain paramount," the report concluded, warning that the amendment would grant Congress power that "could be exercised so as to invade the privacy of the home and the

<sup>113</sup>For more on Guthrie's antistatist career, see Bowes, "Invading the Home," ch. 5. On the patriarchal undercurrents of *Pierce*, see also Barbara Woodhouse, "'Who Owns the Child?' Meyer and Pierce and the Child as Property," *William & Mary Law Review* 33, no. 4 (1992): 995–1122.

<sup>114</sup>"The Miscalled Child Labor Amendment," Radio Address by James Reed, Feb. 23, 1934, vol. 9, Sentinels Papers.

sacred authority, control and duty of parents.”<sup>115</sup> Guthrie also convinced the American Bar Association to use its state associations to lobby against ratification in 1935.<sup>116</sup>

The Sentinels also solidified their partnerships with prominent Catholics and with evangelical and mainline Protestant religious leaders, and used the institutional resources of their churches to disseminate antirratification materials. Edmunds was a member of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, and he secured the support of his pastor, Dr. William Crowe. Crowe sent a letter on behalf of the National Committee to every minister of the Southern Presbyterian Church to call their attention to the “evils in the so-called ‘child labor’ Amendment.” (Machen also unsuccessfully lobbied the Northern Presbyterian Church to oppose the amendment.)<sup>117</sup> Across the Midwest, the Sentinels coordinated with conservative religious leaders, issuing a joint statement of the opposition of twelve ministers from Methodist, Southern Baptist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran Churches, as well as the Archbishop of St. Louis. By the 1930s, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church was united in its opposition to the amendment, and the Missouri Lutheran-Synod joined the fight in the Midwest as well.<sup>118</sup>

In Boston and New York, where the Sentinels’ leadership remained rooted, the Sentinels again used alliances with Catholic leaders to unite wet Republicans and Catholic Democrats. New York, as the home state of the president, was considered a key battleground for ratification in 1935. Guthrie and Butler established the New York Committee Against Ratification in 1934, and Guthrie worked his connections with the Catholic Church, whose public condemnation of the amendment was enough to lead many New York Democrats with large Catholic constituencies to disregard the directions of Roosevelt and the Democratic governor.<sup>119</sup> In Massachusetts, Lincoln appeared before the General Court to read the letters of “unequivocal opposition” penned by Cardinal O’Connell and the Episcopal Bishop Lawrence.<sup>120</sup> By March 1935, a further sixteen states had voted to reject the amendment, and the Sentinels declared it “dead.”<sup>121</sup>

While the Sentinels waged war against the Child Labor Amendment under the auspices of the National Committee, the organization concurrently spoke out against the New Deal in Congress. Between 1933 and 1935, the Sentinels appeared in Congress to register their opposition to the Social Security Act, the establishment of a national department of education, the National Labor Relations Act, and the Public Utility Holding Company Act, all while calling for the repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment and the elimination of the “general welfare clause” of the U.S. Constitution.<sup>122</sup> In 1935, Pitcairn used the Sentinels as a vehicle for his own personal crusade against a provision of the Revenue Act of 1934, which required the small percentage of Americans who paid income tax to disclose their income on a “pink slip” that would become publicly available. Declaring that the “pink slip” was an affront to

<sup>115</sup>Guthrie, “The Federal Child Labor Amendment,” 30.

<sup>116</sup>Sterling Edmunds to Nicholas Murray Butler, July 24, 1934; Sterling Edmunds to Nicholas Murray Butler, Nov. 15, 1934, box 78, Butler Papers.

<sup>117</sup>Machen also personally wrote to every member of the Pennsylvania legislature, unsuccessfully lobbying the assembly to vote against its adoption. The extent of Machen’s lobbying efforts within the Presbyterian Church and Pennsylvania are contained in Box 30, Machen Papers.

<sup>118</sup>Lumpkin and Douglas, *Child Workers*, 240–2.

