The Issues of the Election of 1916

John D. Alexander
Loyola University Chicago

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THE ISSUES OF THE ELECTION OF 1916

BY

JOHN D. ALEXANDER, S.J.

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VITA AUCTORIS

John D. Alexander, S.J., was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, July 23, 1923. After his elementary education at St. Aloysius Parochial School in Jersey City, he attended St. Peter's College Preparatory School in the same city, graduating therefrom in 1941.

On August 15, 1941, he entered St. Andrew-on-Hudson Novitiate of the Society of Jesus, and was thereupon enrolled as a student of Fordham University, New York City. His final year of undergraduate study was completed at West Baden College, West Baden Springs, Indiana, where he was registered at Loyola University, Chicago, and from which he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in June, 1946.

At the beginning of the fall session, 1946, he was enrolled in the Graduate School of Loyola University. While writing his thesis at Santa Clara University, he also attended the Graduate School at Stanford University.
INTRODUCTION

The study of an election is often a difficult task but always most interesting. It is made difficult by the frequent intangibility of the influence deciding the individual voter. The pollsters, Roper and Gallup, have illustrated the difficulties involved in an election and their failure makes any further comment unnecessary. The interest of an election, however, can arise from a number of factors. There is the appeal of the candidates to the people, their characters and personalities, the types of campaigning, the issues involved and the significance of the outcome. All of these elements have been highlighted by the latest presidential race between President Harry Truman and Governor Thomas Dewey in November, 1948, which would also deserve mention on my part, if only for the fact that it was the closest election since the one we will treat. The issues of the 1948 election were many and varied. The appeal of the candidates was on a different plane for the one man was a farm boy who appealed to the simple, home-loving American, while the other was more restrained, dignified, intellectual. The Democratic candidate spoke of specific proposals and legislation, while the Re-
publican candidate, confident of victory, sailed his campaign ship upon a sea of platitudes hoping to gain the shores of victory upon the wave of "national unity".

A complete study of an election would demand a thorough consideration of all these elements that I have mentioned and even more. However, in this study we would like to concentrate upon only one of these elements in the 1916 election, namely, the issues involved, especially from the time of the conventions to the election. It would entail more time and study than is possible here to treat every issue of this presidential race, and so we will restrict ourselves to those issues seemingly most influential upon the voters, to those that received most of the candidates' attention and attracted the most publicity. We have tried to sift the issues and classify them, not arbitrarily, but according to their importance, which was indicated by the attention of the candidates, newspapers, periodicals and by the actual results. We will see that some issues were not properly evaluated during the campaign but were highly overrated by the attention given them. Others appeared shortly before the election and demanded an immediate and just acknowledgment by the people. While this paper is not as complete as possible, since it will be more of a survey than an analysis of the issues, still it should add
some understanding to the terse comments of authors upon the outcome of the 1916 election.

Since we will be looking for elements that decided the election in favor of the Democrats, the reader should not be surprised that the treatment of the issues and many of the quotations are favorable to Wilson. Indeed the issues gain that much more importance when they are credited with having influenced a number of people to vote for him, for we are thus enabled to narrow down Wilson's channels of influence and conjecture upon what swung the election to him.

The election of 1916 was not the stunning upset that took place in 1948, but it was similar in the fact that the man in office stood upon specific legislation and proposals while the challenging candidate was satisfied or forced to dwell upon platitudes and criticism. Just as in 1948 when the appeal of such a course fell short of victory for Dewey, so in 1916 the appeal of Hughes in this same manner was not enough to swing the winning votes to his side of the ledger.

In 1916 the critical state of the world made the election of extreme importance and yet the outcome was to turn upon the votes of a very few states and a comparatively small number of people. Indeed the men were so very much
alike, the platforms so similar and the issues so comparatively few that the election was one of the closest in the history of the United States. Two New York newspapers proclaimed Hughes the President only to be forced into a retraction in a later edition by more complete returns from the polls of the West. The results, therefore, enhance the importance of the issues for any one of them might have been the deciding factor in the slight majority of the winner. Naturally, it is impossible to determine the issue that decided the vote, but we can hope, at least, to shed some light upon the nature and importance of those issues involved from the conventions to the elections.
CHAPTER I
THE CONVENTIONS AND PLATFORMS

In studying the issues, naturally the platforms formulated at the conventions will be more important than the conventions themselves. However, the conventions take on a greater importance when they achieve more than their primary purpose of selecting the candidates. Such was the case in June, 1916.

The Democratic party, holding their meeting at St. Louis in mid-June, showed the country a solidly united organization in nominating their candidate by acclamation rather than by the ordinary procedure. As Woodrow Wilson had no competitor for the nomination the convention was more a ratification than a selection. As one of his biographers said: "The Democrats, both the body of the party in the South and its fairly certain allies in the Western states, were proud of their leader. They had not such a spokesman since Andrew Jackson." He also noted that even the party masters in New York, Indiana and Illinois who nourished a dislike for Wilson because the side-doors of the White House were shut to them, agreed to the nomination. Everyone realized that
Wilson's record was their biggest asset.¹

The Republican convention, on the other hand, did not offer the same picture of unity, but was rather a convention definitely needed to narrow down the Republican candidates to one acceptable by both the Progressives and the Republicans. The discreet selection of Charles Evans Hughes probably achieved the highest degree of unity possible between these two parties, although this fact was not immediately evident to all concerned. While, then, the Republicans were achieving this unity the Democrats were displaying it and, in so doing, unwittingly gave birth to a vote-winning slogan that was to sweep the country during the months of campaigning and thus become an influential factor in the election.

The convention of the Democrats verified in a striking way the convictions of President Wilson that the people of the country, the mass, wanted peace and not war. He was aware of the fact that the pacifists in those pre-war days far outnumbered the comparatively few who were listening to the urgings of a militaristic spirit. It was this conviction, of course, that had motivated his determination to remain neutral in regard to both European and Mexican affairs. As "Current Opinion" pointed out, the dominant purpose

of the convention was to vindicate this policy of the President in keeping the United States out of war.\(^2\)

It was in the light of the convention's aims that the speeches, usually frothy effusions of no merit, gained some importance. For the keynote speech, in conforming to the purpose of the convention, was soon discovered to be also in rhythm with the pulse of the nation, or at least that cross-section of the nation represented at the assembly. Governor Martin H. Glynn, of New York, who had been selected for the keynote oration, was probably delightfully surprised at the enthusiastic reaction of that crowd to his well-delivered speech.\(^3\) He had decided to stress the note of peace and the policy of neutrality so frequently adopted by our country in the past. At the outset he stressed the general ideas of neutrality, its place in American ideals, and proceeded to the proof that Wilson's adherence to neutrality was in accordance with the traditional American policy. To enforce his arguments he began an enumeration of the many instances in American history in which a foreign outrage of one sort or another had been adequately met, not by war but by diplomacy. Naturally, he was then to point

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to the similarity in Wilson's achievements.

Glynn had cited a few examples when he feared that perhaps he was too dull and not appealing to the crowd, and so remarked, "I don't want to take too much time to enumerate them all," but then, to his surprise, the crowd shouted back, "Go on, go on." When Glynn realized that they really meant it, he continued with more confidence and soon had the crowd hanging on his every word. After each example, besides adding, "but we didn't go to war," he also asked the crowd, "Do you want more of them?" Receiving the cries of "Yes, yes!" he continued. After reciting precedents established by Pierce, Van Buren, Jefferson, Adams, Washington, before he could say, "But we didn't go to war," the crowd now interposed the question, "What did we do?" with a great unified shout.

The crowd was proving to be an ideal audience, devouring every word. Men were jumping up on their seats and waving the American flag. In his treatment of the convention, Walter Millis quotes a good conjecture on this scene.

... What was going on in their minds was as easily read as if it had been printed... Pacifism had been jeered at, made to seem in opposition to Americanism, until they had come to feel almost apologetic about it. Now they were told they had been right all the time, that one could be patriotic and pacifistic, that it was the historic
American policy to submit to great provocation and historically un-American to go to war over it; and they could not contain themselves.4

The extraordinary enthusiasm of the crowd, however, worried the party leaders at least momentarily for it looked like a huge pacifist demonstration. Senator John Smith of Maryland and McCombs after a brief conference, passed to Glynn during one of the ovations a scrawled note reading, "but we are willing to fight if necessary."5 Glynn assured them, "I'll take care of that", which he did in a whole section on preparedness, assuring the crowd that "the Democratic party advocates and seeks preparedness, but it is preparedness for defense and not preparedness for aggression."6 But Glynn reached the heights of convention oratory in another passage that commentators on this occasion delight in quoting:

This policy does not satisfy those who revel in destruction and find pleasure in despair. It may not satisfy the fire-eater or the swashbuckler. But it does satisfy those who worship at the altar of the God of peace. It does satisfy the mothers of the land, at whose hearth and fireside no jingoistic war has placed an empty chair. It does satisfy the daughters

of this land, from whom brag and bluster have sent no husband, no sweetheart and no brother to the smouldering dissolution of the grave. It does satisfy the fathers of this land, and the sons of this land, who will fight for our flag, and die for our flag, when Reason primes the rifle, when Honor draws the sword, when Justice breathes a blessing on the standards they uphold. 7

Thus Glynn's appeal to the pacifists on the ground that the President had not brought this country into war was carefully balanced with an appeal to the bellicose that Wilson was also ready to fight if necessary.

Two other speeches drove home these same ideas to the crowd. The second day presented Senator Ollie James of Kentucky whom the New York Times described as having "the face of a prizefighter, the body of an oak, and the voice of a pipe organ, and all the tricks of the orator at the tip of his tongue." 8 The passage of his speech which was repeated in response to the demands of the crowd likewise stressed Wilson's neutrality policy.

... Without orphaning a single American child, without widowing a single American mother, without firing a single gun, without the shedding of a single drop of blood, he wrung from the most militant spirit that ever brooded above a battlefield an acknowledgment of American rights and an agreement to American

7 Ibid., 26.
demands. He truly demonstrated that principle is mightier than force, that diplomacy hath its victories no less renowned than war.9

Bryan, the convention's favorite, who spoke that same evening, declared: "I have differed with our President on some of the methods employed, but I join with the American people in thanking God that we have a President who does not want this country plunged into this war."10

The long quotations from these speeches stress the unifying element running through them but more important they give an indication of how there arose from the convention that all-important slogan, "He kept us out of war." The exact words seem to have been put into the platform by a person unknown to this day despite the research efforts of Ray Stannard Baker. After the endorsement of the President and Vice President there followed this statement in the platform:

... In particular we commend to the American people the splendid diplomatic victories of our great President, who has preserved the vital interests of our Government and its citizens, and kept us out of war.11

9 Democratic Convention, 88-89.
10 Ibid., 98-99.
11 Ibid., 130.
Newton Baker, who probably knew more of the origin of the platform than any other delegate, wrote to R. S. Baker: "The phrase 'He kept us out of war' was put in by the Resolutions Committee, by which member I do not know. I myself always regarded it as a product of the Glynn speech."12 Be that as it may, the Democrats had an effective slogan for the coming campaign and a remarkable unity that was made evident by the vote of acclamation given to Wilson, 1092 to 1.

A discussion of the Republican nomination really demands the story of two conventions for it was with a definite purpose that both the Republican and Progressive parties called their respective conventions for the same day in June in Chicago. Some sort of reconciliation between these two parties was obviously in order since the power of the Progressives was on the wane,13 and a refusal to reunite would only result in the election of the Democratic candidate. This had been the case in 1912 when Roosevelt, bolting the Republican party, split their vote and took with him as a Progressive candidate 4,126,020 votes in comparison with the Republican Taft's 3,483,922 votes. Thus Wilson was elected with

12 Baker, 257 (footnote).
13 Frederic Paxson, Pre-War Years, 1913-1917, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1936, 326.
1,300,000 votes less than the combined total of Taft and Roosevelt. Nevertheless, it was not too evident from the opening speeches of both conventions that a combination of the parties was possible.

The key-note speech at the Republican convention was given by handsome Warren Gamaliel Harding who, William Allen White claimed, was "bitter, scalding bitter to Theodore Roosevelt," despite a plea that both parties forget their differences, while at the Progressive convention Raymond Robins made a rabble-rousing key-note speech and had become the "idol of the men who had determined to nominate Roosevelt." In the Republican convention it was definite that the Taft men would simply not permit the nomination of Roosevelt, while the Progressives would not consider Root, Lodge or Hughes. This apparent deadlock prevailed right up to the end of the two conventions.

According to White, who covered the conventions for the newspapers and was on the inside of the maneuverings in the Progressive party, Perkins, the head of the Progressive Party, "was trying to maneuver the Rooseveltians into accept-

16 Ibid., 523.
ing Hughes as a fusion nominee. At the same time, however, there was a group of Progressives striving to bring about the nomination of Roosevelt before the Republican nominee could be offered to the convention. The latter faction, of which White was a member, won and Roosevelt was nominated just before noon on the last day amidst a great fanfare despite the efforts of Perkins to control the floor. Shortly after, at the Republican convention Hughes received the nomination of the Republican party.

Thus, the desire of the Progressives to have their standard bearer accepted by the Republicans was not to be attained even tho the mention of Roosevelt's name as a nominee at the Republican convention had evoked a rousing round of applause and a demonstration that continued for forty minutes. But when two ballots were cast before adjourning on Friday evening Hughes led the field while Roosevelt commanded the noise. The Republicans' stampede to Hughes at Saturday noon ended all uncertainty, and Hughes himself left them with no doubts as to his intentions or his capacity for action, for he immediately sent his resignation to the President announcing his retirement from the Supreme Court.

17 Ibid., 523.
The Progressives, moreover, were to be disappointed a second time. They had not made sure of Roosevelt's acceptance if nominated. Although the Colonel had given a conditional refusal before the convention, still he had not publicly foresworn the Progressive Party since he was hoping for a nomination by the combination of the two parties. However, those who were close to Roosevelt were of the opinion that he would never again lead a third party. "Americans are a two-party people, there is no place for a third party in our politics" were his words to a friend. It was the knowledge that such a candidacy was doomed to failure, plus his passion for a defeat of Wilson, that finally made Roosevelt turn down the Progressive candidacy. Accordingly, he sent word to the convention that he would not run and then proceeded to name as alternate candidate Henry Cabot Lodge, "perhaps the one man whose long record of bourbon conservatism offered the greatest denial of every liberal tenet to which the party had been dedicated,". Secretary of Agriculture Houston, present at the moment of the announcement, said, "A more stunned, whipped crowd, I had never looked upon. It was a pitiful spectacle. It had been hoaxed."20

18 Paxson, _op.cit_. , 334.
19 Millis, _op.cit_. , 317.
records that he saw "hundreds of men tear the Roosevelt picture or the Roosevelt badge from their coats, and throw it on the floor."21 Another spectator, Ida Tarbell, also recorded the resentment evident at that moment: "It was a great and noble-hearted body, and its tremendous fight deserved a better end than the cowardly stab that its leader gave it in the message which its chairman mercifully and wisely withheld until almost the moment of adjournment."22 All these remarks are significant in the light of the later defection of the Progressives from the Republican party.

Since the Progressives were not only without a nominee but also a man who could command enough votes to make it worthwhile to run as their candidate, there was nothing left to do but endorse the Republican candidate. It is significant, however, that when the National Committee did meet again on June 26 to vote, the endorsement was divided with 32 for, 6 against Hughes, and 9 silent.23

Nevertheless, the choice of Charles Evans Hughes was perhaps the best one possible. Even Joseph Tumulty, Wilson's secretary, admitted that after Hughes' nomination

21 White, 527
23 Paxson, 345.
"there was deep depression in the ranks of our party throughout the country, the opinion being that the former Supreme Court Justice was an invincible foe." The greatest factor in his favor seemed to be the fact that he had no part in the schism of 1912. In his lofty position in the Supreme Court he had been above the "dust and clamor of partisan feuds" and had maintained silence. White thought it the best possible nomination because most of Roosevelt's friends preferred Hughes to Taft as did also the followers of LaFollette. Roosevelt himself "supported Hughes largely because he bitterly disliked Wilson in all his works and ways."

The appeal of Hughes to the people was evident. He had been a great reform governor of New York, and his honest and able exposure of the venal and criminal actions of big business, the great insurance companies, and the machine elements of both the Democratic and the Republican parties, gave promise of a good national government. His service with the Supreme Court doubtlessly added great distinction to the Republican's cause. Of great help, too, was his silence upon all phases of the war, including the Lusitania incident and the submarine warfare.

