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NEWSPAPERS AND NEW POLITICS:

MUNICIPAL REFORM IN CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS, 1890-1900

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Wisconsin-Madison in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

BY

DAVID PAUL NORD

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MUNICIPAL REFORM IN CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS, 1890-1900

BY

DAVID PAUL NORD

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(Mass Communication)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN--MADISON

1979

NEWSPAPERS AND NEW POLITICS

MUNICIPAL REFORM IN CHICAGO AND ST. LOUIS, 1890-1900

David Paul Nord

Under the supervision of Professor Harold L. Nelson

In the 1890s, a new urban politics emerged in America that depended upon the interplay of political organization and mass communication. The new reformers tried to change the urban political system in two ways. They sought to make local politics more issue oriented, and they sought to expand citizen participation in the political process. Unable to gain power within the system of organizational politics, they chose to expand the scope of conflict to involve more groups, more interests, and more people. To build a "mass politics" the new reformers turned to mass issues and to mass communication. They tried to redirect the attention and interest of citizens from personal, group, and neighborhood concerns to issues of general, city-wide significance. The new reformers' main issue was usually public utility regulation; their main political ally, the press.

This dissertation is a study of the role of mass-circulation newspapers in the emergence in the 1890s of a new politics of municipal reform.

The new politics was more successful in some cities than in others. In Chicago, the Municipal Voters' League became a powerful political

force. Between 1896 and 1900, voters increasingly elected aldermen and other local officials who were pledged to support the league's reform program, particularly the league's stand on utility regulation. Public utility corporations and their aldermanic allies in Chicago were stymied in 1898 by something like -- as reformers at the time put it -- "an outraged public opinion." In St. Louis the situation was otherwise. The St. Louis Civic Federation was wrecked in 1897 because of party factionalism and its links to public utility corporations. By 1898, while Chicagoans of all classes were angrily discussing the details of complex franchise extension ordinances, St. Louis citizens were sleeping through the biggest franchise "grab" in that city's history.

The newspapers reflected but also anticipated these divergent paths of reform. From the early 1890s, the St. Louis papers had been more partisan, more competitive, more tied to utility interests than the papers of Chicago. Long before the franchise fights of 1898, the major Chicago newspapers had saturated their readers with information and commentary on all the sundry problems of utility growth and regulation. The St. Louis papers for years had been less interested in utility matters, less hostile to utility corporations (especially to utility managers personally), and less consistent and unified in their portrayal of the utility question. The Chicago papers were generally allied on issues of municipal reform; the St. Louis papers were not. Issues were politicized and voters were informed and infuriated in Chicago; in St. Louis they were not.

The mass-circulation newspapers of the 1890s seem to have had a symbiotic relationship with the new political movements. Press attempts to influence elections without the support of effective political organizations usually failed. Yet these new organizations were equally ineffective without the press. They depended upon newspapers as substitutes for the complex interpersonal communication networks of the political party machine. Quite frequently the newspapers were enthusiastic allies of the new urban reformers, for they had long been interested in and had long promoted issues and political tactics and style that became the "new politics" of the 1890s. When the new politics was successful, as it was in Chicago, it suggested what would become in the twentieth century the modern form of urban politics. It also suggested, indeed it was the origin of, modern political communication.

# # #

Approved by:

Harold L. Nelson

Professor Harold L. Nelson

5/23/79

Date

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1979

PREFACE

This thesis grew out of an effort to make sense of, or at least apology for, a somewhat desultory and dilettantish graduate school career. At one time or another, from 1970 to 1979, I have been interested in Progressive Era politics, municipal socialism, municipal utility regulation, federal regulatory policy making, journalism and newspaper history, communication theory, community power, and half a dozen other things. Some of these things come into play, to some purpose I hope, in this dissertation.

Several people and institutions helped and supported me along the way. I am grateful to a long line of college instructors, ending with Professors Harold L. Nelson and Stanley K. Schultz, of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who read and criticized the dissertation as it developed. The U.W. School of Journalism and Mass Communication gave me financial support for more years than most academic departments consider seemly. The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation provided a dissertation fellowship that allowed me the time to finish the work. The resources of the following libraries were indispensable: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the Chicago Historical Society, the Newberry Library of Chicago, the Chicago Public Library, the Missouri Historical Society of St. Louis, the St. Louis Public Library, the St. Louis County

Library, and the libraries of the University of Wisconsin, Washington University, St. Louis University, and the University of Chicago. The Inter-Library Loan Department of Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin, was always very helpful, as well as clever. I am especially grateful to Lee Products Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota, the manufacturers of "SORTKWIK, the Original Fingertip Moistener" -- the most useful and dependable data processing tool I have ever discovered.

My wife, Martha, and my three-year-old daughter, Molly, regularly distracted me from the task at hand, which I very much appreciated -- most of the time.

# # #

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ii

INTRODUCTION. 1

CHAPTER

I. The New Politics and Public Opinion 10

II. A Communication Model of Reform Politics. 26

III. Two Cities and Their Newspapers 49

IV. Reformers and Newspapers, 1890-1893 86

V. Reformers and Newspapers, 1894-1896 132

VI. Reformers and Newspapers, 1897-1899 187

VII. Municipal Progressivism, 1900 254

CONCLUSION. 288

APPENDIX I: A Note on the Content Analysis 294

APPENDIX II: Tables on Newspaper Content 306

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY 314

# # #

INTRODUCTION

These were Tweed days in St. Louis, a city so debauched and degraded that it stood unashamed in its own corruption. Boodle was the business of government, and the best citizens, the merchants and financiers, systematically looted the city of public franchises and privileges worth millions. The Municipal Assembly was packed with callous bribe-takers and sandbaggers, lacking in common morality and even mentality, save for a base, animal cunning. The newspapers protested sporadically, but their accounts were written in the spirit of burlesque. The citizens of the city looked away, uninformed and uninterested. "St. Louis, rich, dirty, and despoiled, was busy with business."[1]

Meanwhile, St. Louis' great rival Chicago, though loud, lawless, and unlovely, was half free and fighting on. There, too, the big men and the big interests had plundered the city of priceless public franchises. But then Chicago beat the boodlers. And Chicago reform was real reform, not moral fits and starts that do not last. In Chicago the newspapers, the best in any large city, joined with practical reformers to help forge an enlightened, aggressive public opinion. The people were aroused, and they would not be fooled or deterred.

"Reform that reforms, slow, sure, political, democratic reform, by the people, for the people. That is what Chicago has."[2]

* * *

These sketches of St. Louis and Chicago in the 1890s are, of course, those of Lincoln Steffens, immortalized in his famous series of articles, The Shame of the Cities, first published in 1902-03. This series had an enormous influence at the time (William Allen White said it "has done for American cities what De Tocqueville did for the country a hundred years ago"[3]), and its influence persisted, in one form or another, shaping the way twentieth-century Americans have thought about cities at the turn of the century. Here were the stereotypes: Democracy is in crisis; special privilege has replaced the public good; bosses rule for private gain; political parties are the tools of grafters; businessmen are more venal than the politicians; yet the people, once aroused, can rise up and defeat the Enemies of the Republic. The work of Steffens and of his less talented imitators was appealing then and now because it took the form of objective, empirical, even scientific description; yet it was rooted in an essentially moral understanding of man and an optimistic faith in democracy.[4]

Much of the effort of historians of American urban politics has been to modify or dispel the Steffens vision. Where Steffens saw honesty versus dishonesty in the struggle for municipal reform, historians have seen instead a complex political power struggle

between economic classes or between geographical sections of the city.[5] Where Steffens saw a genuine distinction between the social values and aims of the reformer and the political boss, historians have seen only a blur.[6] And where Steffens saw the urban political boss and machine subverting the will of the people, historians have seen the machine as a functional social institution serving its constituents' material needs and reflecting their political and cultural priorities.[7] Perhaps the ultimate in revisionism has been reached in Leo Hershkowitz' recent book, Tweed's New York: Another Look, in which the much-maligned Tammany boss comes across as something of a progressive, businesslike, economy-minded administrator and philanthropist.[8] Though Hershkowitz surely goes too far, historians have correctly reacted against the moral stridency, class bias, and seemingly naive faith in democracy of early twentieth-century commentators on municipal government, including Steffens. In the process they have done much to rehabilitate the political boss and to explain the sources of his appeal and power.[9]

Revisionism, however, tends always to caricature its foil. By concentrating their fire on an exaggerated portrayal of the moralism and pro-reform bias of early students of municipal government, historians have neglected some other very interesting elements of the Steffens critique. Though heavy laden with value judgment and journalistic hyperbole, the opening two paragraphs of this "Introduction" suggest several important things about cities in the 1890s: First, the problems of big cities were similar, having much to do

with the provision of physical services through franchises and contracts with private business. Second, the competition for these franchises and contracts was the single greatest source of governmental corruption and misrule. Third, though cities had similar problems, they reacted to them in different ways. And, finally, the different ways cities reacted had something to do with public opinion.

This dissertation takes these suggestions seriously. It is a study of how reformers confronted similar problems in the 1890s in two major cities, Chicago and St. Louis, and of why reformers were fairly successful in one city but not in the other. The study rests on the belief that it is at least as important to understand successful reform politics as it is to understand why machine bosses were successful. In fact, it may be more important. Though reformers were never completely successful and though vestiges of old-fashioned boss rule lingered in many cities in the twentieth century, reform-style politics and reform programs eventually came to dominate virtually every American city.[10] Thus, to study the elements of successful urban reform politics in the 1890s is in some ways to study the origin of modern political organization.

Every organization or movement is held together by communication, and the communication component of the new reform politics of the 1890s will be the central concern of this study. I will suggest that a critical element in the creation of new forms of urban political reform organizations in the 1890s was the use of the new mass

circulation newspapers. Newspapers did not conduct successful political movements on their own. But they lent their support to and were used by successful reformers in decidedly modern ways, and sometimes they led the way. Reformers learned to use mass communication, largely through newspapers, to make up in part for the lack of the elaborate interpersonal communication networks of the political machine. But successful reformers also learned that mass communication is only useful when complemented by the interpersonal communication of direct political organization. Newspapers, then as now, appear to have played mainly an information and agenda-setting role. Political persuasion and action came about in the interplay between mass and interpersonal communication. Thus, to study the role of newspapers in successful urban reform politics in the 1890s is in some ways to study the origin of modern political communication.

This study is rooted in three different lines of historical interpretation and social research. First, it is an outgrowth of the work of David Thelen, John Buenker, and other recent historians who have discerned in the 1890s an emerging "new politics" based upon broadly based and usually shifting political coalitions. My contribution is an attempt to show <u>how</u>, in some cases at least, successful coalition building was done. Second, this study is informed by the work of Robert Ezra Park, Richard Hofstadter, and others on the role of urban newspapers in the creation of common political reality in an increasingly complex and fragmented society. My aim is to try to isolate this effect in a formative historical period. Third, this

study is in some ways a study of political agenda setting and is conceived as part of an ongoing effort in communication research to study the informational (as opposed to the persuasive) effects of mass media. Chapters I and II elaborate these themes and develop a communication model of reform politics.

The empirical base of this dissertation is two case studies of urban newspapers and reform politics in the 1890s. I chose Chicago and St. Louis because they were the two principal cities of the Midwest, and because they exhibited similarities and differences, along the lines suggested by Lincoln Steffens, that seemed to beg comparison. The focus is on the structure and style of reform organizations and on the editorial policies and news reporting practices of leading newspapers.

The evidence comes from manuscript collections and published materials on reform politics, and from a day-by-day reading of the two leading newspapers of each city and a more cursory reading of other important papers. The four main papers are the Chicago Daily News and Tribune and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and Globe-Democrat. In addition to the day-by-day reading, I carried out a systematic content analysis of a sample of issues to measure the amount of coverage each paper gave to key local issues. The content analysis method is described in Appendix I. The results are summarized in the tables in Appendix II and are referred to from time to time in footnotes to the text. The design of the study is comparative, with key comparisons within each city and each newspaper over time and

between cities and newspapers at specific times.

The general economic and political characteristics of the two cities and their newspapers are summarized in Chapter III. Chapters IV through VI provide a detailed history of reform politics and newspapers in Chicago and St. Louis in the 1890s. