DUANE LOCKARD

New England State Politics

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NEW ENGLAND
STATE
POLITICS

BY DUANE LOCKARD

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DUANE LOCKARD has combined a scholarly and political career. He has taught at Yale and Wesleyan and is now an associate professor of government at Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut. In 1954 he was elected to the Connecticut State Senate, serving from 1955 to 1957. His greatest interests were constitutional reform, municipal home rule, and the party primary. Though he has now returned to the campus, he has continued his general political interests and activities, and serves as chairman of the New London Citizens Action Committee. Mr. Lockard has written articles in the field of law, politics, and political science. This book is the result of seven years of research, involving over one thousand interviews.

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TO BEVERLY

PREFACE

WHEN I began work on this study of New England state politics some seven years ago, little did I realize the magnitude of the task being undertaken. I soon discovered the paucity of published materials on the politics of individual states. For my own state, Connecticut, the task was not quite so formidable, since I had participated sufficiently in its politics to acquire some understanding, but comparative analysis demanded considerable familiarity with all six New England states. I learned a great deal by reading all I could find on New England politics, but I still had a long way to go. Had it not been for the kindness of almost a thousand people interviewed in the ensuing years of research, this book would have been impossible to write. Governors, judges, administrators, lobbyists, party leaders, hundreds of legislators, and dozens of newspaper reporters took time out to deal patiently with my questions. Several visits to each of the states were devoted mainly to interviews, and during the period from 1955 to 1957 I was a member of the Connecticut Senate, where I combined an official with an investigative role. Part of the interviews were relatively systematic in that I set a pattern of questions which I put to the legislators of a given state, particularly in regard to their personal conception of the roles they played as legislators. Other interviews were less systematic in that I encouraged people to range far and wide in discussing the politics of their state. To avoid omitting the name of anyone who gave me valuable information, I refrain from listing all those who gave me interviews. This is no indication of lack of gratitude; I am deeply grateful to them all.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Ford Foundation Fund for the Advancement of Education for granting me a Faculty Fellowship for the academic year 1955-1956, during which time much of the research and interviewing was accomplished. The Social Science Research Council granted me a fellowship for the spring term in 1957, during which time a first draft was written. Connecticut College kindly provided several research grants for various expenses incurred, ranging from newspaper clipping services and travel costs to student typing aid. Professor Allan P. Sindler of Yale read the manuscript and made many helpful criticisms of the early chapters, and Mr. Donald Craig read several chapters and contributed much in his criticisms of style. Professor V. O. Key, Jr. of Harvard has contributed more to this work than he probably realizes: he started me off on the project when he supervised my dissertation on Connecticut politics while he was at Yale. He corrected more faults than I like to remember, and in his various works on state politics he has both established the highest standards of scholarship and set forth the lines for investigation that others must inevitably follow. I also had the benefit of consultation with him at several stages of the evolution of this work. And Miss R. Miriam Brokaw, Managing Editor of Princeton University Press, has been an unfailing source of help in matters large and small that beset an author enroute to publication day. I must make it clear, however, that no faults of this work are to be attributed to either the institutions or the individuals who contributed so much to it. All errors of fact or interpretation are my sole responsibility.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Beverly, and my daughters, Linda, Janet, and Leslie, for patience and aid beyond the call of duty. A book in preparation can be a most unwelcome guest in the home; this was no exception. My wife's editorial assistance was invaluable; indeed the book might be better if I had accepted even more of her suggestions. Linda and Janet laboriously read proof with me when pleasures beckoned but were put aside. Leslie, who is not much older than the idea for the book, did her bit by putting up with a preoccupied father.

W.D.L.

November 15, 1958
Connecticut College
New London, Connecticut

CONTENTS

PREFACE vii

1. ABOUT NEW ENGLAND: AN INTRODUCTION 3

2. VERMONT: POLITICAL PARADOX 8
   - Vermont Republicanism 12
   - Vermont Democrats: The Persistent Few 29
   - The Vermont Legislature: Low-Pressure Politics 35

3. NEW HAMPSHIRE POLITICS: TRIUMPH OF CONSERVATISM 46
   - The Republican Party: Conservatives and Conservatives 48
   - New Hampshire Democrats: Party without Leadership 62
   - The New Hampshire General Court: Biggest Legislature of Them All 68

4. MAINE: PINE, POWER, AND POLITICS 79
   - Maine Republicanism: Multifactionalism 80
   - Democrats in Maine: Down Under Down East 94
   - The Maine Legislature: The Power of the Big Three 107

5. MASSACHUSETTS: THE STANDING ORDER UNDER ATTACK 119
   - The Democratic Party: Liberalism in Moderation 121
   - Massachusetts Republicans: Conservatism in Moderation 136

6. LAWMAKING IN MASSACHUSETTS: TRADITIONAL POMP AND POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCE 148
   - Party Influence in the General Court 151
   - Governors as Legislative Politicians in Massachusetts 159
   - Interest Groups and Legislative Politics 163

7. RHODE ISLAND: ONE-PARTY FAÇADE AND TWO-PARTY REALITY? 172
   - Rhode Island Republicans: The Palmy Days 173

Rhode Island Democrats: The "New Yankees" Take Over 190
Democratic Party Organization: Warfare of Machines 203

8. RHODE ISLAND: POLITICS ON THE SEAMY SIDE 209
The Legislature: Party Battles and Public Policy 212
Pressure Politics: Labor's Near Triumph 221
Conclusion: Party Competition and Public Policy 225

9. CONNECTICUT: THE POLITICS OF COMPETITION 228
The Tight Rope of Competition 229
Organizational Strength of the Republican Party 243
Democratic Party Organization: The Dominance of City Machines 257
The Decline of Corruption: A Consequence of Party Competition? 266

10. CONNECTICUT: LEGISLATIVE POLITICS AND PARTY COMPETITION 270
Connecticut Legislative Apportionment: Republican Blessing, Democratic Curse 271
Evidence of Party Power in the General Assembly 277
Connecticut Interest Groups: Competitors for Political Power 285
Party Power in the Legislature: Some Reasons Why 291
Connecticut Parties and Democratic Responsibility 302

11. ETHNIC ELEMENTS IN NEW ENGLAND POLITICS 305
Ethnic Groups and Public Policy 307
Ethnic Group Politics and Parties 311
What's in a Name? 315

12. PUBLIC POLICY-MAKING AND POLITICAL PARTIES IN NEW ENGLAND 320
The Variable Impact of Parties on Public Policy 324
Some Probable Consequences of Competition and Party Structure 326
The Prospects for Party Competition in New England 337

INDEX 341

MAPS AND CHARTS

Drawn by R. Williams

Page

1. Proctor and Anti-Proctor Areas of Greatest Strength (1946-1954) 22
2. Vermont's "Friends and Neighbors" Influence, 1952 Republican Primary for Governor 26
3. Vermont Foreign Ethnic Group Concentration as of 1939 Census 33
4. Vermont: 1954 Election for Governor, Counties with More than 40 Per Cent Democratic Vote 33
5. New Hampshire: Republican Percentage of Major Party Vote (1928-1956) 58
6. "Friends and Neighbors" in New Hampshire: Republican Primary for U.S. Senate, 1954 60
7. "Friends and Neighbors" in Maine: Republican Primary for Governor, 1956 91
8. Two-Party State: Massachusetts Democratic Percentage of the Two-Party for President and Governor (1928-1956) 124
9. Foreign-Born Population and Democratic Vote in the Seventeen Largest Cities of Massachusetts, 1950 135
10. Massachusetts Republican Primary for Governor, 1950: Organization Strength over "Friends and Neighbors" 143
11. Areas of Republican Strength in Connecticut, 1948 236
12. Towns with 20 Per Cent or More Foreign-Born Population, 1940 242
13. Thirty-four "Democratic" Towns: 1930-1954 242

NEW ENGLAND STATE POLITICS

CHAPTER 1

ABOUT NEW ENGLAND: AN INTRODUCTION

THERE are two New Englands. Most outlanders think of only one of them when New England comes to mind. The image is of a quaint, quiet, and very reserved community; a place of picturesque stone fences, charming village greens, and of nasal-toned, eloquently laconic Yankees. There is still such a New England, an important facet of the total character of the region, but it has for some time been declining before a newer New England. The older New England in its prime was largely an agricultural society, but the rocky soil proved more productive of stone fences than of grain. Transportation to the West brought in grains at a price that even the most industrious Yankee could not meet. Since in general New England is not blessed with rich stores of mineral resources, there was only one direction in which the area could go—toward industry—and it went with a flourish. In the process a newer New England was fashioned.

Industrialization created a demand for labor, a demand greater than the deserting farm population could supply. So the mill owners brought the needed "hands" from Europe and French Canada to tend their machines. Soon the birth registry began to record fewer Calebs and Nathaniels and more Patricks, Anthonys, and Pierres. In time, imposing Catholic churches took their places alongside stately Congregational buildings. Cities grew too large for the town-meeting system to govern any longer; the democratic atmosphere of the town meeting gave way to machine politics. In ghettos reserved for the non-Yankee newcomers political clubs sprang up to plan and maneuver as adroitly as the men who met in Tom Dawes's garret in pre-Revolutionary Boston to caucus before town meetings, much to the displeasure of John Adams. Eventually the cities could not contain their teeming numbers and sprawling suburbs surrounded every city. In small towns adjacent to the cities the once relatively isolated Yankees found challengers to their political hegemony.

There is no *strict* division in area between the two New Englands. Each element is intermixed with the other in nearly every part of the region. However, more of the old New England is to be found north of the Massachusetts border and more of the new in the three southern states. Both elements are significant in both areas, but the old New England is more powerful in the north. Industry is not so concentrated; agriculture is more important in the economy and life of the communities. The small independent town remains a live social unit. In the other three states 43 per cent of the people live in cities with more than 50,000 population; if we include the immediate regions around these cities (formally, the "standard metropolitan areas") they then contain 68 per cent of the three-state population. The proportion of ethnic minorities is much greater in the southern portion; there, about four out of six of those employed work in manufacturing.

The social and economic patterns of upper and lower New England are sufficiently different to have produced distinctly different political systems, but there are enough similarities within the region as a whole to make comparisons possible. Regionalists may argue whether New England actually constitutes a "region" in the strictest sense of the term, but for present purposes this debate is irrelevant.[1] Notwithstanding the changes wrought by the last century particularly, there are many elements of a common heritage operative in all the New England states.

There are, for example, considerable similarities in the governmental structures of these states—similarities not shared in general with the rest of the forty-nine states. The town meeting and the concomitant emphasis on town autonomy are peculiar to New England. Only with the greatest reluctance, however, have these states adopted the home-rule movement whereby the municipality is freed of controls by the state legislature. This, in part at least, is the product of another peculiarity of New England government—the tendency to give legislative representation to every town. The practice of town representation in at least one house of the legislature has been deemed a substitute for home rule. Also significantly, town representation has helped make New England legislatures the largest in the country.[2] County government is relatively insignificant, and accordingly political organization over most of New England tends to be localized within the individual town rather than based on the county as in most of the rest of the country. The wave of disaffection with political parties which swept the country in connection with the Muckraker and allied reform movements of the first decades of this century had relatively less effect in New England than in the West. The anti-party spirit, which spawned the Non-Partisan movement in the prairie states and the non-party practices of many Western states, was a far less effective force in New England's political development. This is a partial explanation of the greater powers of parties in New England. And, finally, the constitutions of the New England states are both ancient and in general fairly brief and simple—at least by comparison.[3] The six New England constitutions were adopted earlier than those of any of the other states. (The dates of adoption in New England range from 1780 for Massachusetts to 1843 for Rhode Island.)

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[1] The debate about the nature of New England has a long history, but in essence the dispute concerns the apparent heterogeneity of economic and social patterns between the northern and southern sections of the area and the all-too-customary tendency to neglect this fact in the glib generalizations so often made about New England. See, for example, George Wilson Pierson, "The Obstinate Concept of New England: A Study in Denudation," 28 *New England Quarterly* 3-18 (Mar. 1955). Also on the skeptical side is Howard L. Green, "Hinterland Boundaries of New York City and Boston in Southern New England," 31 *Economic Geography* 283-301. See the comments made in the articles on "The Withering of New England" by Oscar Handlin and Howard Mumford Jones in 185 *Atlantic Monthly* 49-53 (Apr. 1950). In *The Case for Regional Planning With Special Reference to New England* the Directive Committee on Regional Planning of Yale University took the position that for all practical purposes of regional planning New England could be called a region. New Haven, 1949, Ch. 4.

These elements of a common background and the fact that there is a territorial division between upper and lower New England combine to make the area a fascinating laboratory for the study of state politics. In the three northern states one-party systems prevail and in the remaining three states there is competition between the two major parties. Party competition in Connecticut and Massachusetts is brisk, and there is actually more competition in Rhode Island than the data of Table 1 would indicate, but the reader will have to accept that fact on faith for the moment.[4] In any event Table 1 illustrates the general demarcation between one- and two-party politics in the area.

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[2] The lower houses of New Hampshire, Connecticut, Vermont, and Massachusetts are the four largest in the country and constitute four of the six such houses in excess of 200 members. Massachusetts and Maine do not have representation for every town, but the other four states do. For non-New Englanders some explanation of the "town" may be in order. The total area of the New England state is divided into towns which are not only geographic units but which have governments with broad powers. They have powers that in most states are allotted to the county as well as those given to ordinary local governments.

[3] Only the Massachusetts constitution comes near the average for length of state constitutions, with some 28,700 words. Thirty-seven states have constitutions longer than any of the New England states and the three briefest are in New England: Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

TABLE 1

The Party Tendencies of the New England States, 1930-1956

State	*Mean Republican percentage of the vote for governor*	*Number of Republican majorities for governor*	*Number of elections producing change of party control of governorship*
Vermont	65.5%	14 of 14	0
New Hampshire	55.6	14 of 14	0
Maine	54.7	10 of 14	3
Massachusetts	50.2	6 of 14	7
Connecticut	50.1	5 of 12	7
Rhode Island	44.6	2 of 14	3

The study of one- and two-party states within the context of one region provides an opportunity to make a comparative analysis concentrating on the variations between the two types of political system. It is a general assumption that two-party competition results in a more salutary political atmosphere, but surprisingly little research has been devoted to testing this hypothesis. Various scholars have reported on the politics of individual states and have made generalizations about, for example, the political patterns of one-party states, but little has been done to make direct comparisons between the two types. In one sense this is not surprising, for the political conditions of the South, where one-partyism is most prevalent, are so strikingly different from the conditions in a state like New York or Connecticut, a fact which demonstrates the difficulty of working with *all* the states as a frame of reference. Comparing Connecticut and Mississippi is possible in some respects, but the limits of valid comparison are soon reached. Thus the rationale of a regional comparative analysis of state politics: it reduces the uncertainties and variables to more manageable proportions.

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[4] See Chapter 7 for an analysis of Rhode Island parties.

To test the hypothesis that two-party politics is in some sense more democratic, more responsible, or more rational than one-party politics, it is necessary to go beyond the party organizations as such. To restrict one's view to elections, campaigning, and intra- or inter-party maneuvering on the hustings is inadequate. Some broader perspective is necessary. Part of that perspective can be supplied by looking at the legislative process. In the one-party states, for instance, the factions of the dominant parties are of great significance, for in essence they supply virtually the only means of organized opposition to the holders of power at any given moment. In the two-party states the role of the party's leadership (both in and out of the legislature) is an important determinant of the party's role, whether great or small. Legislative politics reveal much about these telling characteristics of the two types of party system. The legislature accordingly becomes an obvious source for the examination of a whole political system.

In the ensuing treatment of New England state politics I have sought to describe the political parties as best I could.[5] I have then studied the legislative politics of each state in recent decades to try to observe the political system in operation. In the end I have drawn some tentative conclusions about New England state politics. Whether these conclusions are applicable to other parts of the country I leave to others to decide.

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[5] I am fully aware of the almost infinite complexity of the broad matrix of forces that make a political system what it is; I can only plead that I have done my best to ferret out the relevant elements of the broad historical, social, economic, and constitutional forces that have made the politics of each state what it is. I have not attempted a systematic effort to treat New England's contribution to national politics, a topic beyond the scope of this comparative analysis of state political systems.

CHAPTER 2

VERMONT: POLITICAL PARADOX

VERMONT is a land of political paradox. It is conservative, but it has a liberal strain. It has a one-party system, but it lacks many of the common attributes of one-partyism: there is little bitterness, almost no outright corruption, and the extent of popular political participation is not particularly depressed. Early in its history Vermont was liberal, even radical, in belief and action; later it abruptly turned to marked conservatism and in this century it has by fits and starts been both conservative and liberal in its public policies.

It is not enough to say in explanation that Vermonters are cussed and independent people who do things in their own way regardless of what course others may take. It is not enough to say, but it is one of the things that must be said. The Vermont tradition of independence is as sedulously and seriously nurtured among Vermonters as is the tradition of any state—far more than most. What this tradition implies cannot be reduced to a few sentences, and yet the importance of the tradition demands that a suggestion of its elements be attempted.

Prominent among the lures to attract tourists to Vermont is the theme of "Vermont unspoiled," an island of the past where the habits, sights, sounds, and smells of industrial progress are absent, leaving an unsullied land for the enjoyment of today's all-embracing leisure class. As usual what the promoters say does not quite conform with reality; yet there is considerable truth in it. Vermont is a kind of capsule of the American past. It is relatively isolated and it has retained many of the virtues of a simpler past era. As nineteenth-century American orators sang the praises of self-reliance, thrift and independence, and a fierce sense of freedom, so must an unbiased present-day observer of Vermont identify these traits as typically Vermont. Not all Vermonters share these traits equally, of course; yet the spirit of Vermont certainly evokes the feeling that these virtues are meaningful. They are more than slogans for political campaigns and sermons; they are elements of a past that shape the present political direction of the state.

What evidence of the survival of Vermont tradition can be found today? Dorothy Canfield Fisher stoutly maintains that tradition continues to have an influence, and cites as evidence the resistance of the state to the hysterical reaction to Communism found so commonly in other states. She quotes a fellow Vermonter that "Anybody who tries to bore from within in Vermont is going to strike granite."[1] When legislation restricting civil rights was presented in the Vermont legislature, it was turned down as unwanted "witch hunting." The brief story of one or two of these proposals will illustrate.

In 1953 Charles A. Plumley, a 77-year-old veteran of eighteen years in the United States House of Representatives, apparently decided that Vermont was in danger. Perhaps he was unhappy in his political retirement and wanted some excitement; for whatever reason, he urged that Vermont censor her school textbooks to cull out those of subversive nature. Accordingly a neighbor of Plumley's introduced a bill into the Vermont House of Representatives to implement the former Congressman's ideas. The bill called for an appointive board to survey all textbooks and to withdraw any that had "subversive or disloyal" content (neither of these terms being defined).

Plumley had several texts in mind that he wanted exorcised. He contended that Vermont was a "testing ground for the Communists," citing as an item of evidence that Alger Hiss had a home in the little town of Peacham. Late in March a move was started to get Plumley to address a joint session of the General Assembly, but several leaders blocked this, one calling it "an effort at back-door lobbying." The newspapers failed to take up the cry and demand censorship; most of them were critical of the bill. The teachers were opposed, and there was considerable popular opposition to the bill as an invasion of the powers of locally elected school boards. Yet the same kind of opposition to such legislation had been heard in many other states where it became law. Teacher opposition, the desire for local autonomy, and the uncertainties of such vaguely worded law having failed to halt censorship elsewhere, many Vermonters thought the bill might pass. The Appropriations Committee of the House ended the speculation in late March when it voted 14 to one against the bill. (The Education Committee had passed it on to Appropriations without recommendation.) The House itself made it final when only 11 affirmative votes could be mustered against the 202 "nay."[2] Only one member, the bill's sponsor, got up to support it, and the House turned a deaf ear to his warning of danger as well as to his plea that a similar law worked well in New York. The reporting member of the Appropriations Committee said they would not put "the stamp of approval on $1,000 for this witch hunt."[3]

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[1] *Vermont Tradition, The Biography of an Outlook on Life*, Boston, 1953, p. 397. But see the dissenting point of view in Miriam Chapin's article "Vermont: Where Are All Those Yankees?" 215 *Harper's Magazine* 50-54 (Dec. 1957).

Nor has Vermont accepted legislation to restrict the Communist party from the ballot, although the proposal has been made. A bill was presented in the 1951 session of the General Assembly to deny a place on the ballot for any party "directly or indirectly" associated with Communist, Fascist, or other un-American principles. After the Judiciary Committee had amended the bill, it passed in the House without a roll-call vote and without much debate. The Senate Judiciary Committee, however, returned an unfavorable report, and after extensive discussion—there was no disagreement—the bill was unanimously rejected. Said one member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, "If the spirit of liberty should vanish in the United States, and our institutions should languish, it could all be restored by the generous store held by the people in this brave little state of Vermont." The words were not his own, but those of that famous Vermonter, Calvin Coolidge, yet the spirit of the remainder of his speech was in keeping with the quotation. Vermont, going her own way, was not ready to join other states in this form of restriction on liberty as she understood it.[4]

The late Bernard DeVoto once commented that Vermont is essentially Calvinist and that "there are more Yankees left in Vermont than anywhere else."[5] Both socially and politically Vermont is dominated by the small-town and country Yankee. A third of the population lives in towns of less than 2,500 and a greater proportion of the people live on farms than in any other New England state (21.5 per cent in 1950). Vermonters are fond of pointing out that there are more cattle than people in the state, a fact confirmed by the Census Bureau. Vermont, like some of the hill regions of the South, has been a reservoir from which the industrialized cities of the nation have drawn their population; in the first decade of this century two-thirds of Vermont's towns lost in population and in the second decade three-fourths of them declined.[6] Vermonters and ex-Vermonters debate the consequences of this emigration, some contending that it has drained off the ambitious and enterprising, others denying this. Dorothy Canfield Fisher says, "In a Vermont family which had two sons and three daughters, those who moved West were not necessarily the more energetic ones, the brainier ones. Sometimes they were. Sometimes they weren't. It seems to have been a question whether 'they felt to.' Some did. Some didn't."[7] Without entering a family quarrel on what is at best a moot point, one can observe that there was little infusion of new blood and new ideas and that at least some adventurous and energetic types deserted the marginal farms of the hillsides. Hence there was more and more relative isolation of the state from the new developments in more urban parts of the country.

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[2] See the *Burlington Free Press,* Mar. 31, 1953.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] See Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *op.cit.,* pp. 400-402. See also the *Journal of the Senate of the State of Vermont,* 1951, pp. 434-435 (Apr. 23, 1951).

[5] "How to Live among the Vermonters," 173 *Harper's Magazine* 333-336 at p. 334 (Aug., 1936). DeVoto is also responsible for the remark that to Vermonters the difference between ten and eleven cents is not negligible—it is one cent.

There was some new blood, and non-Yankee blood at that. But the influx of the Irish, the French-Canadians, and the Italians to Vermont was meager compared with that in the neighboring states. These newer groups have come to have a minor political role, but the dominance of the Yankee has been unshaken thus far. The Yankee community retains a conservatism of pre-industrial and pre-urban America, but with an added touch of Yankee spirit of the special variety spawned by the cantankerous beginnings and development of Vermont.

Vermont, remember, began as an independent republic and remained one until 1791, when it deigned to ratify the Constitution and petition Congress for admission to the Union as the fourteenth state. A frontier spirit pervaded Vermont's first (1777) constitution, as liberal as any constitution of the period. In addition to the usual rights granted the people, Vermont added abolition of slavery and universal manhood suffrage. In rejection of the conservative argument that a second house of the legislature was necessary to represent property, the constitution provided a unicameral legislature. With the constitution went a political spirit to match—Vermont in that day was radical. Ethan Allen and Irishman Matthew Lyon were typical of their era. Lyon, publisher of a "rabidly republican sheet called the *Scourge of Aristocracy*,"[8] was in Congress when he was prosecuted under the Alien and Sedition Acts for his attacks on President John Adams. Convicted and imprisoned, he was still in jail when reelected to Congress by a good margin against four opponents.[9]

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[6] Harold F. Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England*, New York, 1936, pp. 368-370. The relative decline of the state is indicated by the fact that it began with five members in the United States House of Representatives and now has only one.

[7] *Op.cit.*, p. 284.

The 1777 constitutional prohibition of slavery in Vermont was prophetic of a significant theme in Vermont politics. As hill people they had no need for slavery—as was true even in hill country of the South—and having no seaports they were not tempted by the lucrative slave trade. Although the state rejected the old Federalist party for the Jeffersonians, the slavery question was among the reasons for the abandonment of Democratic ties even before the Civil War. By 1856 the anti-slavery feeling was so deep in Vermont that John C. Freemont, candidate of the newly born Republican party, won the state by a margin of nearly four to one.[10] At this point in time a man named Abraham Lincoln joined the party with some hesitancy, which presumably proves beyond all doubt the legitimacy of Vermont's Republicanism—to be "more Republican" than Abraham Lincoln ought to be evidence enough. And as the twig was bent, the tree has been inclined.

Vermont Republicanism

In every presidential, congressional, and gubernatorial campaign in Vermont from 1856 to today the Republican candidates have without exception been successful.[10a] Almost everyone will recall that in 1936 Vermont was one of only two states (the other being Maine) to remain Republican against the Roosevelt landslide, but fewer people will remember that in 1912, when another Roosevelt was on the war path, Vermont was similarly one of two states to give the Republican nominee a plurality (along with Utah). Such a record of Republican consistency places Vermont in the list of indisputably one-party states. Although the Democratic party musters a larger vote in Vermont than does the Republican party in most Southern states, this fact does not really mean much, for up to the present at least the Democrats in Vermont are more notable for their persistence than for their ultimate political significance.[11]

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[8] Earl Newton, *The Vermont Story, A History of the People of the Green Mountain State, 1749-1949*, Montpelier, Vermont, 1949, p. 119.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[10] Antipathy to slavery was not just the penchant of a militant few in Vermont; it appears to have been a widely held conviction. Candidates urging the strongest anti-slavery positions won elections regularly, and the response of the people to the Civil War was enthusiastic. Enlistments were plentiful, and apparently the state lost more than its share of wounded and dead. "In proportion to population," says Earl Newton, "Vermont gave the lives of more of its sons to the Union cause than any other state." *Op.cit.*, p. 126.

To categorize the state as one-party requires no feat of analysis or research. What is far more difficult is to describe with any accuracy *what kind of one-party system it is.* There is in fact a wide range of differences in the actual political systems of the various one-party states. In some there is a relatively continuous two-factional alignment where the two factions assume something loosely akin to the role of parties in a two-party state. In others there is one continuous faction and a more or less disconnected opposition faction. In still others there is multi-factionalism where it is every-man-for-himself. To illustrate the difficulty of assessing Vermont as a Republican one-party state, consider these two recent efforts at appraisal. Ranney and Kendall, after a brief discussion of the background of Vermont politics, say: "All this sounds very much like the 'multifactionalism' characteristic of many of the southern one-party states. During the Progressive era a half-century ago . . . Vermont politics became bifactional for a time; but the Progressive faction and the old-guard faction eventually merged, and multifactionalism (or the 'absence of machine politics,' as Vermonters prefer to say) has been characteristic of the state's politics ever since."[12] Coleman Ransone presents an entirely different picture of the state's politics. He says: "Of the states in the one-party group, Virginia and Vermont seem to have the clearly defined dual-factional structure. In Virginia the Byrd and anti-Byrd forces give the Democratic Party two fairly definite wings and the same is true in Vermont where the Proctor and anti-Proctor forces make up two wings of the Republican Party."[13]

[10a] Although true when written, this was changed by the 1958 election. A Democrat actually won election to the U.S. House seat. See p. 45 below.

[11] Between 1900 and 1954 in gubernatorial elections, for example, Republican candidates in Vermont have received an average of 69.8 per cent of the major party vote. North Carolina and Tennessee are the only Southern states with comparable second-party strength, according to the figures presented by Alexander Heard in his book, *A Two Party South?* Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1952, Ch. IV and particularly pp. 66-67. In several of the Southern states there is often no Republican candidate at all, a form of supine cooperation that the Vermont Democrats never offer their adversaries.

[12] Austin Ranney and Willmore Kendall, *Democracy and the American Party System,* New York, 1956, p. 193.

Which of these contradictory views of Vermont Republican politics is accurate? The evidence suggests that the bifactional alignment is more nearly descriptive of the realities of Vermont politics, but even this must be taken with caution. The conservative Proctor organization has clearly been the most dominant force in Vermont politics for many generations, but to compare this group with the Byrd machine in Virginia is at best doubtful, since the differences between them are so striking. The Byrd machine is tightly knit; it has discipline; it has considerable control over local and county offices; and there is a definite carry-over of organizational strength into the legislature.[14] None of these things is true of the Proctor organization.

The organization built around the Proctor family, prominent in the marble industry of the state, has existed so long that it has been many things in the course of its history. Prior to the Progressive revolt of the second decade of this century, there seems to have been a real machine with local outposts and considerable internal discipline and control. It is difficult to be certain exactly how powerful the organization was in those earlier years, but subsequently it has been a relatively loose and flexible organization, able to meet rebellious elements with compromise. Serious challenges have been infrequent, partly because the organization restricted its area of control. One may speculate that had the organization tried to maintain a complete control of Vermont politics from the top to the bottom the antagonism aroused would have defeated it in time. Organization power is considerable but its leaders have not overplayed their hand.

Notwithstanding that Vermont is and has been a predominantly agricultural state, the Proctor organization has been based much more on industrial than upon agricultural power. The Proctor dynasty had its origins with Redfield Proctor, who came to the state after the Civil War to operate a failing marble company. He built up his company and with judicious combinations with other organizations produced a quasi-monopolistic control over the state's main extractive industry.[15] Three other Proctors have been governor since Redfield Proctor's day, the latest being Mortimer Proctor, who served from 1945 to 1947.

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[13] Coleman B. Ransone, Jr., *The Office of Governor in the United States*, University, Alabama, 1956, pp. 31-32.

[14] See V. O. Key's analysis of Virginia politics in his *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, New York, 1949, Ch. 2. Through a state board of compensation the machine in Virginia "fixes the compensation of the principal county officials and makes allowances for the salaries and expense of their offices" (at p. 21). To say the least, this facilitates discipline.

The early ascendancy of the Proctor family was attributable not only to the importance of the marble industry in the state but also to the unusual qualities of leadership of such men as Redfield Proctor and Fletcher Proctor, who followed him in command. Other rising industrial groups cooperated with the Proctors, but the place of the marble industry in the economy of the state enhanced the Proctor family position. More recently other economic interests have moved up in importance and accordingly have taken a more active part in politics. The machine-tool industry, with which both Senator Ralph Flanders and the recent governor, Joseph Johnson, are associated, has muscled its way into a prominent position. It may now be somewhat anachronistic to call the conservative faction the "Proctor organization," since the family no longer dominates it. The Proctors are still with the faction, however, even if they are not the guiding spirits, and the general continuity of ideological orientation and the political methods employed are sufficiently unchanged to make the term reasonably accurate. It is in any event still used in political discussion in the state.

The Proctor organization has most of the time controlled access to the highest political offices in Vermont. A definite ladder of advancement has provided an opportunity to examine the political dependability as well, perhaps, as the abilities of those who sought the governorship. The customary route to the top includes service in the House or in the Senate (or both), then election to the lieutenant governor's chair before running for governor. Of the ten governors who served between 1925 and 1958, eight had been in the House before becoming lieutenant governor, an office each held in the terms immediately preceding his service as governor.[16] Money for campaigning, some organizational support in various counties, and usually newspaper support have helped put the Proctor candidates over. No doubt the seeming inevitability of the ladder of ascendancy helped the regular candidates, since to some extent a kind of legitimacy seemed to attach to the regular promotion of those coming along.[17]

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[15] See Robert C. Gilmore's brief history of the rise of the Proctor family's economic and political power in his "The Vermont Marble Company, 1869-1939," xiv *New England Social Studies Bulletin* (Dec. 1956), pp. 11-20, and (Mar. 1957), pp. 14-20.

Most Proctor-faction governors have been conservatives of the "do-nothing" school. Representative of the business and financial interests of the state, they want to keep government costs, government regulation, and service functions at the lowest reasonable levels. The atmosphere of the state legislature, for reasons I will try to explain later, is well suited to this kind of negative approach. It is true that some Proctor governors have worked for progressive legislation on occasion, but for the most part a placid "low-pressure" politics and government has seemed to be the goal. In earlier times they opposed factory inspection, regulation of child labor, workmen's compensation, and other "progressive" measures of this sort.[18] More recently, Governor Johnson's opposition to public distribution of the St. Lawrence Seaway electrical power in the 1957 session of the General Assembly (thereby helping to defeat the proposal objected to by the utilities, who, of course, wanted to distribute it themselves) is illustrative of the present-day attitudes of the conservative governors.[19]

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[16] Five of these eight had also served one or more terms in the Senate, and several had been either president pro tempore of the Senate or speaker of the House.

[17] This ladder of ascendancy has gained a certain popular acceptance comparable to the previously held notion that candidates must be rotated between the eastern and western parts of the state. This came to be called the "Mountain Rule," under which for 90 years prior to 1928 no two successive candidates could come from the same side of the mountain. In short no governor could succeed himself, and open battles for access to power were not so likely since the battles were settled within either region then due for the office. In 1928, however, John W. Weeks, then 74 years old, broke the rule and ran to succeed himself. His success surprised commentators, who thought it impossible to break so iron-clad a rule. The main point of Weeks's opponent's campaign was that east-west alternation rule should not be broken, but it failed to overcome the popularity of Weeks, sometimes called the "Al Smith of Vermont." (The description left much to be desired by way of parallel. Virtually their only similarities were their low origins.) See the *New York Times* commentary on the election, Sept. 12, 13, and 23, 1928. The east-west division of the party continued for some time after Weeks's success. Many still cite it as a line of demarcation, but as subsequent election data indicate, the division, so far as one is perceptible, is now more north-south. Observers of the legislature also report the tendency of members to think of themselves as northern and southern respectively. See Oliver Garceau and Corinne Silverman, "A Pressure Group and the Pressured: a Case Report," 48 *American Political Science Review* 672-691 (Sept. 1954) at p. 689.

[18] See Winston A. Flint, *The Progressive Movement in Vermont*, Washington, D.C., 1941, Chs. 8 and 9. Flint also points out, however, that one Proctor governor (Allen M. Fletcher) did support a factory inspection law and other labor legislation.

Opposition to the Proctor candidates has been sporadic, weak, and usually disorganized. Opponents are often found, but, lacking money and organizational support, their ratio of success to failure has been discouraging to the ambitious. There has been a considerable number of challenges of gubernatorial candidates, but proportionately fewer challenges of congressional candidates, as Table 2 indicates. Note that in the gubernatorial races there has been a challenger in 17 of the 21 contests between 1916 and 1956, even though in five of these races the opposition was unable to center on any single candidate to carry the opposition banner. In some instances the opposition has conceivably missed opportunities to win because of inability to settle on one candidate, as in 1950, when the two opposition candidates drew more votes than Emerson, the Proctor candidate, although the latter won with a plurality of the vote.[20]

TABLE 2

Primary Contests in the Republican Party in Vermont, 1916-1956

	Governor	*Senator*	*Representative*
Number of contests	21	17	29
Number with incumbents running	7	12	22
Number with incumbents uncontested	1	8	13
Number with two candidates	12	5	8
Number with one candidate	4	10	17
Number with more than two candidates	5	7	4

There have been only three relatively brief periods when the anti-Proctor or more liberal faction has posed a successful opposition—from 1910 to 1915, during the depression period from 1936 to

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[19] Innumerable examples could be cited, but one more will suffice. Governor Emerson, a Proctor man who was lieutenant governor under Governor Gibson (1947-1950), cast a tie-breaking vote in the Senate to defeat a Gibson proposal to have public-health units travel around the state to check the health of school children.

[20] Emerson had 43 per cent of the vote, Stacey 35, and Bove 22.

1940, and again between 1945 and 1950. In the first of these periods the opposition did not win the governorship but scared the organization into passing some unwanted legislation, including the party primary law.[21] In the depression the present Senator, George Aiken, was elected governor with the backing of the Farm Bureau Federation and other dissident elements who opposed the Proctor group. Although his program was not particularly radical in character, some of his proposals were sufficiently liberal to win him the enmity of the Proctor organization, with the result that it opposed him when he sought election to the Senate in 1940. Notwithstanding the opposition of most of the state's newspapers and the Proctor organization, Aiken beat Ralph Flanders in the primary.[22] Once in the Senate, Aiken compiled a relatively liberal voting record, much more liberal than that of Flanders, who had to wait six years for his opportunity to enter the Senate.[23]

During the war years the Proctor organization reclaimed the governorship, but the liberal wing returned with a vengeance in 1947. Mortimer R. Proctor, the fourth of the Proctor dynasty to hold the office, was seeking reelection in 1946, and since the custom had already grown up that no man who asked for a second term would be denied it, his success was generally conceded. He of course had the backing of his faction and considerable newspaper support, but he faced a formidable adversary. Young, liberal, energetic, and outspoken, Ernest W. Gibson, son of Vermont's late U.S. Senator, had just returned from the South Pacific where he had been wounded during long service as an army colonel. Gibson, as the anti-Proctor candidate for governor, campaigned against the "line of succession" rule to which he had to be an exception to win, for he had not served the usual apprenticeship in the House, Senate, and lieutenant governor's chair. He also made a vigorous attack on Mortimer Proctor's administration, which one opposition paper had called "a Study in Still Life."[24] Lacking money and organized support, but with farm group help, he won the governorship.

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[21] See Flint, *op.cit.*, p. 105.

[22] See Earl Newton, *op.cit.*, pp. 254-255.

[23] The AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education reported in a pamphlet, "Voting Records of Senators and Representatives, 1947 through 1954," that Aiken had cast 19 "right" votes and 9 "wrong" ones in their view. Flanders on the other hand was credited with 9 "right" votes and 19 "wrong" ones.

[24] See Earl Newton, *op.cit.*, p. 255. Gibson's father had likewise done battle with

Once in office Gibson proceeded to get enacted a legislative program that is the clearest evidence that Vermont's is not purely a conservative outlook. About the best comparison with Gibson would be Connecticut's liberal postwar governor, Chester Bowles. Although Bowles was perhaps a bit more outspokenly liberal, he was on the whole less successful in getting his programs enacted than his Vermont counterpart. Gibson overcame objections to the extension of certain federal aid programs for the state, a move which surprised some people in view of the state's indignant refusal in 1936 to permit a federal highway in the state financed by the New Deal and in view of the fact that some Vermont farmers got out their guns to resist the building of federal dams in their pleasant valleys.

Federal aid programs had been used in Vermont before Gibson's proposals were made, but his success in overriding the objections to further federal aid was a notable event. After a battle, he got through a minimum salary law for teachers,[25] established a teachers' retirement fund, increased state aid to education by $1 million, improved the administration of the state welfare law, and overcame the sheriffs' objections to the creation of a State Police Department. Perhaps even more surprising was his success in getting a state income-tax law passed. The need for new taxes was apparent, but if anything was to be done, according to the industrial and more conservative elements, it ought to be done by a sales tax. Instead, Gibson won acceptance of an income tax with relatively liberal deductions.[26]

Prior to his service in the army, Gibson had served briefly in the U.S. Senate to fill out the term of his late father. His seat happened to be near that of a Senator from Missouri later to become President of the United States. President Truman later remembered his old friend by appointing him to the Federal District Court bench in

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the Proctors, and had won. In 1934 he had gone to the Senate after several terms in the House, but he had to overcome the opposition of the Proctor organization. The elder Gibson had also been among the dissidents in the days of the Progressive Party of Theodore Roosevelt.