<sup>119</sup>William Dameron Guthrie to Nicholas Murray Butler, Apr. 2, 1934, folder 3, box 171, Butler Papers; Charles J. Tobin, Secretary of the New York State Catholic Welfare Committee to Nicholas Murray Butler, May 27, 1936, box 78; Felt, *Hostages of Fortune*, 213–4.

<sup>120</sup>“New Foes to Ratification: Bishop Lawrence, Lutherans in Child Labor Fight,” *Boston Globe*, Feb. 10, 1934, 22; Letter from Cardinal O’Connell to Alexander Lincoln quoted in “Opposed to Child Labor Amendment: Cardinal O’Connell Has Not Changed Position,” *Boston Globe*, Jan. 7 1934, newspaper clipping in box 8, vol. 6, A109, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>121</sup>“Child Labor Act Set Back,” *Des Moines Register*, Mar. 27, 1935, 4.

<sup>122</sup>See Sentinels of the Republic, Statement of Legislative Platform, 1933–35, folder 2, box 1, A-109, Lincoln Papers.

individual liberty and to the Constitution, Pitcairn coordinated a targeted campaign to inundate members of Congress until the provision was repealed.<sup>123</sup>

In May 1935, the Sentinels regrouped at Faneuil Hall in Boston to celebrate their recent victories against “federal paternalism.” Though Pitcairn had pulled the Sentinels in a new direction with his anti-tax appeal, the organization retained a common purpose and ideology, revealed in the persistent gendering of the individual citizen as a male property owner. Pitcairn emphasized that the fundamental constitutional rights that the Sentinels fought to preserve were “profoundly important” to all “productive self-reliant citizens,” and warned that the current administration imperiled the rights of the “home owner,” the “wage earner,” the “businessman,” and the “professional man.” The Sentinels used the same valorizing language to describe the “sanctity of his home” and the “sanctity of his contracts” in describing the property rights protected by the Constitution. At Faneuil Hall, Pitcairn and the original founders of the Sentinels decided to celebrate their recent victories in the antirratification and pink slip campaigns with a weeklong celebration of the Constitution in Philadelphia that October. The exhibit, which attracted 30,000 visitors, used poster displays to portray the dangers of the New Deal and debuted a new and controversial cartoon film mocking the administration.

The celebrations were short lived. In 1936, the Black Committee called the Sentinels to testify before Congress on the sources of their lobbying funds. Chaired by Hugo Black, the committee oversaw a Senate inquiry into the lobbying efforts against the Public Utility Holding Act. Its broader aim, however, was to expose the money and the sinister intents of anti-administration groups, especially the American Liberty League, who were “tried in absentia” and “declared guilty by association” due to their thick links with groups like the Sentinels.<sup>124</sup> The hearings were the first time the Sentinels were forced to disclose their financial operations, revealing that the organization had been limping along on a budget of approximately \$6,000 per annum in the early 1930s until Raymond Pitcairn had joined the Sentinels and injected approximately \$100,000 “on loan” to the organization. During that eighteen-month period, the Sentinels had also received support from other prominent businessmen, including Howard Pew and Alfred Sloan of General Motors. Though it paled in comparison to the more than \$350,000 the du Pont brothers poured into anti-New Deal lobby groups, the Pitcairn family contribution ranked third highest in the donations disclosed in the Black Hearing.<sup>125</sup> The findings that the same businessmen bankrolled all anti-administration groups tainted the groups’ efforts to position themselves as disinterested patriotic organizations.

Beyond the damage done by the financial revelations, the reputation of the Sentinels and their allies was irreparably tarnished by the recovery of private communications that revealed the Sentinels President Lincoln’s anti-Semitic views. In correspondence subpoenaed by the Black Committee, the Sentinels were asked about an inquiry Lincoln had received from a New York lawyer concerning what the Sentinels planned to do about the “Jewish threat.” Lincoln responded that the “Jewish threat is a real one” and that the real opportunity to defeat it lay in defeating Roosevelt in the forthcoming election.<sup>126</sup> The revelation spread through the press like wildfire. Sloan issued a public statement denouncing the Sentinels, adding that he would not be making any further donations to a group that spread religious bigotry.<sup>127</sup> Lincoln stepped down as president of the Sentinels and resigned his post from the Massachusetts State Board of Tax Appeals under pressure, though he maintained his comments had been “misconstrued.”<sup>128</sup> The only political group that would associate with Lincoln after the scandal were the die-hard anti-feminists, led by Kilbreth and her ailing Woman Patriot

<sup>123</sup>Kornhauser, “Shaping Public Opinion”; Kornhauser, “The ‘Invisible Government.’”

<sup>124</sup>Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives*, 229–50.

<sup>125</sup>Black Hearings, 2051–8.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid, 2069–70.

<sup>127</sup>“Sloan Drops ‘Sentinels,’” *New York Times*, Apr. 26, 1936, 32.

<sup>128</sup>“Lincoln Quits Tax Post,” *New York Times*, Apr. 24, 1935, 17.

Committee, who asked Lincoln to act as their treasurer in 1940.<sup>129</sup> Despite the Sentinels' efforts to drop Lincoln, they were unable to escape anti-Semitic charges, and they faded from public view before officially disbanding in 1944.<sup>130</sup> In the 1940s, the American Liberty League, who had attempted to distance itself from the Sentinels, also disbanded, having failed more broadly to sell a free-enterprise agenda in the New Deal era.<sup>131</sup>

## Conclusion

At the end of the Sentinels' existence, the defeat of the Child Labor Amendment stood out as the singular achievement of their antistatist campaigns. By 1937, only twenty-eight states had ratified the amendment, ten short of the necessary majority. In 1938, Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which included regulations to end industrial child labor, replicating the mechanism and limited scope of the first national child labor law of 1916. The Sentinels' critics were not wrong to charge that the organization had scotched the amendment with a well-financed scare campaign backed by industry. But the Sentinels were also more than a big business propaganda machine parading in patriotic garb.<sup>132</sup> The content of the Sentinels' anti-ratification campaign reflected the antifeminist, anticommunist, and antiregulatory interests that made up the Sentinels' leadership ranks, but also allowed the group to build antistatist coalitions far beyond its small membership base. The Sentinels' belief in the sovereignty of family government animated their opposition to the Nineteenth Amendment, triggered their formation, and sustained the organization over time. It also provided the language to sell an antistatist agenda that appealed across sex, faith, class, and partisan lines.

While the Sentinels had petered out as a political force by the 1940s, their politics reveal the deep roots of the New Right. Many of the Sentinels' key players passed away in the 1930s and 1940s. A few notable Sentinels, however, such as Cadwalader, carried their conservative activism well into the twentieth century. Cadwalader, who had co-filed a Supreme Court challenge to the Nineteenth Amendment in *Leser v. Garnett* (1922) and served as the chairman of the Sentinels' executive committee, later coordinated Strom Thurmond's 1948 Dixiecrat campaign in Maryland and filed a brief on behalf of his Mount Royal Protective Association in defense of racially restrictive property covenants in the Supreme Court case *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948).<sup>133</sup> Cadwalader's career points to the connections and continuities between conservative opposition to the enfranchisement of women and opposition to racial integration—politics that took the form of a conservative constitutional language of individual liberty, states' rights, and local self-government. Other Sentinels served as a source of inspiration for late-twentieth-century conservatives. Gresham became a muse to mid- to late twentieth-century evangelical conservatives from

<sup>129</sup>Harriet A. Frothingham to Alexander Lincoln, Mar. 21, 1940, folder 14, box 2, A-109, Lincoln Papers.

<sup>130</sup>See, for example, George Seldes, *You Can't Do That: A Survey of the Forces Attempting, in the Name of Patriotism, to Make a Desert of the Bill of Rights* (New York, 1938), 155–6.

<sup>131</sup>George Seldes, *Witch Hunt: The Techniques and Profits of Redbaiting* (New York, 1940), 262–3. On the disbanding of the American Liberty League, see Burk, *The Corporate State*, ch. 14, and Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands*, 22–5.

<sup>132</sup>Lumpkin and Douglas, *Child Workers*, 240–2; Seldes, *You Can't Do That*, 156.

<sup>133</sup>In the early twentieth century, Cadwalader supported the nullification of the Fifteenth Amendment and the restriction of black suffrage in Maryland. "Lawyers Indorse [sic] the Amendment," *Baltimore Sun*, Oct. 29, 1905, 1; Thomas F. Cadwalader, "Letter to the Editor," *Baltimore Sun*, Apr. 15, 1910, 6; Antero Pietila, *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* (Chicago, 2010), 106–8; "Thurmond Loses Maryland Fight," *Daily Press*, Oct. 9, 1948, 3. On his involvement in the Mount Royal Protective Association and *Shelley v. Kraemer*, see Pietila, *Not in My Neighborhood*, 106–8. Up until the year before his death in 1970, Cadwalader continued to speak out in opposing a proposed constitutional amendment to abolish the electoral college system and calls to withdraw U.S. troops from Vietnam because it would be a victory for the communists; see Thomas F. Cadwalader, "Letter to the Editor," *Baltimore Sun*, Sept. 19, 1969, 16; Thomas F. Cadwalader, "Letter to the Editor," *Baltimore Sun*, Oct. 1, 1969, 16.

Francis Schaeffer to Jerry Falwell.<sup>134</sup> In Gresham's work, they found a blueprint for an evangelical conservatism that fused religious fundamentalism, libertarianism, and antifeminist politics.

The Sentinels' activism highlights important affinities among conservative constituencies that found common cause around the politics of the family in the 1920s and 1930s. The contributions of conservative lawyers, and the ideology of constitutional nationalism that the Sentinels promulgated, suggest a longer history to the conservative constitutional movement that postwar scholars have begun to sketch out.<sup>135</sup> The National Association of Manufacturers' efforts to sell free-enterprise politics in the 1940s formalized alliances with religious conservatives that the Sentinels had forged in their antiregulatory campaign in the decades prior.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, the partnerships forged between the high-church Protestants who made up the ranks of the Sentinels and conservative Catholics over the politics of the family in the 1920s and 1930s suggest that the cross-faith alliance forged over abortion, antifeminism, and sexuality in the late twentieth century represented the resurgence of an old pairing. Overall, the story of the Sentinels should remind us that an antiregulatory business agenda originally formed in opposition to maternalist politics, and that histories of free-market conservatism cannot be divorced from the politics of gender, sexuality, and the family.<sup>137</sup>

**Julia Bowes** is an assistant professor of U.S. history and gender history at the University of Hong Kong. She received her PhD at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in 2018 and was awarded the 2019 Lerner-Scott prize for the best dissertation in U.S. women's history by the Organization of American Historians. She is currently writing a book on children, state power, and the gendered origins of modern conservatism from the 1850s to the 1930s.

<sup>134</sup>Vinz, *Pulpit Politics*, 83–4. For further analyses of fundamentalist opposition to the New Deal state and the longer roots of the modern right, see Matthew Avery Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Antiliberalism in a Global Age," *Journal of American History* 98, no. 4 (Mar. 2012): 1052–74.

<sup>135</sup>See, for instance, Kenneth I. Kersch, *Conservatives and the Constitution: Imaging Constitutional Restoration in the Heyday of American Liberalism* (New York, 2019); Jill Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History* (Princeton, NJ, 2010); and Jefferson Decker, *The Other Rights Revolution: Conservative Lawyers and the Remaking of American Government* (New York, 2016).

<sup>136</sup>Kruse, *One Nation Under God*.

<sup>137</sup>On the linkages in the late twentieth century, see Self, *All in the Family*; Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart*; and Natalia Mehlman Petrzela, *Classroom Wars: Language, Sex, and the Making of Modern Political Culture* (New York, 2015).