26 Ibid., 528.
27 Dodd, 185.
Another thing about Hughes, mentioned mostly by the followers of Wilson, was his very close resemblance to the President, which, Baker claims, was Hughes' peculiar availability from the beginning. 28 Roosevelt himself later dubbed Hughes "a whiskered Wilson" while a newspaperman was asking as early as the April before the convention: "What is the purpose of nominating Justice Hughes? To continue the Wilson administration under Republican auspices?" 29 This point is of some importance, at least to my mind, for it seems to throw a little light on the extreme closeness of this presidential race. There seems to be no doubt that the Republicans did not want to differ with Wilson upon the most vital issue of the day, namely, entanglement in war on either side of the belligerents. If this issue was going to be met head on, then Roosevelt or Wood would have been chosen for the whole country knew that those men stood for immediate and extensive military and naval preparation and for prompt military action. But the Republican leaders knew the temper of the country as well as the Democrats and they knew that the people did not want war. Hence we have in the champion

28 Baker, 247.
and the challenger two candidates very similar to one another in character, background and ideals. This similarity will now move over into the issues of the campaign and thus help to provide a close battle down the stretch to the election.

There was such a marked likeness between the two platforms that the Socialists in their Hand Book for the campaign printed the two platforms with an issue-by-issue contrast under the heading, "Where's the Issue?" There was a great deal of truth behind this question for the points of agreement were numerous. The position of each party on women's suffrage was one instance. Both platforms likewise demanded strict enforcement of the civil service laws, a simple and business-like budget system for the government, a rigid economy in national expenditure, the encouragement of business, and the strict supervision and regulation of monopoly. The Republicans requested an "effective system of rural credits" while the Democrats boasted, "we passed the rural credits act." The two parties called for a tariff commission for impartial study of that problem, and for the careful conservation of natural resources; and while the Republicans favored the extension of a rural mail delivery system, again the Democrats could boast that they had added 10,000 delivery routes.

31 Ibid., 30.
Upon the smaller points of foreign policy such as closer, more friendly relations with the Pan-American Republics and approval of the Monroe Doctrine, they were in perfect agreement. Moreover, although the platforms disagreed in their attitude toward the Philippines with the Republicans being more inclined to grant independence sooner than the Democrats, still there was little discussion of this issue during the campaign. 32

With regard to the attitude of the parties upon the threatening war, it was clear that both favored adequate preparedness, an adequate army and navy for defense, an adequate merchant marine, the protection of American citizens in all his rights at home and abroad, by land and sea, and the maintenance of a strict and honest neutrality. Obviously, there was no clash here in aims or ideals, but the Republicans nevertheless made a major issue out of Wilson's handling of these policies, expressing more disapproval of this procedure than of his purpose. This same approach was taken on Wilson's Mexican policy. Another point upon which the platforms agreed in ideal but not in fact was the civil service reform. While both parties advocated it, the Republicans claimed that the Wilsonian administration had been chock-full of partisanship appointments. The tariff, however, was a subject of

32 Ibid., 30.
definite disagreement as was also the matter of progressive legislation. The Democrats were not only able to appeal in their platform to Wilson's record but on the strength of his record they were able also to predict more social and economic reforms, whereas the Republicans in the role of challengers naturally had no record nor did they advocate as many new reforms as the Democrats. 33

In treating all of these issues I should like to consider the tariff, civil service, and the Mexican policy as a unit because in spite of the fact that the Republicans laid great stress upon these issues, the strategy involved terminated in failure. On the other hand the other two issues of the parties, their respective attitudes to the threatening war and appeals to the Progressives, take on the greatest importance because they were considered by the newspapers and independent authors to be the predominant and deciding factors in the victory of the Democrats. They will receive more attention. However, with regard to the first three issues we must at least give the respective stands of the parties and the candidates. But before we consider any of them, we must turn our attention to a peculiar phenomenon in the 1916 election worthy of our consideration, a phenomenon that I have termed, the "artificial issues."

33 Ibid., 30.
CHAPTER II
ARTIFICIAL ISSUES

In many presidential campaigns, there appear issues that gain undeserved publicity and attention. For a time these issues dominate all others in the newspapers only to lose their appeal before the election, or at least, fail to have any noticeable effect upon the voting. That is why I would refer to such issues as "artificial", for though there might even be a divergence of opinion upon the subject involved, still because their importance is so very much overrated they do not deserve a place with the real major issues of the campaign. There were two such issues in the 1916 campaign and their prominence in the thought of all demands acknowledgment in a study of this election. The newspapers pounced upon these issues, the persons affected protested their value to the candidates, and for a time they seemed to be of major importance. However, when the showdown arrived at the time of the election they disappeared into the ranks of the insignificant.

One of the issues that followed this pattern faithfully was the so-called "hyphenate" issue which received attention even before the conventions met because of President Wilson's outspokenness on the subject. As early as November
4, 1915, in an address given at the Manhattan Club in New York, he expressed his grave concern over the voices being raised in America "which came from men who loved other countries better than they loved America, men who were partisans of other causes than that of America." He claimed that they had forgotten that their chief and only allegiance was to the great government under which they live.¹ Of much more importance than this speech was his annual message to Congress in Joint Session on December 7, a little over a month later, when he again struck at the un-American spirit of certain quarters of the country:

There are citizens of the U.S., I blush to admit, born under other flags but welcomed under our generous naturalization laws to the full freedom and opportunity of America, who have poured the poison of disloyalty into the very arteries of our national life ... (who) seek to make this proud country once more a hotbed of European passion.²

Though this topic was referred to as the "hyphenate" question before this time, Wilson helped to perpetuate the term when he again attacked this overzealous partisanship in a speech in honor of John Barry, Father of the American Navy. Wilson's attacks were still general, not stating the

¹ Albert Shaw, President Wilson's State Papers and Addresses, George H. Doran Company, New York, 1917, 132.
² Ibid., 150.
particular hyphenates involved such as the Germans, English or Irish. But in this particular speech the allusion was rather obvious since Wilson was angered at the anti-English opposition to the repeal of the tolls-exemption clause, then pending.

Some Americans need hyphens in their names, because only part of them have come over. But when the whole man has come over, heart and thought and all, the hyphen drops of its own weight out of his name.3

These were not the only references made to the hyphenate issue during the months before the conventions but they are enough to indicate that the problem had a prominent place in Wilson's thoughts. During this time, however, some German-Americans had formed an alliance, met at a convention in Chicago, and were now threatening to wield their influence at the polls of the next election. Greatly angered at this attempt at intimidation, President Wilson spoke harshly against the hyphenates in the Flag Day Address at Washington on June 14, the very day that the Democratic convention opened in St. Louis. He referred to active disloyalty in the country and how it should be crushed even if it proceeded from a very active and subtle minority. Then he attacked its

method of operating:

It works underground, but it shows its ugly head where we can see it; and there are those at this moment who are trying to levy a species of blackmail, saying 'Do what we wish in the interest of foreign sentiment or we will wreak our vengeance at the polls'.

Thus we see that the issue was connected with the vote, and that Wilson has taken a firm stand.

The Democratic newspapers, especially the New York World, were also accusing the German-American Alliance of organizing to control the vote. Articles appeared in independent magazines such as the Atlantic Monthly, Outlook and the Living Age attacking those Germans who were only geographically and politically American. That this offensive was sustained as well as critical can be ascertained from the fact that as early as October 1915 the Literary Digest had written an article which characterized the attacks as a "Swat-the-Hyphen" movement. As the three parties approached their respective conventions, there was some speculation as to just how each party would approach this problem now that it had forced itself upon the attention of potential voters throughout the country, for,

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5 New York World, March 19, 1916, was an example.
6 Literary Digest, October 15, 1915, 943-944.
indeed, the problem seemed to involve not only the votes of
the hyphenates themselves but others also because of the
prevailing strong sentiment for and against these German-
American people.

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, as usual, left the
German-Americans and his Progressive Party in little doubt
as to his stand. His violent attacks upon the hyphenates
had made newspaper columns time and time again. Although
he must have realized there were other factors precluding
his nomination, nevertheless considerable importance was
attached by the Colonel to this one. On November 27, 1915
in a letter to his friend Lodge, he had observed that "the
German-Americans of every kind, and whole flapdoodle paci-
fist and mollycoddle outfit" would be against him."7 And
even more to the point on December 7 he wrote: "As you
know, I feel that the course I have followed about the
hyphenated Americanism, and especially the German-American
vote, is such as absolutely to preclude the possibility of
nominating me as a candidate."8

The passage of time only served to heighten the
anger of Mr. Roosevelt for after a conference of the German-
American Alliance on May 28 and 29 his attacks became more

7 Hermann Hagedorn, Correspondence of Roosevelt and Lodge,
8 Ibid., 466-467; see 479 for another letter expressing the
same opinion.
furious. He gave a speech at the very day after the close of the meeting. The editor of the World, who was pro-Democratic and hence rarely impressed by anything that Roosevelt said, styled his talk as "hitting straight from the shoulder," for Roosevelt denounced the Alliance as an "anti-American alliance," and its activities as "moral treason" to the republic."9 Doubtless, another good reason for Roosevelt's anger was the tenor of the resolutions adopted by the German-American Newspapers Publishers Association during that meeting. While the meeting named no names in the resolutions adopted on May 29, "it hardly concealed behind its descriptions of the requirements for a candidate who might deserve the united German-American vote ... the negation of both Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt."10 Moreover, when on June 5 the German-American Alliance sent protests to the Progressive Party Committee against the possible nomination of Roosevelt and Root, Roosevelt returned to the attack with a message to the same committee on June 22 that was stinging in bitterness:

No good American whatever his ancestry or creed can have any feeling except scorn and detestation for those professional German-Americans who seek to make the American President in effect a viceroy of

9 New York World, June 1, 1916.
10 Paxson, 339.
the German Emperor. The Professional German-Americans of this type are acting purely in the sinister interest of Germany.\(^{11}\)

Without a doubt this attitude of Roosevelt on the hyphenate question had an influence upon the Republican Committee, although it was probably the least of their reasons for refusing to nominate him. Nevertheless, the issue loomed large in those early days of June, and the Republican candidate was to be one who had not alienated all of these German-American votes.

The silence of Charles Evans Hughes on this, as well as on other political matters, made him even more acceptable to the Republican Committee but especially did it raise the hopes of the German-American Newspapers and his nomination was greeted with great outbursts of enthusiasm. Typical of these newspapers was the reaction of a Milwaukee paper which, upon news of his nomination, plastered a picture of him and Mrs. Hughes on the front page and expressed their hope and confidence with the words beneath the picture: "the next president and his wife."\(^{12}\) Hope even traveled across the seas to Germany where the Cologne paper, the Kolnische Zeitung, reputed for generations to be the mouthpiece of the German Foreign Office policy, seemed to look with a favorable eye

\(^{11}\) American Year Book, 1916, 33. 
\(^{12}\) Milwaukee-Sonntagspost, June 11, 1916.
upon the Hughes candidacy. It expressed its delight that Roosevelt's "chauvinistic anti-Germanism" had been definitely repudiated by the Republican party.\textsuperscript{13} This same paper did not entertain any very good opinion of Wilson for in the same issue it said "that German-Americans, on whose vote perhaps the decision of the election rests are for the most part publicly on the side of Hughes," and pointed to their "opportunity of paying back President Wilson for his false, hypocritical neutrality and for his unheard of attacks on this American nationality."\textsuperscript{14}

The Republicans, therefore, did not pass up the opportunity offered them but made "a determined effort to woo the pro-German element."\textsuperscript{15} Accordingly at the Republican convention Chairman Warren G. Harding dealt with the issue in a rather soothing manner in his opening address on June 7:

One must be human; to be an American he must have sympathies and human loves; and I should pity the foreign-born sons of foreign-born parents whose very souls are not wrung by the cataclysmal sorrow of the old world.\textsuperscript{16}

The Republican platform was likewise mild in its approach to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Literary Digest}, 53:1, July 1, 1916.
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{15} Thomas A. Bailey, \textit{Diplomatic History of the American People}, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1946, 638-9.
\item \textsuperscript{16} \textit{Republican Campaign Text Book}, Republican National Committee, 1916, 28.
\end{itemize}
the subject: "We appeal to all Americans, whether naturalized or native born, to prove to the world that we are Americans in thought and in deed, with only one loyalty, one hope and one aspiration." It then called upon "all Americans to be true to the spirit of America, to the great traditions of their common country." 17

This Republican strategy seemed to demand that Hughes should try to straddle the pro-German issue. The theme of his nomination speech was "America first and America efficient." When he said that he was "for the firm and unflinching maintenance of all the rights of American citizens on land and sea" the Germans took that to mean that he would enforce American commercial rights as against the British blockade. 18 This use of vague phrases by Hughes led "to his being renamed Charles 'Evasive' Hughes, and to the quip that he had left the bench for the fence." 19

There was no "pussyfooting" on the issue by the Democrats. We have already seen how Wilson, even before the conventions met, had attacked the hyphenates. For a brief moment, however, there was a tendency among members of the

18 The New Republic, July 9, 1919.
19 Bailey, quoted by, 639.
party at the Democratic convention to straddle the issue and side-track forceful language against it. When Tumulty was informed by one of the editors of the Milwaukee Journal that this spirit was prevalent among party members, he realized that the adoption of this attitude in the platform would result in bitter disappointment to the country, and so he immediately wrote to Wilson that the hyphen issue should be met in a "manly, aggressive and militant fashion." At once Wilson warned Secretary Baker, his representative at the convention, to insist upon a "definite and unequivocal repudiation of the hyphen vote." The President's telegram to Baker resulted in the insertion of a paragraph in the platform that condemned in strong language all hyphenate activity in behalf of a foreign power. Wilson never stopped in this drive against the hyphenates but perhaps his best declaration of independence of this element was in his acceptance speech from Shadow Lawn, New Jersey, his summer headquarters - "I neither seek the favor nor fear the displeasure of that small alien element which puts loyalty to any foreign power before loyalty to the United States."

20 Tumulty, 188-190.
21 Ibid., 190.
22 Democratic Convention, 122.
23 Baker and Dodd, II, 282-283.
As usual the newspapers lined up on both sides and for a while hyphenism was one of the two planks of the Democratic party upon which the "fire of the opposition seemed to center..." Republican newspapers and the German-American papers like the Germania-Herold of Milwaukee claimed that the Democratic stand was "an attack upon a whole nationality," the Free Press of Lincoln, Nebraska stated that it was "an insult to all Americans of German blood" while the New Yorker Staats Zeitung echoed more or less the same sentiments. However, a few reputedly Republican papers like the Des Moines Capitol admired the stand of the President and commended its opponents for being "plainer and bolder in this declaration of Americanism" than the Republican platform; and the New York Press affirmed that the "hyphenates have more to hope for from Wilson than from Hughes."

Wilson's Democratic colleagues hoped that press comments like the following would have a sobering effect on anyone who intended to cast his vote for Hughes:

If Hughes should be elected President his success would be regarded throughout

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25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
the world as a tremendous victory for Germany in the U.S. It would be a notice to all civilization that the German vote, and through the German vote the German Government, holds the balance of power in American politics.27

Editorials such as "We Fight Mit Hughes," and "German Drive Against Wilson," might have made the German-American espousal of Hughes a burden rather than a help. Ambassador Gerard was probably right when he said that for Wilson it soon became "an asset to have the German-American against him."28

But Hughes had more to contend with than the Democratic newspapers. There was his bellicose associate, Teddy Roosevelt, whose ranting speeches probably alienated many pro-German and peace-loving Republicans. There were some who thought that Roosevelt's speeches did much to embarass Hughes. For instance, in a letter to President Wilson Colonel House claimed that he had been informed by newspapermen that "Hughes was becoming more irritable and that it is caused largely by Roosevelt's speeches."29 In his book Mr. Paxson points out that "in this particular aspect of the canvas, the support of Roosevelt was a liability to Hughes, for Roosevelt would make no concession to

29 Ibid., II, 371.
prudence." Roosevelt, he adds, spoke in contempt of what he thought was hedging on the part of Hughes, and he was growing in dislike of Hughes because of the latter's carefully balanced utterances. "To his newspaper friends Roosevelt criticized the inept technique with which Hughes, instead of profiting by counsel, just 'withdraws into his whiskers;' when he exploded to them about the 'bearded lady' it was Hughes he had in mind."30

Fortunately for Hughes, the German-Americans were not alienated by Roosevelt from their support of the republican side. This was made evident after Roosevelt's attack of the hyphenates in Lewiston, Maine when, despite a telegram from Hughes congratulating Roosevelt upon the speech, the German-American newspapers hastened to give assurances that they didn't care what Roosevelt said since Hughes was the candidate.31 However, the President did gain a tactical advantage over Hughes in his treatment of the O'Leary case.32 Jeremiah A. O'Leary was a member of the American Truth Society and apparently patronized by the German Embassy. He was engaged in dislodging the Irish and German votes from the Democratic ticket, and so with his associates pushed

30 Paxson, 350.
31 Literary Digest, 53:12, Sept. 16, 1916.
32 Paxson, 350.
the charge that Wilson was more harsh in his dealings with Germany than with England, and that his neutrality was a fraud. In a long telegram to the President, in September he denounced Wilson's insincerity and warned him of political consequences. In this telegram he also mentioned Wilson's "truckling to the British Empire" and his "dictatorship over Congress." Seizing this opportunity afforded him by O'Leary, Wilson, before a group of newspapermen, replied with a brief, pointed answer that was quoted everywhere:

   I would feel deeply mortified to have you or anybody like you vote for me. Since you have access to many disloyal Americans, and I have not, I will ask you to convey this message to them.33

Tumulty regarded this decisive act by the President as somewhat of a turning point in the campaign for at that time the Democrats were rather depressed due to the Maine elections which indicated a victory for the Republicans in the coming election. He also felt that it won the hearty and unanimous approval of the country for the President.34 Robert Lansing, in his War Memoirs, thought that this "made thousands of votes for its author."35 While Colonel House

33 Tumulty, 214.
34 Ibid., 214-215.
told the President that the telegram was "the best thing so far in the campaign." 36 A lone dissenter to all these favorable opinions was Walter Millis who thought that it probably cost the President New York where the Irish Tammany votes dominated the Democratic party. 37

Perhaps Hughes sensed the political significance of Wilson's outspoken defiance of the hyphenates for he himself hastened to add on October 24: "I don't want the support of anyone to whom the interests of this nation are not supreme." 38 The New York Times probably expressed the general reaction of the people to this statement when it commented: "He speaks too late and makes the fatal mistake of saying in a weaker way what his opponent and men of sturdier courage in his own party long ago said with full sincerity and sledge-hammer emphasis." 39

Thus was the hyphenate problem treated by the principal persons and parties involved in the election of 1916. It is evident from the words of the candidates and the comments of the newspapers and magazines that this was considered a vital issue. But despite all the hullabaloo the German-American question as a vital election issue.

36 House, I, 365.
37 Millis, 347.
39 Ibid., October 26, 1916.
proved a colossal flop. The German vote proved to be largely a myth, and where not a myth a minor factor. Just a short while after the returns were counted the New York Times voiced the opinion that prevailed generally in the other newspapers and in the magazines:

A survey of the returns by states fails to disclose where the hyphenate vote threw a single electoral vote to Hughes. Either there was no hyphen vote or it was cancelled or more than cancelled in its own territory by anti-hyphen votes.40

Two of the largest cities in the country with a predominant German-American population were St. Louis and Milwaukee and yet both were carried by Wilson. In the little city of Hoboken where propaganda for the German-American was used quite intensively during the campaign Wilson beat Hughes by a count of 5,167 to 4,201. In Wisconsin, Maryland, and Missouri the German-American vote might have been a major factor but that is not too evident. However, in Cincinnati where German-Americans constituted one-third of the people, there was a majority of 12,000 for Hughes in Hamilton County of which Cincinnati is a part. Yet even this was in vain for the state of Ohio went to Wilson. Where their votes might have produced results in accord

40 Ibid., November 12, 1916.
with their boasts was in Minnesota or Oregon but again the evidence was not sufficient to verify the claim.

"The Disappearance of the Hyphen", a post-election editorial appearing in Fair Play, a German-American weekly, carries in its title more or less the whole story of this election issue. Why it disappeared is a question beyond our present inquiry. It is sufficient for us to note that the issue had a short-lived and illusory importance in the campaign, but in the payoff of the election proved to have had little or no value to the Republican candidate.

Another "artificial" issue that received just a bit less publicity and attention was that of woman's suffrage. The origin of suffragette parties in the various states and their progress in gaining the right to vote need not detain us. It is sufficient to note that the suffragettes were not discouraged by the failure of their amendment for universal suffrage in the previous election, but were preparing to keep in the public eye in the coming campaign of 1916. They arranged a demonstration along with a convention to be held in Chicago. It met just two days before the Republican convention when they also staged a parade along Michigan Avenue supposedly to impress the Republicans with their strength. At the convention a National Women's Party was launched.
However, the demonstration of their "power" and enthusiasm seemed to have no noticeable effect upon the platform of either party; the two were practically identical. The Republican platform favored "the extension of the suffrage to women, but recognized the right of each state to settle the question for itself;" while the Democratic platform differed little with its advocacy of the "extension of the franchise of the women of the country by the states."\(^{41}\) It must be noted, however, that it was upon this question that the Democratic convention had its most lively debate, the discussion taking up almost sixteen pages in the published proceedings.\(^{42}\) There were present "large numbers of representatives of women's organizations, bedecked with bright yellow sashes, ribbons and parasols, (who) filled the galleries, vociferously demanding a sweeping declaration of the approval of their plank" which called for universal women's suffrage by amendment to the federal constitution and not by the state-by-state process.\(^{43}\) However, when the substitute plank favored by the women was put to a vote, it was defeated by a one-sided vote of 888 1/2 to 181 1/2, and the Wilson plank was adopted as above stated.\(^{44}\)

\(^{41}\) Republican Convention, 168; Democratic Convention, 130.
\(^{42}\) Ibid., 131-147.
\(^{43}\) Baker, 261.
\(^{44}\) Democratic Convention, 147.
It was evident what the reaction of the women's organizations would be to both platforms. "Suffrage Planks Not Enough", the title of an article in the Literary Digest shortly after the conventions, expressed exactly the sentiments of the militant suffragettes.\(^4\)\(^5\) Perhaps their protests had something to do with the subsequent change of Mr. Hughes. At any rate, the Digest was able to write a new column on the suffrage with this heading: "Mr. Hughes New Suffrage Plank" for, in the words of a newspaper quoted in the article, Mr. Hughes had "stolen a march on President Wilson and delivered a telling blow against him in many states," by coming out for the Susan B. Anthony constitutional amendment providing for woman suffrage.\(^4\)\(^6\) It is well to note that this statement attributed some power to the suffragettes for it was a common opinion at this time.

Hughes had made no mention of the amendment in his acceptance speech but on the very next day he had sent a telegram in answer to an inquiry of Senator Sutherland of Utah, which was quoted by the papers as follows:

\[\text{In my answer to the notification, I did not refer to the proposed Federal amendment relating to the woman suffrage.}\]

\(^4\)\(^5\) Literary Digest, 53:1, July 1, 1916.
\(^4\)\(^6\) Ibid., 53:7, August 12, 1916.
as this was not mentioned in the platform. My view is that the proposed amendment should be submitted and ratified, and the subject removed from political discussion.47

Later that same day in a speech in New York before a Woman's League, he gave as his reasons for favoring the equal suffrage amendment the bitterness of this long continued struggle of the women and the fact that such agitation would only obscure the normal issues.48 Whether these reasons were sufficient or not, President Wilson, when called upon by Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the Women's Suffrage Association, to do the same, simply refused, and in a letter to Mrs. E. P. Davis on August 5, he made this observation:

...if I should change my personal attitude now, I should seem to the country like nothing else than an angler for votes, because...my attitude in this matter has again and again been frankly avowed...

I have all along believed, and still believe, that the thing can best and most solidly be done by the action of the individual states, and that the time it will take to get it that way will not be longer than the time it will take to get it the other way.49

47 Ibid.
49 Baker, 277 (footnote).
As Baker adds, the President throughout the campaign "adhered with good-humored flexibility to the position he had always held."50

The threats and cajolings of the women's organizations were numerous and varied during the campaign. They boasted frequently of their power at the polls and predicted a landslide of votes for Hughes by protesting women. An example of this was the National Women's Party convening at Colorado Springs, Colorado, on August 11, pledging itself to work in the twelve equal suffrage states to defeat the Democratic candidate for President.

But alas! it was the same story as the hyphenate issue, a great deal of shouting and threat-throwing with no apparent effect. Of the twelve suffrage states only two, Illinois and Oregon, voted for Mr. Hughes, while all of the others, including Arizona, Colorado, California, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, voted for the reelection of Wilson. In Chicago, the city of the Woman's Party convention, there was no sort of proof of the assertion that the women supported Mr. Hughes because he favored a suffrage amendment to the Constitution. The women of Cook County which includes Chicago, gave Hughes

50 Baker, 277 (footnote).
about 135,000 votes and Mr. Wilson 130,000. Since Illinois wisely tabulated the votes of women separately from those of men, the results pointed out that "in political psychology, the feminine mind apparently differs little from the masculine mind." Clearly these statistics indicate only one thing and that is "that the women voted just about the same as the men."\(^5\) In other words, they showed themselves deaf to all appeals like those of the suffragettes and voted on the major issues like the men. Some states, however, were even said to have been turned to Wilson by the vote of the women. In Kansas, for example, where 240,000 women voted for the first time, William Allen White, editor of the Emporia Gazette, claimed that the result in his state was due mainly to these votes of the women for Wilson.\(^5\) The Boston Post\(^5\) and the New York Herald\(^5\) shared this opinion while the editors of the Topeka Capitol and the Wichita Beacon said practically the same thing.\(^5\)

On this topic the Sacramento Union made the significant observation that although the women voted for the Republican

\(^5\) Boston Post, November 10, 1916.
\(^5\) Literary Digest, 53:21, November 18, 1916.
\(^5\) Literary Digest, Ibid.
candidate for Governor, nevertheless they voted for Wilson out of desire for peace. In Minnesota, the editor of the Duluth News Tribune claimed that woman's vote was the dominant factor in favor of Wilson, and a strong influence was attached to the women's vote by the San Francisco Chronicle and the Bulletin as well as the Los Angeles Express and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Looking at the vote of the whole country rather than at the individual states, the New York Times attributed great importance to the woman's vote in Wilson's victory as did the Harper's weekly in its critique of the election results.

It is perhaps fitting, that we close our discussion of the second artificial issue with the words of Mrs. Arthur Dodge, president of the National Association Opposed to Woman's Suffrage, in a letter to the New York Times: "The so-called Woman's Party...failed absolutely to carry out the purpose for which it was organized - to defeat the Democratic candidate in the States where women vote."

56 Sacramento Union, Nov. 15, 1916.
57 Literary Digest, Ibid.
58 San Francisco Chronicle, November 11, 1916.
60 Los Angeles Express, November 11, 1916.
61 Literary Digest, 53:21, November 18, 1916.
CHAPTER III
THREE ISSUES MADE BY THE LOSING REPUBLICANS

Besides these "artificial" issues there were three issues upon which the Republican candidate laid great emphasis throughout his campaign. One was the rather worn out question of the tariff, a perennial favorite in campaigns. Another issue, also of frequent appearance in previous electioneering, was the advocation of civil service reform; this was stressed by Hughes because during the past administration the Democratic party had appeared guilty of partisanship in appointing unqualified Democrats to important federal offices. The third issue was really a criticism of the President's first term foreign policy. In this part of our thesis we will consider only the Mexican foreign policy, for the European question will be discussed later not as a strong point for the Republicans but rather as a boon for the Democrats.

The disagreement of the parties on the tariff was indicated in the platforms. The Democrats took the following stand:

We reaffirm our belief in the doctrine of a tariff for the purpose of providing sufficient revenue for the operation of the government economically administered,
and unreservedly endorse the Underwood tariff as truly exemplifying that doctrine.¹

Whereas the Republican platform stated that "the Republican party stands now, always has, ... for the policy of tariff protection to American industries and American labor ..." It did not regard an anti-dumping provision as an adequate substitute and also went on to say that the "Underwood tariff act is a complete failure in every respect."²

The sharp opposition of these two positions, however, was somewhat softened by the recommendations on the part of both parties for an advisory tariff commission that would give impartial study to the matter and advise the administration accordingly. Wilson, at first opposed to such a board, admitted his change of opinion on the subject as early as January, 1916, in an address to the Railway Business Association in New York City. He spoke of the "economic revolution" going on in the world, and therefore the necessity for a more thorough investigation of conditions than Congress was capable of because of its other preoccupying concerns.³

¹ Democratic Convention, 122.
² Republican Convention, 168.
³ Shaw, 156-157.
When, moreover, Wilson signed the measure for a Tariff Commission in the very heat of the campaign on September 8, 1916 and then secured as chairman, Frank William Taussig, long distinguished at Harvard as a low economist, "there was implicit in this move", according to Paxson, "a Democratic willingness to accept the protective system as reasonable."4

Naturally, the Republicans criticized the President's shift of opinion, but even more did Hughes, beginning with his acceptance speech, attack the whole tariff program. In almost every city of the West in which he campaigned Hughes gave some time to this issue. The people of Tacoma, Portland, Coeur D'Alene, San Francisco and Los Angeles, - all heard Hughes speak against the tariff.5 Yet the Republican papers in these same cities after the election attributed very little importance to this issue, and we fail to see why the people at large would favor the return of a protectionist policy.

This matter of the tariff had taken on importance in the last twenty years. In the Congressional elections of 1890 and 1910, the tariff question was about the only issue upon which the parties really differed. In 1890, following

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4 Paxson, 352.
5 San Francisco Chronicle, August 14, 15, 16, 1916.
the passage of the McKinley Tariff Act, the Republicans suffered defeat, a phenomenon repeated again in 1910 subsequent to the passage of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff of 1909. These results would seem to indicate that when this issue was presented without complication from others the popular verdict was against the stubborn maintenance of a rigid protectionist policy.\(^6\) The depression that followed the crisis of 1907 and continued after the passage of the tariff bill of 1909 certainly did not enhance the position of the protectionist Republicans.

Moreover, this turn from a prosperity, which the Republicans attributed to their protectionist policy, to a state of depression, was naturally a plausible opportunity for the Democrats in turn to attribute the depression also to this policy. However, the Democrats strengthened their appeal to the people by linking the high cost of living with the protective tariff. It was under the influence of these circumstances, Taussig thought, that the Republicans went down to defeat in the Congressional elections of 1910, and, together with the party split to the rout in the Presidential race of 1912.\(^7\)

That the Democratic power was on the rise cannot be

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\(^7\) Ibid., 412.
denied. It is best seen perhaps by a glance at the following tables:

61st Congress, 1909-1911 (that which passed the tariff act of 1909):

- House, 214 Republicans
- 175 Democrats
- Senate, 60 Rep.
- 32 Dem.

62nd Congress (1911-1913):

- House, 228 Democrats
- 165 Republicans
- 1 Socialist
- Senate, 51 Rep.
- 43 Dem.

63rd Congress (1913-1915) that which passed the tariff act of 1913:

- House, 286 Democrats
- 122 Republicans
- 21 Progressives,
  Prog.Rep.,
  and Indep.
- Senate, 51 Dem.
- 44 Rep.
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When this surge of power brought Wilson to the Presidency in 1912 the Democrats lived up to their platform promise and under Wilson's leadership quickly engineered the composition and passage of the Underwood Tariff in 1913 which provided for a general reduction of tariff rates. In his acceptance speech of 1916, Wilson referred to this revision, saying, "the tariff has been revised, not on the principle of repelling foreign trade, but upon the principal of encouraging it."9

It is hard to see how the tariff could have been made the main issue of the coming election unless Wilson's present administration had been accompanied by a great

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8 Ibid., 412.
9 Shaw, 305.
depression, and this was nowhere in evidence. Trade with the belligerents was bringing money into the country. Since there was a comparatively enjoyable prosperity, one is surprised to find that Hughes did not leave this issue entombed in the black print of the platform. However, it can be said that issues were scarce, as the Socialists pointed out, and the tariff probably helped Hughes to retain the votes of the conservative East. But the important votes of this campaign were those of the Progressives, and such a traditional policy as the protective tariff would hardly be enough to win their vote. In an editorial after the election, the New York Times spoke very critically of this issue, saying that "the Republicans had no issues, no clear policies except protection, a scarecrow hung out at the eleventh hour, and inciting only guffaws." Although we need not go as far as the Times in our condemnation of this issue of the campaign, it probably lost no votes for Wilson except in those states of the East that had already been conceded to the Republicans.

Another issue stressed a great deal by Hughes from convention time to election was Wilson's partisanship in appointing Democrats to office in place of more capable and skilled men. This issue was hardly important enough to swing an election because it was only a perennial favorite with the

challenger. Besides the American people seem to concede the principle that to the victor belongs a certain reasonable amount of the spoils; or as Bryan retorted to Hughes' accusations, "the deserving Democrat" is as much entitled to recognition as a deserving Republican. However, that the matter was definitely controversial was indicated by Outlook, which favored the Republicans in this regard and pointed out that even Wilson's legislation could not "make up for the fundamental corruption of an administrative system by the reintroduction of the spoils system."

It seems that Wilson was probably guilty in this case for two of his biographers, who are usually favorable to him, admit his guilt. David Lawrence, one of these biographers, thought that in Wilson's administration

... ambassadors were selected and governmental jobs of various sorts dispersed in panicky haste to satisfy the demands of the party vultures. Patronage was like so much debris ... that had to be cleared away ... The disregard of a civil service reform and the appointment of some men to ambassadorial or ministerial posts who would never have been sent as first secretaries even, had there been the slightest suspicion that a war was brewing in Europe, constituted an indefensible chapter of the first part of

11 Literary Digest, 53:9, August 26, 1926.
12 Outlook, CXIV, October 4, 1916.
the Wilson administration. 13

Dodd, another biographer, also says that Wilson did not handle the question of civil service any too well.

Wilson, although fully aware of the risks, allowed many diplomatic, consular, and other positions to be awarded to party workers. And Democratic leaders in Congress more than once enacted legislation that tended to debauch the civil service. 14

However, Dodd also points out that, although this difficulty of patronage arose between the President and his party in both houses of Congress throughout the administration, "as the matter stood when the campaign opened the administration had as good a record as any of its predecessors; one is constrained to say a better one." 15

Among the appointments criticized two immediately come to mind mainly because of the publicity given by Hearst to everything negative connected with the Mexican affair. During the Mexican crisis William Bayard Dale, an unfrocked clergyman and newspaper writer, was selected by Wilson as a personal representative to investigate conditions. Not only was he temperamentally unsuited 16 but actually ignorant of the mission assigned to him. Soon after another representa-

13 David Lawrence, The True Story of Woodrow Wilson, New York, Doran Co., 1924, 185.
14 Dodd, 181.
15 Ibid., 182.
16 Baker, IV, 265.
tive was selected to deal with Huerta and this appointment was just as bad. John Lind, Bryan's personal friend and the former Governor of Minnesota, chosen as the new mediator, was completely unfamiliar with Latin American affairs and untried in diplomatic circles. These facts, together with his inability to speak Spanish, made him the most unfit person who could have been sent.\footnote{Charles W. Thompson, \textit{Presidents I've Known and Two Near Presidents}, Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, 1929, 261.}

Another appointment under attack by Hughes was one made by Secretary of the Treasury, McAdoo, who had removed Henry Clapp as assistant appraiser of merchandise at the Port of New York to make way for Daniel E. Finn, a Tammany district leader, whom Hughes claimed was unfit and unqualified.\footnote{San Francisco Chronicle, August 13, 1916.}

With regard to two other publicized cases, the independent Springfield Republican said that the two parties were even. While a Mister Durand had been removed from public office against his will by the Administration, a Doctor Titman had resigned voluntarily for reasons of health from the post of the Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey.\footnote{Literary Digest, 53:9, August 26, 1916.}

Although there were many more dubious appointments these few most publicized cases are sufficient to indicate...
that Hughes had found a chink in the armor of Wilson's administration. It led to many speeches by Hughes on inefficiency of government, waste of money, and particularly partisanship and sectionalism in politics that resulted in putting incompetent men into important positions. But whether Wilson was guilty or not, whether Hughes gained votes or not, it still must be recognized as one of the major issues made by the Republicans. Worthy of notice too is the fact that while it might have accounted for the closeness of the race it could not have aided Wilson in any way in winning the election.

Another important thrust against Wilson was made by the Republicans on the subject of foreign policy. Hughes launched a critical attack in his very speech of acceptance in which he devoted more than half of his time to this subject. In his attacks he consistently hammered at the Mexican policy which, indeed, at that time and perhaps even today, appeared to be another sore spot in the Wilson administration. Unfortunately, Wilson was unprepared for the task of foreign relations with Mexico as he had himself admitted, stating that, "it would be the irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs when my own preparations had been exclusively with domestic
problems." Yet in spite of his insight into his own limitations, he nevertheless refused the advice of authorities on important matters, selected a cabinet of inexperienced politicians, and flung himself into the very depths of foreign entanglements from the very beginning, as his Mexican diplomacy conclusively shows.

Briefly the situation in Mexico developed as follows. When Diaz, the dictator of Mexico for thirty-five years, yielded to a revolutionary movement that he could no longer suppress, Madero was installed as constitutional President in 1911, but he did not keep order nor did he satisfy the aspirations of the landless peons. A counter-revolution of landowners, supported by foreign investors, displaced him and installed Victoriana Huerta as President. Great Britain and most of the powers promptly recognized Huerta's government but Wilson refused to do the same, despite the cries of the business interests in this country.

"Watchful waiting" was the policy adopted by Wilson. Unfortunately, with this policy he was implicitly encouraging revolution. The revolutions were supposed to convince Huerta, a character most obnoxious to Wilson, that he should abandon

20 Baker, IV, 247.
21 Ibid., 344.
his high ambitions and retire. Pressure from foreign countries forced Wilson to hurry the process and so he sent two poorly equipped ambassadors who failed to gain their objectives. The repeal of the canal tolls exemption clause by Congress, an act done at Wilson's request, brought England to Wilson's side and encouraged him in his watchful waiting. Huerta, however, continued negotiations with the foreign powers and Wilson decided to lift the arms embargo for the benefit of the constitutional forces, which meant that Villa and Carranza would now receive munitions openly from the United States.

The Tampico incident and the A B C mediation brought a brief respite, but soon Carranza, Villa, and Zapeta were taking turns in overrunning Mexico City. The mediation of South American countries was again invited, and this time after conferences of these countries with Secretary of State Lansing, the Carrancista party by some strange process of reasoning was chosen as the only party possessing the essentials for recognition as the de facto government. The United States then recognized Carranza as the chief executive of Mexico, and Wilson simultaneously proclaimed an embargo on arms to Mexico, except for the newly organized government.

Villa's reaction, the murder of 16 American engineers, brought more trouble, but when armed intervention was
recommended, Wilson preferred to take Carranza's worthless promise that he would pursue justice in this case.\textsuperscript{22} When Villa continued raids upon New Mexico, Wilson called out the militia to pursue Villa into Mexican territory. Carranza appeared cooperative at first, but then he definitely refused our soldiers the use of all Mexican transportation facilities; his next step was a bitter condemnation of American invasion on Mexican soil as "a move that could easily lead to war."\textsuperscript{23} In June war was almost declared when several clashes occurred between some men of Pershing's command and Mexicans at Parral, and a collision with a force of Carranza's troops at Carrizal.

The United States President was still determined to keep peace and so adopted Lansing's suggestion of a joint Mexican-American commission to reach an understanding. The net result of the New London Conference was a victory for Mexican diplomacy; the withdrawal of American troops from Mexican territory; the restoration of full diplomatic relations between the two countries; and the decision to patrol the borders rigorously against further raids. These events bring us to the closing month of the campaign.

Then as now, to many Wilson's policy was the


combination of delayed recognition and meddling in Mexico's internal affairs, while to others it was an example of remarkable patience, unselfishness and sincerity that paved the way for his moral leadership of Europe. 24 Some will point to the four hundred American civilians killed in Mexico or to the one hundred and seventy million dollars lost to American businessmen. 25 Wilson's defenders, however, will say that his refusal to be forced into war with Mexico saved many more lives, made unnecessary prolonged policing measures, and did much to remove the suspicion with which our policies in the Caribbean were regarded by our southern neighbors.

With regard to the recognition of Huerta, Wilson was criticized by some for departing from the traditional course of the United States of recognizing de facto governments. The easiest and wisest course, they claim, would have been to grant recognition to the Huerta government and leave to Huerta and the Mexicans the solution of their problems of constitutional law and democracy. The policy adopted by Wilson, however, was one that introduced moral considerations into the realm of international law, a

24 J. Latane & O. Wainhouse, American Foreign Policy, Odyssey Press, New York, 1940, 602.
dangerous procedure since it placed upon the U.S. the re­
sponsibility of deciding which government was moral and of
establishing that government.

It is not our purpose here to decide which course
would have been best in the Mexican crisis for that would de­
mand a long and comprehensive study of a question that is
still among the unsolved problems of history. However, the
above facts are necessary to show upon what grounds the Re­
publicans based their attack.

While Hughes and Lodge recommended intervention in
the Mexican crisis, Hughes in his acceptance speech merely
denounced Wilson's "vacillation" and demanded a "new policy"
without specifying what it should be.26 This attitude was
rather typical of the rest of his campaign speeches. Hughes
claimed that Wilson should have insisted upon protection of
the lives and property of American citizens. If Huerta and
his government could not discharge this function, then the
U. S. should not have recognized him but instead our ad­
ministration said to Huerta, "You, get out!" and recognition
was given to Carranza. The attack of some Mexicans under
Villa that killed 19 Americans was war, and yet we allowed
the Mexicans to spill blood, coquettled with Villa, with

Carranza. The administration was also to blame for the anarchy that prevailed in Mexico, for leaving our citizens a prey to the ravages of revolution, and for making our name a word of contempt in a riotous republic. "It was a miserable, petty war brought about by weakness and ignorance, by incompetence and blundering."27

It was probably very fortunate for President Wilson that the Mexican crisis abated somewhat a month or so before the election. There was a decided number of Americans clamoring for intervention and they were not only the warhawks and the believers of the jingoistic press but a number of people usually pacifistic in outlook. The Roman Catholics were also a sizeable minority who disagreed with Wilson's maneuverings. Even the Mexicans were not sold on the President's 'watchful waiting', at least if one can believe an article in Outlook magazine just before the election that contained condemnations of Wilson by First Chief Carranza, the Secretary of War Obregon, the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations Aguilar, and a leading general of the army.28 Few papers expressed the convictions of the Springfield Republicans that "it is impossible not to have faith

27 Literary Digest, 53:8, August 19, 1916.
28 Outlook, CLIV, November 1, 1916.
that President Wilson is still on the right track and facing in the right direction."²⁹

At any rate, how this issue of the Mexican policy affected the election is a question difficult to answer. It could have been one of the main reasons for the closeness of the contest. One reason that inclines us to believe this was that the aggressive and openly hostile attitude of the Catholic papers unified when Wilson expressed his fondness for the anti-clerical Carranza and even aided him with military supplies. Catholic blood flowing in the streets of Mexico stirred the sympathies of American Catholics to a distaste for Wilson and his policy. However, since Catholic criticism of Wilson was found chiefly in Catholic newspapers and periodicals of very limited circulation, the united stand of Catholics against Wilson cannot be certain, especially when these few organs of publicity were not unanimous in condemning voting for Wilson. That Tumulty was worried and even the President, over the antagonism of the Church, and that he tried to placate its members, seems to be indicated by a letter of the Roman Catholic Tumulty to an obligingly inquisitive friend; for in this letter he attempted to explain away the whole

Mexican persecution as an exaggeration.

However, the newspapers of the country seem to give no importance to its part in the election except as a verification of the Democratic slogan, "He kept us out of war." That Hughes' attacks upon Wilson's "meddling" brought him any votes is almost impossible to prove, especially since the papers concentrate upon what lost votes for the challenger rather than what gained votes for him. At the most we can say that the Republicans in the election of 1916 succeeded in making a major issue of Wilson's Mexican policy but failed to make it a winning issue.

This brings to a close our brief discussion of the major issues made by Hughes and the Republican party. From the general tenor of the issues it is easy to understand why the post-election surveys blamed the Republicans and Hughes for making the campaign predominately "critical" rather than constructive.
CHAPTER IV
THE WAR ISSUE: A DEMOCRATIC SUCCESS

The winning strategy of the Democrats centered upon two policies: first, the President's successful prevention of an American entrance into war despite the occasion for such a course, and secondly, his indisputable record of progressive legislation. Though at times one or the other of these elements was stressed, it seems that the combination of both was just too much for the Republicans. Because of the importance attributed by newspapers and authors to these two factors we have limited our discussion to them as the main vote-getters for the Democrats. In our discussion we will emphasize their special importance in the West because it was in the West that Wilson found the votes that tipped the scales ever so slightly in his favor. Since the contest was so close we will be looking for elements in Wilson's favor, and this purpose, rather than partiality to Wilson's cause, will determine the selection of quotations.

Many commentators thought that the main issue of the election was provided by the threatening war. It certainly accentuated our relations with the belligerent countries which were proving to be an extremely difficult problem and as
complicated in the early part of the war as was public opinion in this melting pot of millions of hyphenated Americans, Wilson's early appeal on August 18, 1914, urging the American people to be "impartial in thought as well as in action" was asking the impossible. A rhyme from the New York Sun gave humorous expression to this not-too-humorous and rather complex situation:

The barber to the right of me hocking for the Kaiser,
The barber to the left of me was hacking for the Czar.
A gentleman from Greece was shearing off my fleece,
While very near a swart Italian stropped his scimitar.
And when presently discussion, polyglot and fervid,
On political conditions burst about my chair,
I left the place unshaven - I hope I'm not a craven
But I sort of like to wear a head beneath my hair!¹

Accordingly, the United States soon became a fertile field for the propagandists of the belligerents. But as early as November, 1914 in a poll conducted by the Literary Digest, of the 367 editors who replied only 20 favored the Germans while 105 favored the Allies and 242 remained neutral. This was even before the English propagandists launched their

¹ Quoted by Mark Sullivan, Our Times, Scribner's Sons, New York, 1933, V, 140-141.
successful campaign in the United States. In general, "the sympathies of the Americans lay on the side of Great Britain, France and the other allies. Relations with Great Britain had on the whole been friendly since the recent repeal of the canal tolls exemption clause." Then, too, the Americans were always partial to the French. On the other hand, German-American relations had not been particularly friendly since the eighties and by 1914 the American people "had come to regard German militarism and navalism as an international menace." Moreover, "the ruthless invasion of Belgium, despite a solemn treaty obligation to respect her neutrality, merely confirmed the deepest American suspicions." And then to make matters worse, "the German Chancellor blunderingly explained that the Belgian neutrality was but a scrap of paper." Needless to say big America sympathized with little Belgium.

Despite this growing sentiment in favor of the Allies, when convention time arrived before the 1916 election both parties advocated neutrality in their respective platforms, together with the firm defense of American rights.

2 See J. D. Squires, British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914-1917; Carl Wittke, German-Americans and the World War; Peterson, Propaganda for War.
3 Bailey, op. cit., 612.
4 Ibid., 612.
This seemed the wisest policy because the American people still preferred peace and had not as yet been completely turned against either side. At this point American desires did not include a victory that involved American participation on the side of one of the belligerents.

Another factor made neutrality the more popular policy. As Baker points out:

One element or condition of the approaching campaign which was of the utmost importance ought to be here considered: this was the relative lull in American diplomatic activity which began in May, before the conventions, and continued until after the elections in November. It applies not only to Europe but also to Mexico. For five months, while there were indeed irritating controversies, especially with the British regarding the black list, no really acute foreign crisis disturbed American life or influenced opinion. It is only in the after look that the immense political importance can be fully recognized. The campaign so far as the slogan "He kept us out of war" was concerned largely turned upon it.5

Preparedness was also a major plank in both platforms for this policy had been brought before the people by the many preparedness parades of May and June. Tumulty claimed that they were part of a political movement led by Wood, to mention one, to embarrass the President and Congress into passing some radical legislation.6 Be that as it may,

5 Baker, 242.
6 Tumulty, 246-247.
the number of people taking part in these parades was in six figures and that in New York was described as "the greatest civilian demonstration in the history of the world." As the political importance of these parades was more obvious to Tumulty than to the President, it was by Tumulty's maneuvering that the President not only was invited but also took part in the parade at Washington, marching at its head on the very day that the Democratic convention was meeting in St. Louis. "By getting into the 'front line,' the President, argued Tumulty, had cleverly outwitted his enemies and took command of the forces in the country demanding preparedness."

Wilson made other appropriate gestures toward the more militant elements in the country with the preparedness measures that were pushed through Congress during the few months previous to the election. The National Defense Act of June 23 enlarged the regular army to 175,000, strengthened the National Guard, and provided for an officer's reserve corps. The Naval Appropriations Bill of August 29, authorized the construction of a large number of new dreadnoughts, battle cruisers, and minor warcraft; and since the Democratic party was likewise converted to building up the Merchant Marine, the United States Shipping Board Act of September 7th

7 Ibid., 247.
appropriated fifty million dollars for the purchase or construction of merchant ships. Finally to coordinate industries and resources for defense, Congress created a Council of National Defense, consisting of six cabinet members and an advisory board drawn from the ranks of industry and labor. That these measures were not adequate nor of the radical type that Tumulty had feared, need not concern us here. It is more to the point to note that they were enough to placate the midly militant Americans who demanded the protection of American lives on the high seas, and likewise enough to enable the Democrats to boast of a program that embraced both preparedness and neutrality. For "had the Democrats attempted to run on a straight pacifist platform they would almost certainly have been defeated." The slogan, "He kept us out of war," proved to be a "safe means of tapping the powerful sentiment for peace without too far alienating the war hawks." 9

The Republican party strategists had refused to make an issue out of the threatening war by nominating Roosevelt or Wood, and wisely so because they realized that the country still wanted peace. But now that their platform practically agreed with the Democrats on the issue they

8 Millis, 320.
9 Ibid., 320.
could only denounce Wilsonian "weakness" in maintaining American rights abroad, and even then they had to be careful because they were straddling the affections of both the English and the German-Americans. They were, as someone phrased it, "beating drums up both streets;" hence their platform also blazed with nationalistic fervor, giving offense to no one.

Hughes' acceptance speech fell right in line with the platform. He spoke of "America first and America efficient" and dedicated himself to the "unflinching maintenance of all American rights on land and sea." He stressed a "firm American policy" but the obvious question was immediately asked by the hostile Democratic papers, - "What does 'firm' mean?" An independent paper, the Springfield Republican, was quoted by the Digest as giving a "careful criticism" of the speech. After reviewing Mr. Hughes' condemnation of President Wilson's policy with reference to the European war the paper asked:

What would Mr. Hughes do with reference to the European war, in case he were to be elected? Would he join one side or the other? Would he forthwith demand specific disavowal from Germany of the Lusitania's sinking? Would he threaten

10 *New York World*, August 1, 1916
England with reprisals on account of the blockade? No one would know from this speech what Mr. Hughes would do, but we do know with sufficient precision what to expect of President Wilson.\footnote{\textit{Literary Digest}, 53:7, August 12, 1916.}

Throughout most of the campaign speeches Hughes seemed to follow this course, that is, he offered no alternative to the policy of Wilson but advocated the same thing in a more "firm" way. He constantly criticized and condemned Wilson's missteps. Both he and the other Republicans found fault with Wilson not for keeping us out of war but for doing so by methods which were humiliating in the extreme, sacrificed national honor and surrendered its position as the defender of its own rights and the rights of neutrals in the face of flagrant wrongs against which the President had protested - on paper.

It was a very delicate position for Hughes especially when one of his colleagues, Theodore Roosevelt, was speaking in a fashion much more aggressive. Roosevelt's hatred of Wilson led him into undignified outbursts and to extremities of statement that were irritating and embarrassing to Hughes and his managers,\footnote{Baker, 289 (footnote).} for implicit at least was the suggestion that we should have gone to war.

12 Baker, 289 (footnote).
The Colonel's attacks upon the foreign policy of the administration were violent and persistent. He characterized the statement 'He kept us out of war' as an "Utterly misleading phrase, the phrase of a coward, and distorted it into a promise that under no circumstances could we go to war." He also declared that if he had been president when the Lusitania was sunk, he would have seized every German vessel interned in American waters. But the speech that was perhaps the climax of the Colonel's outbursts and of his campaigning was given at Cooper Union in New York on November 3rd. As he reached the end of his flaming speech, Mr. Millis notes that "he tossed his manuscript aside and trembling with emotion uttered the soul cry of the true patriot:"

There should be shadows now at Shadow Lawn: (Wilson's Summer home) the shadows of the men, women and children who have risen from graves in foreign lands; the shadows of the helpless whom Mr. Wilson did not dare protect lest he might have to face danger: the shadows of babies gasping pitifully as they sink under the waves; the shadows of women outraged and slain by bandits... Those are the shadows proper for Shadow Lawn; the shadows of deeds that were never done; the shadow of lofty words that were followed by no action; the shadows of the tortured dead.

14 Ibid., October 1, 1916.
15 Millis, 349.
Speeches such as this seemed to put Hughes in an impossible situation. Like Wilson he knew the sentiment of the country: it did not want war. How could he then, or the Republican managers, approve the incendiary proposals of Roosevelt, who was going up and down the country insisting that "the time for the ostrich policy, the time for the head-in-a-hole policy, in America is past!" 17

Wilson capitalized on the situation, and in a speech at Shadow Lawn on September 30th he said: "The certain prospect of the success of the Republican party is that we shall be drawn in one form or another into the embroilments of the European War." 18 As if to prove it, Roosevelt, campaigning for Hughes at Battle Creek on that very day was shouting: "President Wilson by his policy of tame submission to insult and injury from all whom he feared, has invited the murder of our men, women and children by ... German submarines at sea." 19

It was said that the Democrats "cheerfully reprinted this passionate effusion and spread it broadcast over the radical-pacifist Northwest." 20 It was a commitment of the Republicans to war in event that the German pledge on submarine warfare was broken.

17 Ibid., October 10, 1916
18 Ibid., October 1, 1916
19 Ibid.
20 Millis, 343.
A few days before the campaign ended Hughes added a statement indicative perhaps of his fear of the effect of Roosevelt's speeches: "A vote for me is not a vote for war. It is a vote for lasting peace, it is a vote for the maintenance of American rights on land and sea, throughout the world." Late in the campaign Hughes was also forced to give his views upon two important incidents involving America. One expression of opinion was forced by a heckler who put the question to Hughes point-blank: "What would you have done when the Lusitania was sunk?" Hughes answered:

...when I said 'strict accountability' every nation would have know that that was meant; and further when notice was published with respect to the action, I would have made it known in terms unequivocal and unmistakable, that we should not tolerate a continuance of friendly relations through the ordinary diplomatic channels if that action were taken, and the Lusitania would never have been sunk.22

This, Baker claimed, "was the one important respect in which Hughes said that he would have taken a more advanced step than the President."23

On the issue of "black-listing" and the violation of property it seems that Hughes, despite the criticism of Wilson's methods, agreed with him. On October 9th he said:

22 Ibid., October 13, 1916.
32 Baker, 288.
I do not put life and property on the same footing ... We do not propose to tolerate any improper interference with American property, with American mails, or with legitimate commercial intercourse. No American who is exercising only American rights shall be put on any black list by any foreign nation.24

The open struggle of the Wilsonian administration to maintain neutrality could carry no pledge of non-participation, and Wilson, neither before or after his nomination, promised more than an effort to avoid war. Indeed, as early as May 30, Wilson had made it clear that he was no doctrinaire pacifist. Everyone understood that war at times was necessary and beneficial. "The Union was saved by the processes of the Civil War" 25 and America while passionately desirous of peace, might have to fight again.26 This attitude, however, was wholly different from militarism which he did not care to find prevalent in America.27

Little else, however, was said for the President than that he kept the nation out of war. But, "it was certainly never the President's intent to rest the most important phase of his record - his attitude toward the European War - upon this naive generality ..."28 Of course, Wilson was aware of the implication of the phrase and he gave indications that he did not like the phrase, even though he could not object to it.

25 Paxson, 347.  
26 Baker and Dodd, IV, 194.  
27 Ibid., 403.  
28 Baker, 257.
Once he remarked to Secretary Daniels: "I can't keep the country out of war. They talk of me as though I were a god." Then he added: "Any little German lieutenant can put us into the war at any time by some calculated outrage." If the country had been plunged into war this campaign phrase could easily have backfired and blasted his hopes of reelection.

To the people this phrase seemed to mean that Wilson was earnestly and honestly seeking to keep out of war. His hesitation, his continued and determined efforts for peace, his mental debates, seemed to express the mind of a good percentage of the American people. Besides the mention in his speeches of his avoidance of war he often referred to the moral leadership of America in this crisis, to the impossibility of isolation in the future, and to the League of Nations, but it is very doubtful that these ideas were appreciated by the people at large. The slogan seemed to be the all-important part of the Democratic stand on the war issue and that they relied upon its appeal is seen in appeals such as the following just before the election:

You are WORKING
- Not Fighting
Alive and Happy
- Not Cannon Fodder!

29 Baker, 258.
Wilson and Peace with Honor?
or
Hughes with Roosevelt and War?30

Every reference to this slogan and to peace carried a conscious allusion to what the policies of Theodore Roosevelt and the Republicans might have brought to pass had he been in the White House. When the Republicans criticized his foreign policy Wilson had a tactical advantage, for his policy had already been tried and any radical change would only lead to war. Obviously this was not a necessary outcome of a Republican victory but the Democrats played upon the people’s alarm to enhance their own chance of winning.

Thus were the cards stacked on the war issue. Only a general outline has been given because a detailed account of all the prewar events and diplomatic relations was thought unnecessary for our purposes here. It seemed sufficient to note the stand of the parties, and the strategy employed. The one party could stand a successful record in keeping the country out of war, could point to an all-important slogan and could imply that a change might mean war. The other party was forced to criticize a policy of peace, had no catchy slogan, and seemed to be weakened by the militant speeches of one of its prominent members who worked almost at cross-purposes with the challenging candidate.

We are not surprised, then, to see the following caption on one of the leading articles in the New York Times on November 12: "Peace a Powerful Issue - 'He Kept Us Out Of War' Won Women ... was the greatest argument, East and West, but especially the West. In the West it appealed to hatred of war, in the midwest to pacifism." 31 That the people voted Wilson because of the war issue was the opinion of the San Francisco Bulletin and Chronicle. 32 The San Jose Mercury Herald thought "that the slogan swung states usually Republican" like New Hampshire 33 and the Sacramento Union claimed the "call of humanity impelled the West to vote for Wilson" and his policy of peace. 34 The Los Angeles Express and the Spokane Spokesman attributed importance to the slogan, while the Seattle Post-Intelligencer gave top-rank influence to the appeal of the slogan to women. 35 This same attitude was shown in the midwestern Wilsonian states: In Kansas by the Emporia Gazette and Wichita Beacon and in Minnesota by the Duluth News Tribune. 36 The lone Wilson state in New England, New Hampshire, attributed second largest influence to the slogan; while "Independent" (Harper's Weekly) a week after the election said that the prime

33 San Jose Mercury-Herald, November 9, 1916.
34 Sacramento Union, November 10, 1916.
35 Literary Digest, 53:21, November 18, 1916.
36 Ibid.
element apparent in the election returns was the approval by
the country of the President's success in "keeping us out of
war." From these comments it appears that

The closing weeks of the canvass clarified
the antithesis between the neutrality that
Wilson cherished and its only alternative,
which was war. It made him votes that he
was not a swashbuckler, and he needed all
of them to overcome the normal Republican
drift.37

The domination of the war motive is easily understood
if an article of the Literary Digest just before the election
was an indication of what the American people were thinking
about. Entitled "What the War is Costing in Men," it was set
off by a drawing of a torrent of dead bodies going over the
waterfalls of war; the caption was "The Ceaseless Torrent".
Included in the article were the sobering figures of the war
dead. The count at that time was 711,000 deaths.38 The ef-
fekt of this article upon women readers served to heighten the
importance of the Democratic slogan.

When looking for influential factors that went hand
in hand with this war issue we cannot overlook the work of
Bryan, for apart from the South, the Wilson majorities came
mainly from the territory in which Bryan did his campaigning

37 Paxson, 263-4.
38 Literary Digest, 53:19, November 4, 1916.
for Wilson. "This campaigning took Mr. Bryan through nineteen states in eight weeks, during which time he made four or five speeches a day." 39 This last statement takes on greater significance when we add two remarks made by the San Jose Mercury-Herald to the effect that probably no one had "larger or more appreciative audiences" than Bryan and that "the one issue which appealed to his tender sensibilities was that of peace." 40 Even the Post of far-eastern Boston speaks of Bryan as the deciding factor in the Nebraska vote. 41 At any rate it seems more than a mere coincidence that only one of the states covered by Bryan went Republican. 42 As someone said of him, "his mood is the mood of the West." And when he added his oratorical ability to this sympathetic attitude toward the western people, stressing that the President should not be rebuked for keeping the country out of war with Mexico and Europe, and playing upon the important slogan, we can feel reasonably sure that the vote of many westerners was influenced by Bryan. The Chicago Tribune thought that Bryan "was more responsible for Wilson than he was four years ago," but having the Tribune on one's side is no help so we'll forget their

40 *San Jose Mercury-Herald*, November 16, 1916.
41 *Boston Post*, November 11, 1916
42 Hibben, *ibid.*, 354.
remark. However, we will note that Woodrow Wilson himself seemed to attribute a great deal to Bryan from the following acknowledgment:

May I not say how much I admire your part in the campaign and what a vast deal of effective work you seem to have done in the very part of the country which has now aligned itself with the forces of progress. I think that all Democrats are grateful to you. Certainly I am.43

The few representative newspapers quoted were selected from the west because of its recognized importance in the reelection of Wilson. The Literary Digest in making its poll of the various Republican editors likewise concentrated upon the west and midwest. Thus far we have seen that the facts and a cross-section of opinions indicate that the war issue with its effective slogan was a very important factor in the Democratic victory. We will now consider the other predominant factor in Wilson's favor, at least in the western states, and that is, his successful bid for the Progressive vote.

43 Ibid., 354.
CHAPTER V

THE DEMOCRATIC APPEAL TO THE PROGRESSIVES

By adding the Republican and the Progressive votes of 1912 Justice Hughes appeared certain of victory. Theoretically the union of the two was very possible but we've seen that the Progressives had almost a nostalgic devotion to Teddy Roosevelt and when he refused to run and supported the candidacy of Hughes, many of his followers were sadly disappointed, others angry. During their convention the Progressives had summarily refused to nominate Hughes, and when after the convention they were called in special session to endorse him wholeheartedly, the request proved impossible. That their allegiance was divided is evident from the results of the election.

The Democratic administration, on the other hand, had to hold tight to the votes that were consistently Democratic and pick up its working majority from other sources. This was to be done by attracting the votes of political independents and Republicans who for some reason or other were dissatisfied. The Republicans boasted a unified front but the break with the Progressives was obviously not healed for as the North American phrased it, "the Progressives who left
the Republican party four years ago have no more affection or veneration for it now than they had had then. Thus the Democrats knew where to look for the necessary notes. By early June, even before the Republican and Progressive conventions had met, the Democratic leaders had settled upon the two broad policies by which they would appeal to the people. We have seen how in the knowledge that the country was opposed to war, they offered the record of the administration in keeping out of it. The country was still progressive; as the other policy they would offer the record of the Wilson administration in progressive legislation in their belief that Wilson would even continue to advocate more legislation of this type in the brief period before the close of Congress.

Before the Democratic convention met in June, Colonel House had written to Wilson, "Now that Hughes is the candidate, it is all the more necessary for us to gather in the Progressive vote. I think that we can show Hughes up as a thorough conservative." From the beginning of the campaign, House insisted that the Democrats must work to capture the Independent vote and the Progressives of the West. The entire strategy was to be founded upon the principle of permitting the Republicans to spend their efforts and money on

38 Current Opinion, LXI, 2, August, 1916.
39 Seymour, I, 346, 347.
the anti-Wilson states east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio, while the Democrats would hope to win the West, which, with the South, would supply the necessary majority.40

Since the Progressives were aware of the appeal of Wilson's record, those who returned to the Republican fold realized that it must be discredited. With this in mind, an advertisement sponsored by the Republicans provides us with an insight into their tactics. It was a two page article in the Literary Digest appearing in late September that tried to cover up the truth, at least so it appears to me. It read: "Wilson's Record Should Make Every Progressive Vote For Hughes." In the rest of the article the author, Gifford Pinchot, a Progressive seems to ignore deliberately the very foundation of the Progressive platform, the social and economic issues, and rather concentrates on Mexico, and the civil service reform.41 This example was followed by another Progressive, Charles Bonaparte, former Secretary of Navy and after that Attorney General under Roosevelt when, in a similar article entitled, "Why I must Vote For Hughes;" he, too, attacked Wilson primarily on civil service and his failure to protect the constitutional rights of American citizens in Mexico and Germany.42 But another Progressive who had bolted

40 Ibid., 347.
42 Outlook, CXIV, October 11, 1916.
the Republican party in 1912 was admittedly having trouble as he turned to prepare his campaign speeches in behalf of the Republican party. It was no easy task for Albert Beveridge to speak against Wilson, and his embarrassing position seems to give the lie to Pinchot's outburst as well as mirror more correctly the difficult position of the Progressive. As Beveridge said of himself:

He had long urged currency reform upon his party without effect, and Wilson had created the Federal Reserve System over Republican opposition. He had vainly sought to interest his party and Mr. Roosevelt in child-labor legislation and Wilson forced its enactment. . . . He had been the first in years to fight for a tariff commission, and Wilson had created one. He had proposed the establishment of a clearing house where business men might learn their rights and find protection against unscrupulous competition and Wilson had given them the Federal Trade Commission. He had bitterly denounced the tariff lobby in 1909, and in 1913 Wilson literally had scourged it from the Capitol. And if the Underwood tariff did not meet with his approval, it more nearly accorded with his views than the last Republican tariff act which he had fought heroically. Clearly, it was not to be a simple matter to frame a militant campaign against an administration with such a record. 43

This was a resume of Wilson's legislative record which needs further amplification to show its appeal to the Progressives. Wilson's legislating had begun when the Under-

wood Tariff became a law in October, 1913. As Mr. Beveridge intimated, though it was not perfect, it was at least a decided improvement over the Wilson-Gorman and Payne-Aldrich tariffs. Currency reform providing for a new national banking system was brought about by the Federal Reserve Act of December, 1913. Then Wilson sought to fulfill the most emphatic of the party pledges, "the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States." Roosevelt had failed to obtain such legislation from a recalcitrant Congress, and Taft had not even tried. Wilson's efforts resulted in the passage of the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Clayton Anti-Trust Act. The former authorized a commission to investigate corporations engaged in interstate commerce, all alleged violations of the anti-trust laws, and to issue 'cease and desist' orders against any corporation found guilty of unfair methods of competition. The latter was more sweeping in its provisions:

It forbade rebates, tying contracts, price discriminations, price cutting to restrain trade, the ownership of stock in competing companies, and interlocking directorates in banks and large businesses.

Officers of corporations were made personally responsible. Competitors when injured were allowed to use the injunction and to utilize evidence unearthed by the government.⁴⁵

Mainly because the use of injunctions in labor disputes was explicitly forbidden, it was hailed by Gompers as labor's charter of freedom.

Other legislation not mentioned by Beveridge was the Seaman's Act of 1915 which at least intended to do much for the sailor's wellbeing and abolished the crime of desertion in the American Merchant Marine. James Truslow Adams remarked that this Act, together with the farm legislation, "at least showed a marked and proper interest in the welfare of the ordinary man, instead of the larger business interests which had formerly considered the government as rather peculiarly a perquisite of their own."⁴⁶ Moreover, the Alaska Railway Act of 1914 provided for the construction, operation, and ownership of Alaskan railroads by the Federal Government, and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 provided millions of dollars for farm demonstration work in every rural county in the country.

These acts appealed to many Progressives in the same way that they appealed to Beveridge. Naturally they were unpalatable to big business and conservative moneyed interests who felt the challenge to their power and to their profits, but they were staunch Republicans anyway so that their interests would remain unchanged.

This was only the legislation enacted before the campaign began. But before we go on to the other important legislation it would be well to take a glance at the rival party, its platform and its candidate. Noticeably lacking in the Republican platform was the specific labor measures mentioned in the Democratic platform. As Mr. Beveridge, the Republican-Progressive-Republican, said to one of his colleagues: "What has become of the wonderful platform, especially the economic features? Has it all been abandoned for what you say is now 'Americanism,' preparedness, and a protective tariff?" Together with the labor and economic omissions, recommendations for farming legislation was a glaring omission when compared with the excellent measures proposed by the Democrats. I mention this only because these omissions were frequently commented upon by the Progressives during and after the campaign.

47 Bowers, 489.
The acceptance speech of Hughes appealed no more to the Progressives than did the Republican platform. The Springfield Republican in summing up the speech reflected this disappointment:

The impression one receives from Mr. Hughes' notification speech is one of solidity, and perhaps heaviness rather than brilliancy. It is likely to appeal to many of the Republican candidate's more conservative supporters as a careful and strong indictment of the present administration, with no display of flightiness or instability in the discussion of constructive policies. It seems less calculated to satisfy the radical wing of the Republican party, as the Progressives returning with Mr. Roosevelt may be called. There is no attention given to the policies of social and industrial justice which were the backbone of the Progressive movement, while there is little to suggest Rooseveltian fervor and conviction in the discussion of later issues of preparedness and Americanism.48

President Eliot of Harvard, an impartial observer, voiced somewhat the same criticism in saying that it was "filled with universally accepted statements concerning the proper national policies and general descriptions of what ought to be done and ought not to be done by national administrations." His comment that it was lacking in "exact measures" could be

48 Literary Digest, 53:7, August 12, 337.
said of Hughes' other campaign speeches. 49

During the campaign Wilson had the great advantage of being a President in power. "He could act: he could keep the eyes of the country constantly upon him." 50 It was easier, too, to win the Progressive vote in this position, since the Progressive party was primarily interested in domestic affairs, and action on this score could convince them. And Wilson did take advantage of this position. His "record for progressive legislation during that hot and hectic summer was as extraordinary as it was comprehensive." 51 In his speech of acceptance he could well say: "We have in four years come very near to carrying the platform of the Progressive party as well as our own; for we also are Progressives." 52 Since the campaign did keep Wilson and his achievements before the public eye and especially the Progressive eye, it would seem well worthwhile to consider this legislation rather thoroughly. It falls into two main categories, farm and labor legislation. The Federal Farm Loan Act, though it really became law in May, is close enough to convention time to warrant our study. It gains special importance from the fact that the Republicans offered little to attract the farmer vote in the coming election. Thousands of

49 Quoted by Houston, op. cit. I, 214.
50 Baker, V, 263.
51 Ibid., 263.
52 Shaw, 308.
The Federal Farm Loan Act was considered to be a gesture to the farmer:

... at the final passage in the House, the bill was reinforced by the vocal support of one of the survivors of Populism, Representative "Cyclone" Davis, of Texas, whose political career was based on his unsurpassing skill in emitting a piercing rebel yell'. His noisy thanksgiving in the House did not hurt the measure as a gesture to the farm opinion. 55

In some quarters it was looked upon as a successful ending of a battle of 15 years, waged by grangers and some banks of the South and Middle West. 56 The poor financial status of the farmer was a grievance long before the Populists gave it voting strength. The People's Party which had asked for Federal storage facilities, easier credit and loans on farm crops, was now getting all of these provisions in the Farm Loan Act and they would not forget the President who put them through. Besides this Act there were the Cotton Futures Act and the Grain Standard Act to obtain fair prices, and the Permissive Warehouse Act which afforded storage facilities for the farmers.

The Federal Farm Loan Act had provided for a Farm Loan Board, and Wilson's appointments to this board during

54 Ibid.
55 Paxson, 352.
56 Lit. Dig., op.cit.
the campaign gave great publicity to his work for the farmer at an opportune time. Four members were appointed to journey from Maine to California "to determine the best means of putting all the advantages of the system at the disposal of the farmers." To this end a thorough study of farm conditions and farm-loan means was to be made in each state, and witnesses at the hearing were to advise the board as to the needs of the farmers, the extent to which they expected to use the system, present difficulties in obtaining credit on farm mortgages and the cost of loans, including interest and commissions. These specifications are mentioned in detail because of the appeal they might have had to the farmer.

Besides all these measures for the farmer, the previous years of Wilson's administration had seen many improvements which are recorded by the Secretary of Agriculture David Houston, in his book on the cabinet. Appropriations for the support of the regular activities of the Department of Agriculture had increased 50% from 24,100,000 to 36,130,000 dollars; during the First Administration the Department had created an Office of Information which simplified the farmer's bulletin, and facilitated circulation of farming news; it encouraged farm demonstration; it provided the Educational Extension Act, and an organization was created to supervise investigational work in rural finance and
marketing. If only half of these measures had produced favorable results we can imagine the effect upon the farmer. Naturally, we cannot measure accurately the effect upon the farmers' vote, but at least we can show that the Democrats appeared in the role of benefactors who offered them greater hope of prosperity and improvement.

Farmers are acutely conscious of their economic interests; perhaps more than any other group in the population they know where their economic interests lie. And they vote their economic interests. In the recent 1948 election, President Truman, a farm boy himself, knew all this, and so was quick to point out that the falling wheat and livestock prices of the last few months were due to the influence of a probable Republican victory. The Republican candidate, Thomas Dewey, did not convince the farmers that he would continue the price support program, and the Republican-minded farmers failed to support him just as they failed to support Hughes in 1916. In the 1916 election the farmers were enjoying a comparative prosperity since farm prices were high and the tendency in such circumstances is to leave well enough alone, as some Republican and Socialist papers pointed out afterwards. The $2 wheat price

57 Houston, I, 199-210.
58 Literary Digest, November 14, 1916.
could well have been the deciding factor for the Republican northwest farmer, thus giving the margin of 200 votes in Minnesota, 3500 in Oregon, 2750 in South Dakota. Be that as it may, we want at least to realize that the Democrats made a concrete appeal to the farmer's vote. There seems to be a strong foundation for the observation of the Wall Street Journal that "apparently there was just one 'vote' reached by special appeal - the farmers!"\textsuperscript{58a} With this quick look at Wilson Progressive legislation in general and its appeal to the farmer in particular, let us now turn to labor's part in the election.

\textsuperscript{58a} Wall Street Journal, November 11, 1916.
CHAPTER VI
THE LABOR VOTE AND THE CANDIDATES

The labor vote was undoubtedly stirred by two bills that were pushed through Congress by President Wilson, but whether they had the effect of favoring the President is hard to determine. It seems that throughout the country the labor vote was rather evenly divided, but when narrowed down to the all-important state of California it could easily have been the deciding factor. At any rate, the Administration's labor policies did provide a vital issue in the campaign, and so are worthy of our consideration if only on that score. The acts that were to draw labor's attention were the Child Labor Act and the Adamson Act.

The Child Labor Bill had originally appeared in the Progressive platform of 1912, and was only incorporated by the Democrats and the Republicans in 1916. While it was not opposed by the Republicans it was pleasing to the Progressives and the circumstances surrounding the bill might have helped the President to a slight degree. The Democratic majority in the Senate had decided in caucus to exclude this bill from the list of measures to be enacted before adjournment, but on July 18 the President paid an unexpected visit to
the Capitol to urge the Senate leaders to reconsider this decision.\textsuperscript{1} The bill had already passed the House by an overwhelming majority, the Republican leaders in the Senate desired favorable action, and only a small but determined minority of Southern senators opposed it. As a correspondent of the Boston Transcript pointed out:

\ldots for the first time, certainly in this administration, if not in many years, there is the spectacle of the President of the United States fighting the minority of his own party with the aid of leaders of the opposition.\textsuperscript{2}

Whether the dominant motive of President Wilson in his dramatic eleventh-hour demand for the passage of the child-labor law was politics or humanity - the newspapers naturally took both views - it was evident, at any rate, that the people wanted the measure and backed the President in his move. Only three states, the two Carolinas and Georgia, seriously opposed the bill which put an end to interstate commerce in goods made in mills which employed children under fourteen years of age, or in which children under sixteen years of age worked more than eight hours a day or were employed before seven o'clock in the morning or after seven o'clock in the evening.

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., July 29, 1916.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.
The appeal of the bill to the Progressives was noted by the Washington correspondents, while its attractiveness to the hearts of women was noted by Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont with the exclamation: "Is this a Machiavellian stroke? Does our President at last see the wisdom of catering to those four million women voters out West?" As one can guess, Mrs. Belmont was a suffragette referring to her militant sister-suffragettes in the West. The Springfield Republican remarked that the Republican candidate's slurs upon Democratic progressiveness "would stand more chance of being believed" if the Democratic party had not put this piece of legislation on the statute books; and the Republican New York Tribune, a consistent critic of the administration, remarked:

If President Wilson was seeking political credit when he insisted on the passage of this bill, he is entitled to it now ... While he was merely taking up near its end the campaign carried on by reformers for years, he gave aid when it was much needed, and he took his stand regardless of offending wealthy Southerners whose political support he may need.

The circumstances surrounding the Adamson Act gave a great deal of publicity utilized by Wilson in the campaign.

3 Ibid., 53:6, August 5, 1916.
4 Ibid., 53:70, August 12, 1916.
5 Ibid., 53:10, September 2, 1916.
Headlines and front-page columns were given to Wilson and his work day after day so that his part in this labor drama kept him in the public eye. The Adamson Law, which established the basic eight-hour day, with time-and-a-half for overtime, came about mainly as the result of a long, hard-fought campaign on the part of four powerful brotherhoods of railway employees engaged in carrying freight between the states. The engineers, the firemen, the conductors and the trainmen made up the strong unions that had come to be known as the "big four". It was said that the agitation was not for a working day restricted to eight hours, for the laborers would agree that such a regulation would hardly be feasible in the railroad business, but for an eight-hour standard of pay. It was also said that the plan was first brought forward by sectional organizations of the brotherhoods as early as 1909, and, after gaining momentum over a period of seven years, it reached the railroad chiefs in March, 1916, backed by the united support of from 325,000 to 400,000 men. The owners of the railroads candidly added that the public would ultimately be made to bear the burden when and if the brotherhoods realized their objective.

The American railroads had been controlled rather

effectively during the previous twelve years by the Interstate Commerce Commission which held them to the published tariffs, barred them from pooling and rebating, and kept them subject to administrative bodies whose tendency was to keep the rates down. Workmen's compensation and safety measures increased costs and operating expenses of the carriers, and while they sold their wares in a controlled market they bought their labor in a competitive market. Interest on their bonds and dividends to their stockholders were low while funds for improvements were meagre. Such is the sympathetic picture painted by Paxson. On the other hand there was "the prosperity enjoyed by the railroads due to the heavy exports being made to Europe and to all the world since shortly after the war began." Doubtless this was one of the reasons for the restlessness of the workers.

In June, 1916, the railroad owners urged that the matter be brought before a tribunal of arbitration, but the labor heads would not cooperate. Throughout the summer every attempt at mediation was blocked by the railroad brotherhoods, and the principle of an "eye for an eye" was employed by labor, which in former times had pleaded in vain for arbitration. By August when it was clear to all concerned that the brotherhood

7 Paxson, 354.
8 Ogg, 355.
had a death-grip on the nation's economy, the country became extremely anxious and the representatives of the allied governments of western Europe without a doubt shared this anxiety. If the strike came there would be no relief through injunctions of the Federal courts, as had been the case in the past; labor strikes had been exempted from this interference through the recent Clayton Anti-Trust Law.

On August 16th President Wilson sent the following telegram to the Presidents of fourteen different railways:

Discussion of the matter involved in the threatened railway strike has reached a point which makes it highly desirable that I should personally confer with you at the earliest moment and with the Presidents of other railways affected who may be immediately accessible. Hope you can make it convenient to come to Washington at once.9

When the brotherhood chairman and the railroad presidents arrived at the White House, Wilson listened to the arguments on both sides, and then suggested that the railroads meet the request of the men for ten hours' pay for the first eight hours, and that the question of the rate for overtime be submitted to arbitration. As the railroad executives refused to yield on the eight-hour day unless it should be decreed by a tribunal of arbitration, on August 28th the representatives left Wash-

9 Baker and Dodd, V, 264.
ington with orders for a strike to begin at 7 A.M. on September 4th, which "would tie up every railroad from Maine to California and cause an insufferable paralysis of industry and trade."\textsuperscript{10}

Wilson's name was now in the headlines daily for he seemed the only hope of preventing the strike. On August 29th, he appeared before a joint session of Congress assembled in the Hall of the House of Representatives, and addressed the Legislature for approximately half an hour. Begging assistance in dealing with a very grave situation, he proceeded to recommend the following legislation: (1) the enlargement of the administrative organization of the Interstate Commission; (2) the establishment of the eight-hour day for all railway employees engaged in the work of operating trains in interstate transportation; (3) authorization of the appointment by the President of a small body of men to observe the actual results in experience of the adoption of the eight-hour day; (4) explicit approval by Congress of the consideration by the Interstate Commission of an increase of freight rates, should the facts justify the increase; (5) addition to the federal statute, which provides for arbitration in such controversies as the present, of a provision that in case the methods of

\textsuperscript{10} Ogg, 356.
accommodation now provided should fail, a full public investigation of the merits of every dispute shall be instituted and completed before a strike or lockout may be lawfully attempted; (6) and, finally, that the Executive should have the power, in case of military necessity, to take control of such portions of the railways as may be required and operate them for military purposes, with authority to draft into the military service of the United States such train crews and administrative officials as the circumstances might require for their sage and efficient use.\footnote{11} 

When Wilson had sent the telegrams already mentioned to the various railroad presidents on August 16th, he had followed up with a statement for the public in which he said that only experience could determine just what arrangements should be equitable for both the workers and the railroads. But he pointed out that certain railroads which had already adopted the eight-hour day did not appear to be at any serious disadvantage "in respect to their cost of operation as compared with the railroads that have retained the ten-hour day."\footnote{12} In the same statement Wilson claimed that the eight-hour day now "undoubtedly has the sanction of the judgment of society in its favor, and should be adopted." He \footnote{11 \textit{Congressional Record}, 64th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 53, 13335-6.} \footnote{12 Baker and Dodd, V, 265.}
had enlarged on this same idea in his message to Congress on August 29th:

The whole spirit of the time and the preponderant evidence of recent economic evidence spoke for the eight-hour day. It has been adjudged by thought and experience of recent years a thing upon which society is justified in insisting on as in the interest of health, efficiency, contentment, and a general increase of economic vigor. The whole presumption of modern experience would, it seemed to me, be in its favor, whether there was arbitration or not. 13

In that same address to Congress Wilson claimed that the railroad heads had rejected his plan because they were convinced that they must "at any cost to themselves or to the country, stand firm for the principle of arbitration which the men had rejected." 14 Wilson said that he also stood firmly in favor of the principle of arbitration in industrial disputes, but that matters had come to a sudden crisis in this particular dispute, and the country had been caught unprovided with any practical means of enforcing the principal of arbitration in practice. "I have based my counsel upon the indisputable fact that there was no means of obtaining arbitration." 15 Wilson's intention was obviously to secure peace in the crisis by yielding to the demands of the railroad heads.

13 Congressional Record, ip. cit., 13336.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
brotherhoods, but also to put through such legislation as would make any such crisis impossible in the future.

Congress acted according to Wilson's desires but not completely, for although the Adamson Bill passed the House on August 31st and the Senate on September 1st, these two bodies cut away Wilson's proposals which looked to similar disputes in the future and also decided that the Bill would become effective on January 1st and not earlier.16

Taken by itself, the Adamson Act was controversial in character but since it was election time it became naturally enough, the subject of many debates. A few hostile periodicals and newspapers will reveal the Republican attacks. "Congress Stampeded" was the title of an article in Nation in which the writer concluded with a plea to "patriotic Americans" to decide for themselves whether or not the avoiding of the strike was worth "such a sacrifice of the nation's dignity".17 The same journal later chastised Wilson for rushing through "the judgment of society" in 48 hours, and then for being so bold as to defend the intrinsic merits of such lightning legislation. In a constitutional government, the writer argued ...

16 Ibid., 13335-6, 133552.
17 Nation, September 7, 1916.
... there are certain recognized ways of seeing that the 'judgment of society' shall be embodied in laws. Boiled down to its essentials, [Wilson's] defense would justify passing in 48 hours anything that he thought [good for the nation.]\textsuperscript{18}

A letter to the editor of Nation pointed out the incongruity of considering as the "judgment of society" a law which benefited only the "comparatively few members of the four strongly organized unions." It went on to say that the situation would be fairly staggering were we candid enough to admit that 20 percent of the employees of a great public service industry were dictating not only to the remaining 80 percent, but also to the holders of $20,000,000 worth of stocks and bonds.\textsuperscript{19}

The New York Times ran a scathing editorial on September 2nd which included the following cry:

The blackmailing of the whole nation under the threat of a strike and the extortion of a special act granting the demands of the brotherhood without time to inquire into the justice and practicability ... put upon the country an intolerable humiliation. If such an outrage can be put upon us unresisted, we have lost our republican form of government. Below

This theme of "national humiliation" was stressed by papers throughout the country especially the Republican papers, a fact indicated in polls conducted by both the Literary Digest and Outlook.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Nation, September 28, 1916. (Words in [ ] are mine).
\textsuperscript{19} New York Times, September 2, 1916.
\textsuperscript{20} Literary Digest, 53: , September 6, 1916; Outlook CXIV, September 13, 1916.
The most prominent opponent of the Adamson Law, however, was Charles Evans Hughes. His attack upon the Law evoked the cry from the San Francisco Bulletin that instead of the many "manufactured campaign issues, we now have one that grew, like Topsy, and is real flesh and blood." Although a majority of the Republicans in Congress voted with the Democrats in favor of the Adamson Law, Hughes nevertheless saw it as a "blow at business in this country," and its enactment spelled "the surrender of the very principle of government."

It was, he claimed, "legislation without inquiry," and "the demand by the Administration for such legislation as the price of peace was a humiliating spectacle." In particular, however, Hughes urged three arguments against the Law. In the first place it merely raised wages, but did not reduce hours. Moreover, it should not have been passed without more time for investigation. Finally, Wilson knew for over a year that the crisis was coming, and should have been prepared for it. To these arguments presented at a Republican rally in Springfield, Illinois, the Democrats were quick to answer. With regard to his charge that the bill was a wage bill and not an hours bill, they replied that it of-

21 Literary Digest, 53:12, September 16, 1916.
22 Ibid., 53:15, October 7, 1916.
fered the railroads the alternative of receiving 8 hours work for ten hours pay, or of doing 10 hours work in 8 hours. The railroads might save the extra pay by increasing the speed of certain freight trains. Furthermore, the law offered a "direct economic incentive" to greater productivity, and though the incentive would have been strengthened by keeping the time-and-a-half overtime which Wilson proposed, Congress would have been accused of increasing wages by 37 1/2% instead of 25%.24

On Hughes' second point, namely, lack of time for sufficient investigation, the Democrats retorted that for over a year the "experts" had been investigating, and that the whole process was becoming a grand "guessing contest." A Board of Arbitration could only continue to guess. Hughes merely meant "guesswork before legislation" when he called for investigation, while Woodrow Wilson and the Adamson Law stood for an "inductive experiment" on the basis of six months trial.25

With regard to Hughes' assertion that the President should have legislated to forestall the crisis, the Democrats admitted that while it would have looked better for Wilson, had the Adamson Law been enacted two or three months before the showdown finally came, it was very doubtful in the minds of the Democrats that Wilson could have forced such a law through

24 New Republic.
25 Ibid.
Congress except under pressure, for the attitude of the American public would have been that of the man who said, "Who is he (Wilson) to meddle in this business and borrow trouble."\textsuperscript{26}

In his Labor Day speech Hughes had also directed some remarks to the principle of arbitration saying: "I believe and I stand here firmly for the principle of arbitrating all industrial disputes, and I would not surrender it to anybody in the country." He added:

\begin{quote}
... I stand for two things: first, for the principle of fair, thorough, candid arbitration; and second, for legislation of facts according to the necessities of the case; and I am opposed to being dictated to either in the executive department or in Congress by any power on earth before the facts are known and in the absence of facts.\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

That Wilson did not sacrifice this principle of arbitration was the opinion expressed in an article in Outlook; rather, Wilson "butted in" to rescue successfully the public from starvation. Our legislators, claimed the writer, were too sensible "to haggle with an earthquake."\textsuperscript{28} However, a better response was given by New Republic and Wilson's biographers when they blamed Congress for eliminating the recommendations made by Wilson for maintaining the principle of arbitration.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
and for a better handling of future strikes. Despite all the argumentation that filled papers and periodicals there was, it seemed to me, a great deal of truth in the remark of the New York Independent that

... attack and defense in this case did not meet head on since 'Mr. Hughes does not discuss the merits of the 8-hour day for railroad operatives and Mr. Wilson does not discuss the propriety of enacting the law with unusual rapidity because the workers threatened to strike if it did not become law by a given day.'

At any rate all this publicity from the middle of August was not only keeping Wilson before the public eye but it pictured him as favorable to labor.

But whether or not the Adamson Act influenced the vote, is more or less an open question even if the Progressives were certainly attracted by this piece of legislation. In the all-important state of California, and especially in the city of San Francisco, organized labor was made even more conscious of the difference between the Progressive Wilson and the Conservative Hughes. The difference between the two men was accentuated by Wilson's action in the railroad and an incident that occurred at the time of Hughes' visit to San Francisco. On August 19th on the front page of the San

30 Literary Digest, 53:15, October 7, 1916.
Francisco Call these joint headlines were flaunted before the laborer's eyes: "Waiters Strike at Hughes Luncheon" and "Wilson Bids Railroad Chiefs Grant 8 Hours;" and in the columns they read that the "Union Men Refuse to Serve at Club - Cafes Send Open Shop Men to Wait on Hughes!" While on the front page of the Bulletin they read: "Union Men Ask Hughes Not to Dine in Open Shop Club," the Chronicle, a Republican paper, judiciously relegated the news of the waiters' strike to a small column on the second page.

What was the incident that brought on these headlines? When the culinary workers in the city went on strike for the closed shop on August 1st they faced bitter opposition from organized employers. Hughes was to dine at a political party luncheon at the Commercial Club which, like most of the other prominent hotels, fought the unions and maintained an open shop. Hence, for Hughes' luncheon the Club was forced to hire scab-laborers and it was these men who served Hughes. "Whatever affront could be offered to organized labor by such an episode was offered" is the observation of one commentator. Wisely or not, Hughes made no mention of the strike at the luncheon, but the antithesis between his position and that of Wilson was definitely highlighted by the two incidents.

31 San Francisco Call, August 19, 1916.
33 San Francisco Chronicle, August 19, 20, 1916.
34 Paxson, 378.
That labor realized this difference was made evident by a presidential "straw vote" of Union Labor conducted by the Literary Digest during October which sounded out "the consensus of political opinion of union-labor officials representing more than 100 trades." The magazine claimed that "out of 457 labor officials, 332 said their members favor Mr. Wilson, 47 - Mr. Benson, the Socialist Candidate, and 43 - Mr. Hughes." Of course such a labor poll did not have the meaning that it would have today, for in Wilson's time there did not exist the powerful unions of today which can so readily swing their solid vote behind one candidate. For example, in 1948 the labor unions in their desire to repeal the Taft-Hartley Law and punish its Republican supporters backed Truman for the Presidency and Democratic Congressmen with a campaign expenditure of $7,000,000. The labor unions in 1948 were definitely united and could claim a major part in the victory of the Democratic President, but in 1916 there was not this union solidarity. Nevertheless, the labor vote played an important part on the West Coast and in a few other isolated states as was conceded by many newspapers and competent authorities.

Some Republican politicians admitted that the labor vote was undoubtedly the means of carrying Ohio for Wilson, and

35 Literary Digest, 53:15, October 7, 1916.
it might have been the determining factor in California. William G. Lee, President of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, is quoted in the Literary Digest as saying that 13,000 members of the railroad brotherhoods in California, 2,500 in New York, 12,000 in Minnesota, 3,500 in New Mexico and 30,000 in Ohio were practically unanimous for Wilson.\(^{35a}\)

(It is well to note that most of these states had been remarkably close in the election totals.) The Tribune also believed that these votes would not have been turned against Hughes if he simply had kept quiet about the Adamson Law. When he attacked it, the Brotherhoods made it their chief issue and campaigned directly under the Democratic National Committee, emphasizing the fact that the President had cast his lot with them.\(^{36}\)

Offsetting this attraction of organized labor to Wilson, was the antagonism of bankers, railroad magnates, and business owners who, in their financial, railway and conservative papers, denounced the President as a foe to arbitration in labor disputes. Because of his progressive legislation, the real opposition, as Dodd says,

... came from the industrial centers, from the former bankers, railroad magnates, and the sturdy old Republican stocks of the East, and the middle West, men who were afraid of

\(^{35a}\)Ibid., 53:15, October 7, 1916.

even the moderate reforms of Southerners and agrarians, from people who thought that the Government must ever remain subservient to the industrial regions which had so long controlled the vital concerns of the nation. They feared Wilson. Nor did the larger labor organizations despite all that Wilson had done for labor, support the Democratic administration. Labor was more afraid of "empty dinner pails" which masters of industry threatened, than it was hopeful of good things to come from friends actually in power ...\textsuperscript{37}

All that Dodd claims is apparently true, but in the vital western area, especially California, it could have been labor's vote that decided the contest in Wilson's favor.

With this in mind it is interesting to note the opinions of a few representative newspapers on this matter of the influence of the labor vote upon the election's outcome, particularly in those influential states of the west and midwest. The Literary Digest published a symposium of the following significant papers on November 18th: the Cheyenne Tribune of Wyoming thought that the chief factor in Wilson's victory was the large proportion of the railroad employees voting for him; the Minneapolis Journal named among the deciding factors the vote of the large labor centers and iron range employees who swung to Wilson for his 8-hour stand; the St. Paul Pioneer Press thought that "the most reasonable explanation was the organized labor vote in the three large

\textsuperscript{37} Dodd, 193.
cities of Minnesota, together with the general pacifist character of the Swede population. In Ohio the Cleveland Plain Dealer attributed the second most influence to the industrial and prosperous elements who cried, "Let well enough alone;" in New Hampshire, the lone Wilson state in New England, the 8-hour law was considered a major factor as it was also by the Republican Kansas Times of Leavenworth.\(^\text{38}\)

We would expect the San Francisco papers to contain the most pertinent comments on the labor vote and yet they were preoccupied with the Progressive-Conservative clash among the Republicans and carried little about the Labor vote. However, the Mercury-Herald of nearby San Jose thought that the "victory of Wilson in San Francisco was clearly due to the cohesive labor vote" which felt grateful to the President for jamming through Congress the Adamson 8-hour law.\(^\text{39}\) Moreover, the San Francisco Chronicle ran an article written by Chester Rowell, Chairman of the Republican State Central Committee in which he asserted that the labor vote, added to the minority of Progressives and the pacifist's woman's vote, turned the tide for Wilson.\(^\text{40}\) Across the country in New York the Tribune pointed out that in San Francisco, "the heart of California and

\(^{38}\) Literary Digest, 53:21, November 18, 1916; also Outlook, November 28, 1916.

\(^{39}\) San Jose Mercury-Herald, November 19, 1916.

\(^{40}\) San Francisco Chronicle, November 11, 1916.
perhaps the strongest labor union city in the country, Wilson won nine out of the 13 assembly districts. Significantly, the paper pointed to the "luncheon mistake" of Hughes, "his failure to recognize Hiram Johnson", and the "criticism of his opponent."41

In Los Angeles, where Hughes tied in with Harrison Otis, the arch-enemy of union labor in the state, the Express gave first and second place respectively to the progressive policies of the Democrats and the labor vote.42 Naturally, other newspapers thought other factors more important. It is our purpose, however, to show which were the chief sources of the deciding votes. So much, then, for the labor legislation and its part in influencing the American people and in building up the appeal to the Progressives.

42 Los Angeles Express, November 10, 1916.
CHAPTER VII
THE RESPONSE OF THE PROGRESSIVES

But how were the Progressives taking to the two candidates through the campaigning? The newspapers naturally talked up both men. Speaking at Plattsburg on September 12th, the day after the supposedly significant Republican clean sweep of the primaries in Maine, Hughes expressed his feelings (or hopes?), "I come to you as the spokesman of a reunited party." But reunion in fact was far less than in hope for it was becoming evident that not even Roosevelt, the former idol of the Progressives, could deliver the whole Progressive vote to the Republicans.

The Progressive votes were definitely split if one could judge from the positions taken by the prominent men in the party. Francis Heney, fiery prosecutor and violent 'bull-mooser', ran as a Democratic elector in California and led his ticket. While Albert Beveridge, as we have seen already, stumped for Hughes, Victory Murdock, editor of the Wichita Daily Eagle, and chairman of the defunct Progressive National Committee supported Wilson. His close associates, Gifford Pinchot and James R. Garfield, followed Roosevelt

1 Paxson, 359-360.
into the Republican line, but each had a distinguished brother who came out for Wilson. The scientists, John Burroughs and Luther Burbank, lent their name to the Democrats, as did Thomas A. Edison and Henry Ford.2 "John M. Parker, the Progressive Vice-Presidential candidate, bitterly attacked Roosevelt for returning to a Republican party more reactionary than ever before."3 Bainbridge Colby also came out for Wilson as did Samuel Gompers who joined with the Vice President and Secretary of the American Federation of Labor in a statement which strongly recommended the Democrats.4 Evidently the "feast of unity" held by Hughes and Roosevelt in New York on October 35 was not as successful as they had hoped it to be and Wilson's praise of the Progressives in a speech of September 30th seemed to have fallen upon sympathetic ears among the Progressives.

To remove any doubt as to the attractiveness of Wilson's record of legislation to the Progressives, the New York Times tells us that just a few days before the election, eleven of the nineteen members of the defunct platform committee of the Progressive party convention of 1912 endorsed

2 Ibid., 360.
3 Baker, 287.
5 Ibid., October 4, 1916.
Wilson and called upon all members of the party to support him. They declared:

Of thirty-three planks in the Progressive platform of 1912, twenty-two have been wholly or partly enacted into laws. Of eighty propositions embodied in these planks, more than half have been carried out by administrative acts or laws.⁶

However, the really important defection of the Progressives was in the West and especially in the state of California. Colonel House, realizing the effects of Hughes' campaigning in the West remarked sarcastically: "I expressed regret that the Democratic Committee's finances were in such condition that they could not offer to pay for ... for instance, the Golden Special." This was the name of the train that the Republicans sent West with Hughes aboard and House thought his trip worthy of Democratic pay.⁷ But Tumulty had made similar observations even before the actual trip to the West. In a letter to Mr. Raymond T. Baker on August 4th he had remarked:

My belief is that Hughes' trip to the West will prove another distinct disappointment to his friends. A candidate following the path of expediency as exemplified by Hughes will find himself in an unenviable position in the West, merely

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⁶ Ibid. November 1, 1916.
⁷ Seymour, 371.
criticizing, finding fault, and setting forth no policy of a constructive character. 8

This prediction was remarkably accurate, and in it Tumulty stressed an essential weak point in Hughes' campaign, namely that he had to attack achievements and not principles of doubtful value.

Two things stand out in Hughes' western campaign, the critical tenor of his speeches and his failure to acknowledge Johnson and the Progressives. The critical rather than constructive character of his speeches, noted by the newspapers and prominent men centered mostly upon the administration's disregard of the merit system, failure to maintain the constitutional rights of American citizens in Mexico, and general inefficiency. 9 A quotation by the Call Bulletin of San Francisco was very expressive of the Progressive sentiment toward Hughes' speeches: "We have waited in vain for Mr. Hughes to say something that would show his reputed Progressivism." 10

The second factor, one which gained a great deal of unwanted publicity for the Republicans and for Hughes, was the so-called "snubbing" of Governor Johnson. It was picked up

8 Tumulty, 195.
10 Literary Digest, 53:10, September 9, 1916.
immediately by the newspapers and most books on this period regard the episode as one of the major reasons for the Democratic majority in California. Briefly the story was as follows. In 1908 California had gone Republican 2 to 1 and in 1912 the state had given its electoral votes to the Progressives. Roosevelt was the Progressive candidate for the Presidency that year and his running mate for the vice-presidency was Hiram Johnson, the Governor of California. Johnson nevertheless had remained in control of the Republican party's State Committee despite the fact that he had turned Progressive. In 1914, though the Conservative Republicans regained control of the State Central Committee Johnson was then elected Governor on the Progressive ticket. Hence when delegates were selected for the Chicago convention of the Republicans, the Conservatives, angry at Johnson for his Progressive affiliation, refused to join the two parties' delegates and sent conservative Republicans to represent the party.

When Hughes arrived in California Johnson was out dutifully canvassing for Hughes, and himself as Progressive and Republican candidate for the United States Senate, a situation possible under California laws. The Conservative Republicans had no desire to see Johnson elected and so they ignored him. At the largest of the party rallies in San
Francisco on August 18th, despite the fact that the Progressives demanded that Johnson be acclaimed, Johnson was not even in attendance, the Conservative Republicans simply refusing to recognize him. Throughout the campaign, though there was one occasion when they were in the same hotel, Hughes never spoke to Johnson. Paxson notes

... that it helped Johnson in his personal campaign that the stalwart Republican committee were so openly his enemies but it did not help Hughes that the most influential political personage in the State should be affronted.11

Johnson never referred to the incident, nor did he waver in his loyalty to Hughes, but his followers did, and "the country knew that the Central Committee had endangered the election of Hughes because of its animosity to Johnson."12 Outlook predicted that Hughes' "unbenevolent neutrality" would make the voting close in California.13 Naturally, the Democratic papers played up this chance to widen the breach between the Republicans and the Progressives. Even the independent Call-Bulletin printed on the front page: "Hughes Blunders Here Lost Him 100,000 Votes Say the Progressives," and added "Hughes seen in company of men whose very names

11 Paxson, 356, 357.
12 Ibid., 356, 357.
13 Outlook, October 25, 1916.
have always spelled reaction and anti-progressivism throughout the state.”¹⁴ Two days before in an editorial it had spoken of Johnson's absence from the "regular" function at which Mr. Hughes was entertained in San Francisco. The Democratic San Francisco Post had likewise stressed Hughes' departure from the state without having once met Governor Johnson.¹⁵ The silence of the Republican Chronicle is again significant.

The voting in California seemed to confirm the predictions of Progressives and the Democratic newspapers that California would be lost to the Republicans. Of the 531 electoral votes, 266 were necessary for a victory. Without California, Hughes had 254 and Wilson had 264. The thirteen votes of California loomed high in importance during those last few hours of vote counting. To accentuate the suspense, Governor Johnson had already been elected by a huge majority of 296,815 votes, indicating what might have been accomplished for Hughes if he and his managers had bestowed a gracious smile upon the right people. As it turned out, Wilson took California's electoral votes by the slight margin

¹⁵ San Francisco Call, August 21, 1916.
of 3773 popular votes. Mark Sullivan remarked, "however much it (the outcome) was due to the action of Johnson's followers whom Johnson could not control, the incident, normally a local teapot tempest, achieves high importance when we realize how different history would have been."16

Naturally the Progressives claimed credit for the election results, but the newspapers, even the Republican ones, likewise attributed great importance to the Progressive vote. The San Francisco Bulletin claimed that the "defection from Mr. Hughes began when he came to the State and affiliated with the anti-Johnson Republicans" and that many Johnson Progressives turned to Wilson because of his progressivism."17 The San Francisco Examiner summed up its opinion in the editorial title "Progressive vote defeats Hughes"18 and the Call & Post in an article with the caption, "Hughes lost by party politics."19 The Los Angeles Express among many causes included the progressive policies of Wilson and the fact that "Hughes had been used by a small group of California reactionaries."20

16 Sullivan, Our Times, V, 243.
18 San Francisco Examiner, November 11, 1916.
19 San Francisco Call and Post, November 11, 1916.
20 Los Angeles Express, November 11, 1916.
Times, a Republican paper hostile to Johnson, bitterly cried that "there was undoubtedly a treasonable combine in northern California between Johnson and Wilson supporters." It even blazed headlines like the following: "Johnson is blamed for treachery," "How Johnson's perfidy beat Hughes," and "Hughes secretly traded off for Johnson." These were exaggerations because Johnson, regardless of his followers, still canvassed for Hughes despite the affront given him. He answered the attack of the Los Angeles Times in an article that was run on the front page of the San Francisco Call and Post in which he blamed the Conservative Republicans for the loss since they had issued an "ultimatum" that Mr. Hughes would have nothing to do with the Progressives in California.

The Spokane Spokesman-Review conceded prime importance to the fact "that Washington is Progressive, and the refusal of the Republicans to recognize Progressives resulted in resentment that swept many into the Democratic ranks."

In the East, too, on November 12th the New York Times claimed that the "Vote of Women and Bull Moose Elected Wilson;" while the Independent (Harper's Weekly) in its analysis included these two elements among four:

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22 San Francisco Call and Post, November 11, 1916.
and warmhearted than their eastern brothers, that Mr. Wilson was more their kind of a Progressive than Mr. Hughes and their belief that the Democratic party under the leadership of Mr. Wilson is the present party of progress, while the Republican party under the present leadership is the party of the backward look; the willingness of the Republican candidate to content himself with an attack upon Mr. Wilson and his deeds, and the failure of the Republican campaign to develop any kind of positive appeal to the progressive vote.25

The New York American, usually critical of Wilson's policies, admitted that the Progressives were probably satisfied with Wilson's progressive legislation;26 while the Boston Globe considered "the verdict a victory for Democratic and progressive ideas."27 The Philadelphia Ledger thought that the Progressive vote in a sense is the whole reason why Republicans failed "because it explains the enormous defection of Republicans in California."28 While the Chicago Herald chimed in that Hughes was beaten because the people of California and other states of the West believed him, unjustly, to be a puppet of the Old Guard.29

Progressives also confirmed the opinions of the press. John M. Parker, former Progressive candidate for the

Vice-Presidency, thought that the human-welfare and progressive legislation of Wilson, more than had been enacted in the preceding fifty years, was undoubtedly of the greatest appeal to the Progressives.30 Bainbridge Colby was of the opinion that the Progressives cost Hughes the vote in California, and, he estimated that from 60 to 70 percent of the Progressives voted for Wilson,31 while Matthew Hale, a Massachusetts Progressive considered Wilson to be the foremost Progressive in the country.32 Chester H. Rowell, former Progressive and chairman of the Republican State Central Committee of California opined that

...Charles Hughes was defeated because his western trip did not convince the rank and file of Western Progressives that his election would mean a sufficient recognition of the Progressive movement and influence in a newer Republicanism.33

The Democratic National Committeemen from California also admitted that without the help of the Progressives and independents they could not have carried California.34

Among historians there are two who comment directly upon this point. James Truslow Adams thought it

31 Ibid.
34 Literary Digest, 15:22, November 10, 1916.
probable that "the apparent lack of interest shown by Hughes in progressive policies at home, as well as his somewhat evasive speeches on all topics, had gained as many votes as the slogan ..."\textsuperscript{35} Dwight Dumond is of the opinion that "the presidential election did not hinge on the war issue" but rather claimed that "the Republican candidate ... was defeated because neither he nor his party would endorse or offer a substitute for the social and economic reform program."\textsuperscript{36}

In his autobiography William Allen White wrote: 

"... the returns ... proved clearly that Wilson was elected by the votes of the Progressive states normally Republican in the Middle West, many of them for Roosevelt in 1912 ..." To prove that "Hughes was not sufficiently aware of the Progressive issues to appeal to these Republican states," he recalled a conversation with Hughes during the heat of the campaign when Hughes asked him: "What are the Progressive issues?" Hughes then listened to White's summary of them with sympathetic intelligence, but White was of the opinion that Hughes did not comprehend how earnestly a considerable section of public opinion had accepted and endorsed these issues. White then added that the people of Kansas and the other western states

\textsuperscript{35} Adams, \textit{History of the U.S.}, 209.  
who voted a Republican state ticket and then voted for Wilson did so "because of his progressive achievements in his first term." 37

It seems that whether the Progressive issue eclipsed the war issue or not, we can at least draw from the above summary of Wilson's legislation and its appeal to the Progressives the conclusion that the Progressive vote did have an important effect upon the results of the election that saw Wilson carry the West, put Ohio in the Democratic column, and take the close races in New Mexico, Minnesota and New Hampshire.

Just as the platitudes of Thomas E. Dewey failed to carry the American voters with him in 1948, so too, in 1916 the platitudinous speeches of Mr. Hughes brought him short of victory. As the New York Times editorial said:

Wilson appealed to the country upon his record of public achievement... No issue was settled, because no issue was raised by Mr. Hughes. From his own utterances the country reached the conclusion, it could reach no other, that in Mr. Wilson's place, he would have adopted Mr. Wilson's policies, that if elected he would continue Mr. Wilson's policies. The electorate chose Mr. Wilson because it knew him better, understood him better, because it was averse to a change. 38

It was thus that Hughes, making no appeal to the Progressives, found himself weaker in November than he had been in June. People forgot that his governorship had been a constructive, progressive administration.
CONCLUSION

Thus it was that the election of 1916, so important because of the critical state of the world and America's growing prominence in world affairs, seemed to hinge upon the two important issues of Wilson's neutrality and progressivism, made real to the people of the nation by a simple slogan and a series of legislation. The former won the women and the pacifists, the latter, a section of the Progressives sufficient to provide a slight majority.

At first we wonder why the election was so close. However, although the betting was ten to seven in favor of Hughes, the Republican candidate had an extremely difficult task, somewhat comparable to role of President Truman in 1949 when he battled to pass legislation against the powerful combination of the Republicans and the southern minority of his own Democratic party. From convention to election Hughes had to steer his campaign ship through a political Scylla and Charybdis with Roosevelt and his bitterly anti-German followers on one side, and on the other, the influential German-American politicians, newspapermen and voters. Beyond this
danger lay another obstacle in the radical element of the
former Progressives, whose loyalty had to be held without
alienating the Conservative majority of the Republican ranks.
It is not strange, then, that just as Dewey stressed
"national unity" Hughes emphasized "national efficiency"
in a campaign that was a masterpiece of straddling but un-
fortunately and consequently filled with weak appeals upon
the vital issues before the public.

To balance these disadvantages there were other
factors decidedly in Hughes' favor. Although Hughes was a
conservative as the outmoded public beard that adorned his
face, still this conservatism was an asset rather than a
handicap if one considered the election trend before 1916.
The cup of progress was filling up toward the end of the
Wilsonian administration and a reaction toward conservatism
loomed up in the crystal ball, seemingly indicated by the
results of the Maine elections. In 1900 the Conservative
McKinley had defeated a Progressive Bryan. Then the see-saw
tilted and the Progressive Roosevelt rose in victory while
the Conservative Parker went down to defeat. Conservatism
returned with Taft in 1908 only to yield to the Progressive
Wilson in 1912. This see-saw reaction indicated a trend that
would, if continued, mean another triumph for Conservatism.
This seems to be one of the basic reasons for the remarkably close vote.

There was likewise the other side of the war issue that was constantly brought home to the popular mind by the Hearst papers throughout the country, namely the inefficiency of Wilson in foreign affairs, particularly in Mexico where his misguided policy had prolonged the revolution and gained nothing for the United States but enmity and distrust. Undoubtedly, these newspaper attacks added numbers to the ranks of the conservative businessmen who, despite the Democratic slogan of "He Kept Us Out Of War" with its passionate support by vast sections of the country, believed that "Wilson's policy was bringing the country rapidly nearer the brink and that a prudent statesman like Hughes had the best chance to extricate the country from its situation."¹

These two factors were undoubtedly of great influence in the conservative east and are perhaps the best explanation why, when this section swung so heavily to Hughes, the newspapers of New York with but two exceptions took for granted that the trend to conservatism was nation-wide and

the faith in Hughes' diplomacy greater than that in Wilson. Thus the New York World, the Sun and the Herald either announced Hughes' victory on election night or predicted it as certain. While the Times prudently withheld judgment, the New York American in spite of the mounting opinion of the opposition predicted a Wilson victory. Only the American foresaw a Democratic storming of the West where they took not only the Democratic states but even such dependable Republican centers as Utah and Kansas. Every state west of the Mississippi went to Wilson except for Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, and Oregon and these were lost only by slight margins. Worthy of note is the fact that although close to a million votes had been cast for the Socialist candidates in 1912, the number significantly dropped to about five hundred thousand and it is hard to imagine these liberal votes going for the representative of the Conservative Republicans.

Wilson's victory, which made him the first President to be elected without the votes either of New York or Pennsylvania whose electoral votes were about one-third of the total two hundred and sixty-six, was based on a new

2 New York American, November 9, 1916; this issue contained a comparative study of all the headlines of the New York papers.
alignment of the West and the South. It was the importance of the votes in the west, therefore, that marks this election as exceptional since a solid Democratic south was hardly a novelty in American politics. Consequently, studying the issues with this in mind, has shown how, if politics is a play upon public opinion, the Democrats were a bit more successful in gauging the public opinion of the West than were the Republicans. The war issue with its slogan of "He Kept Us Out Of War" was more in accord with the pacifist sentiments of a western area that was far removed from the submarine warfare of the east coast. The prosperity in agricultural circles and the acknowledged attempts of Wilson and the Democrats, especially during the campaign, to improve the lot of the farmers seemed to impress these politically sensitive citizens. Wilson's sympathetic attitude toward the laboring man displayed in his stand for the Adamson Act was helpful, if only on the west coast and in the city of San Francisco, especially when contrasted with the opinions of Hughes and the Republicans and the poor tactics during the campaign tour in that section of the country. Finally, in the all-important state of California, where the deciding votes were cast, the split between the Progressives and the Republicans and the subsequent inability of Hughes and the
Republican committee to swing the Progressive votes back into the Republican column, permitted Wilson's progressivism to be regarded as a satisfying alternative for those Progressives who had bolted from the Republican party.

Our study of the issues has hardly been definitive upon the subject for as someone remarked, "we hold an election and then spend a lifetime deciding the winning issues." The deciding influence is too frequently unfathomable and even with the comments of newspapers and magazines the result is only an approximation without certitude. However, these same sources have helped us to understand just what were the issues, and they have indicated, even though in an imperfect fashion, the proportionate importance to be attached to the numerous issues. A study of the candidates' speeches before the election and a review of the newspapers afterwards indicated how issues such as the woman's vote and the hyphenate vote, though highly rated during the campaign, actually came to deserve the characterization of artificial. The western papers were stressed because of the obviously important part played by the western states, especially California. We sincerely hope that our understanding of the deciding issues has been enlarged and that some light has been added by this survey of the issues in this all-important election of 1916.
If there is one lesson that this election teaches, it is the importance of the individual vote, for the closeness of the final count in many states indicates the duty and responsibility of each voter in the country. The man elected President was to shape America's destiny for a good many years.

The victory was undoubtedly satisfying to the ex-college professor if only because of the personal motive that must have been aroused by the rather bitter criticism that attended his second marriage to Mrs. Edith Bolling Galt within fourteen months after the death of his first wife. The confidence of the women voters seemed to prove how baseless and malicious were the calumnies by which this President had been attacked. Then, too, Wilson was to be given a chance to test his idealistic principles and his belief in the moral leadership of America and a "peace without victory." Europe rejected both of these principles but he was to be more bitterly disappointed when his own country would reject his plan for an international organization, the necessity for which he envisioned before the world of his time was ready to accept it. However, not only America but the whole world was to acknowledge the need for today's version of the League of Nations.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by John D. Alexander, S.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 17, 1949

Signature of Advisor