[25] I vividly recall my own frustrating and unsuccessful efforts to get a minimum-salary law through the Connecticut General Assembly in the 1955 session. The effort foundered on the rock of local prerogatives. Why the same argument did not doom the Vermont bill is hard to comprehend. Perhaps the deplorably low salaries prevalent in Vermont then and the modest request for a $1,500 minimum explain Gibson's success.

[26] For a brief résumé of Gibson's accomplishments see Melvin S. Wax, "Vermont's New Dealing Yankee," 168 *The Nation* 659-660, June 11, 1949.

1950 before his term as governor expired. Had he not accepted President Truman's offer, Gibson might well have changed the pattern of Vermont politics considerably; with the donning of judicial robes, his political influence virtually disappeared. Following Gibson, two conservative, generally uninspired, and more typical governors have restored the customary peace and tranquillity expected of Vermont politics.

What are the respective sources of strength of the Proctor and the anti-Proctor groups? In terms of interest-group backing, we have noted the importance of manufacturing and marble interests in the Proctor faction. Farm groups and apparently the newer elements moving into the state, many of them concentrated in the southern part of the state, have been the main backing of the liberal wing at least *within the party*. But the liberal wing has also drawn strength in primaries from the Democrats, since in effect Vermont has an open primary in which a person may choose whichever party primary he prefers on primary election day.[27] In an election which clearly pits a more liberal against a more conservative candidate the Democratic voters are frequently found to be voting in the Republican primary for the liberal candidate. Democratic statewide candidates are almost never challenged and therefore participation by Democrats in their own party's primary is normally very light. The turnout for the Democratic primary between 1930 and 1954 averaged about seven per cent of the turnout for the Republican primary, with the highest percentage being 11.7 per cent. Below is listed the Democratic turnout as percentages of the Republican primary vote totals since 1940. In the middle two elections, in other words, the participation in the Democratic primary fell off; the assumption is that many of

1940: 9.7%
1942: 7.9
1944: 6.1
1946: 3.7%
1948: 3.7
1950: 5.6%
1952: 7.6
1954: 7.4

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[27] Vermont law provides that "A person voting at [a] primary shall indicate to the ballot clerk his party choice, and such ballot clerk shall give him a ballot of such party and no other." (*Vermont Statutes*, Revision of 1947, Ch. 13, Sec. 168.) Apparently some effort is made to keep local caucuses for the nomination of members of the lower house somewhat more restricted to party members. Caucus check lists are required, for example, and a certificate must be filed stating party affiliation. (See *Vermont Statutes*, Ch. 15, Sec. 235-236.) These rules do not apply to the state primary, however.

these people were voting for Gibson. In Winooski and Burlington, both normally Democratic, Gibson alone won more votes in the 1948 primary than all the Republican gubernatorial candidates combined could win in 1950, 1952, or 1954. It cannot be proved, of course, but Gibson's 90 per cent of the vote in the Republican primary in Winooski suggests some Democratic participation.[28]

The Proctor forces have their greatest strength in three northern counties, the anti-Proctor forces in three southern counties, as Figure 1 indicates. This is at least the present distribution of strength, to judge from five recent gubernatorial campaigns in which the two groups had clear contests going. Going back to Aiken's gubernatorial victories, one cannot discover any similarity between his areas of strength and the areas of greatest strength for more recent anti-Proctor candidates. In more recent campaigns, however, the anti-Proctor candidates have consistently done better in the three southern counties of Bennington, Windsor, and Windham. These same three southern counties are among the most heavily industrialized in the state and, as the southernmost counties, they have also received a considerable influx of newcomers into the state. It is likely, although not certain, that these are factors which have made these counties more liberal in outlook. The three Proctor counties (Orleans, Lamoille, and Washington) are more rural and sparsely settled.[29] Rutland County, which shares many of the same characteristics of the three anti-Proctor counties, is also the home of the Proctor family, and it is the one county which has consistently divided its vote nearly 50-50 between the two factions.

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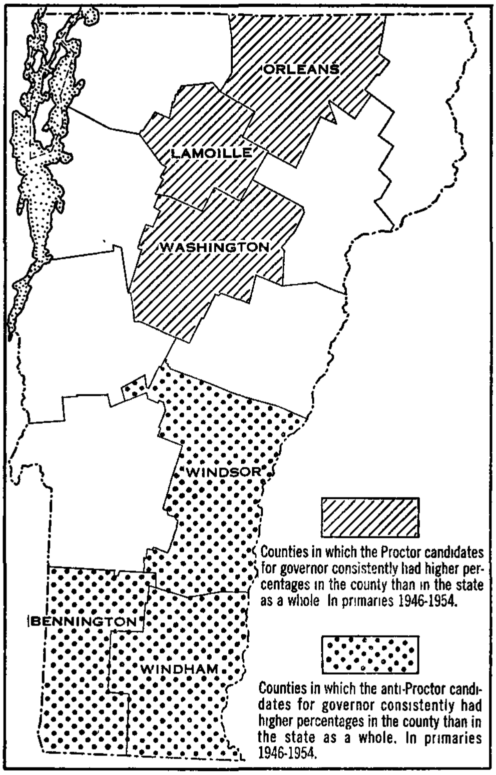
[28] Professor Andrew E. Nuquist of the University of Vermont tells this story of his campaign against Congressman Plumley in 1946, to illustrate the Democratic voting in Republican primaries. At a pre-election meeting held by the League of Women Voters at which both Republican and Democratic candidates spoke, the Democratic Congressional candidate told the audience to vote for Nuquist. "I haven't a chance of winning and I wish you would vote for Nuquist in the primary," he is reported to have said. His remarks showed more realism than party loyalty, perhaps, but the implicit invitation for Democrats to vote in the Republican primary tends to confirm the statistical inference. (From an interview with Professor Nuquist, Apr. 27, 1957.)

[29] It may seem to be a kind of contradiction to say that three primarily rural counties have supported the Proctor faction, and yet to contend that the Farm Bureau and farmer support have been important elements in the anti-Proctor camp. This is nevertheless the fact, for under the guidance of Arthur Packard the Farm Bureau in Vermont has been—in contrast to its conservative orientation in other states—a liberal element; the support of the organization in effect, although not always in outright commitment, has gone to the liberal wing. The Bureau is not the only farm organization in the state, of course, and there has always been considerable conservative farm support for the Proctor faction. Moreover, according to some observers, the three Proctor counties mentioned have been dominated by conservative politicians with some pro-Proctor organization.


ORLEANS
LAMOILLE
WASHINGTON
WINDSOR
BENNINGTON
WINDHAM
Counties in which the Proctor candidates for governor consistently had higher percentages in the county than in the state as a whole In primaries 1946-1954.
Counties in which the anti-Proctor candidates for governor consistently had higher percentages in the county than in the state as a whole. In primaries 1946-1954.

1. Proctor and Anti-Proctor Areas of Greatest Strength (1946-1954)

Since Vermont is the most one-party-dominated state north of the Mason Dixon Line, it is interesting to compare the operations of Vermont's Republican party with the tactics of the Democratic party in the Southern states. Such a comparative analysis is possible thanks largely to the pioneering study of Southern politics made by Professor V. O. Key, Jr. In the course of his work, Key has singled out several leading characteristics of one-party politics in the South; it is useful to apply his generalizations about the South to states like Vermont. He says, for example, that in the South there is a tendency to emphasize personalities instead of issues in running for office. Under these conditions there is considerable dependence upon localism—a personal appeal that pays off through heavy "home town" support, or, as he calls it, "friends and neighbors." There is also a tendency to invite demagoguery as the appeal to personality overshadows the issues.[30]

The general avoidance of issues in a one-party system is perhaps the consequence of the lack of any pressure to focus on issues. A two-party system provides two continuously distinct groups of politicians aiming at the exclusion of the opposition from power. Undoubtedly they would find it just as useful to avoid issues as any other politicians, but the pressure of the opposition party in campaigns often forces them to take some kind of position. Certainly there are successful politicians in two-party states who consistently avoid taking clear stands on questions of public policy, but such evasion is less common and more risky in the two-party than in the one-party states. In the latter states the very vagueness of political alignments puts little pressure on politicians to espouse particular policy positions; emphasis on personality seems to predominate.

In most Republican primaries in Vermont not a great deal of attention is given to issues. The only exceptions are the rare campaigns when men like Aiken and Gibson have staged battles against Proctor candidates; then there is battling on policy questions, sometimes quite vigorously, as in Gibson's campaigns of 1946 and 1948. But these campaigns remain the exceptions; in most, there is a Proctor candidate who apparently has no great desire to conduct either a vigorous campaign or, when elected, a vigorous administration. On the whole, the attitude seems to be, the less said about issues the better. Even if gubernatorial candidates did want to discuss policy more conspicuously, the public would not have a clear chance to hold any factional group responsible for their actions, since there is very little carryover of factional alignments into the legislature. This is not to say, however, that there is a virtually complete absence of policy discussion, as seems to be the case in some Southern states. In all campaigns from 1946 to 1954 there was some semblance of anti-Proctor opposition, and thus there was at least some attention to policy matters, even though not enough to bestir any great public attention.[31]

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[30] V. O. Key, *op.cit.*, Ch. 14, "The Nature and Consequences of One-party Factionalism." Key's points are reduced here to very brief statements which are elaborated on somewhat as the discussion ensues. For a concise restatement of Key's conclusions on this by Key's chief aide in his Southern politics undertaking, see Alexander Heard, *op.cit.*, pp. 10-13.

In the Southern multifactional states, according to Key, localism plays an important role in deciding primary elections. Where personality is emphasized above policy, the contacts of the candidate with the people take on an exaggerated importance. Since his connections are greatest in his own home area the candidate is likely to pull a very strong local vote. In two-party areas this is not so important for the obvious reason that the traditional and policy orientations of the voter with his party will override his attachment to the local candidate. To the extent, therefore, that the factions take on some of the attributes of a party system within a party, the pull of localism is likely to be less persuasive since voters react to the factional alignment as well as to personality.

How important is localism or "friends and neighbors" in Vermont? It has some effect, to be sure, but nothing like the patterns of the multifactional parties in the South. Localism shows up in the home counties of most candidates in recent elections, but equally or more important is the bifactional division in the party between 1946 and 1954. Vermont counties only infrequently give any gubernatorial candidate an overwhelming margin of their vote. In gubernatorial primaries between 1946 and 1954 there were eight instances of counties casting as much as 75 per cent of their vote for one candidate. Significantly, in six of those eight cases the favored candidate was a local boy. Yet in each of these six cases the "friends and neighbors" pull was reinforced by factional pulls—that is, the candidate was from the area in which his faction had its greatest strength.

The limited scope of "friends and neighbors" in Vermont is illustrated by the 1946 gubernatorial primary. That year Mortimer Proctor carried his home county with 53 per cent of the vote, but his home county vote was not as high as in two northern counties where the Proctor strength has traditionally been great—there he won 55 and 59 per cent of the vote. In 1952 in a two-man contest that pitted the two factions against each other there appears to be considerable localism, but note that this general distribution of strength coincides with the factional areas as illustrated in Figure 1.

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[31] There is, for example, far less attention to issues in Maine than in Vermont in the average election.

Emerson's 87 per cent of the vote in his home county is therefore not just a local endorsement, but both that and a continuance of habitual Proctor faction attachments.[32]

Has the one-party system of Vermont invited demagogic appeals? In general, no. In some cases extravagant claims may be made and efforts to appeal to emotional reactions certainly crop up, but with no greater and probably a lesser frequency than in some two-party states. Relatively mild demagogy is subtly preached on Catholicism, but this is more an inter- rather than intra-party conflict and in any event it is not signally important. In Vermont, unlike the South, there is no emotionally disturbing "problem" like the Negro question on which to base rampant demagogy.

Furthermore, the tendency toward bifactionalism creates a political atmosphere in which the appeal to demagogy is neither so necessary nor so fruitful as it is in a multifactional situation. Stunts such as campaigning with a hillbilly band or "the red galluses" showmanship of Georgia's Gene Talmadge have not turned up in Vermont. Some of this sort of extreme effort to attract attention does occur in Maine's Republican party, but Maine tends to have a much more multifactional arrangement within the dominant Republican party than is true in Vermont.

Key also makes the point that in Southern politics there is frequently favoritism in matters of contracts and other governmental dealings with money. Where the factions are in today and out tomorrow with virtually no concern for the next candidate who represents the group (if indeed the group continues its existence in any form), there is an invitation to take the attitude of "getting while the getting is good."[33] Although there is certainly some fast and loose playing with state money and favors in the two-party states,

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[32] The suspiciously minded may be wondering whether the chance location of Proctor and anti-Proctor candidates in fact shaped the areas of strength of the two factions—thus making the actual alignment not that of faction but of "friends and neighbors." Such is not the case. Candidacies over the period 1946 to 1956 have been widely scattered geographically and the general alignments along factional lines have remained. In 1954, for example, both candidates were from the *same* county and three of the four highest anti-Proctor counties were the three southern counties of Bennington, Windham, and Windsor; similarly, the Proctor candidate had his greatest margins in the three northern Proctor counties notwithstanding that he *lived* in Windsor County in the south, where his percentage of the vote was slightly *less* than it was statewide.

[33] See Heard, *op.cit.*, p. 11, and V. O. Key, *op.cit.*, p. 305.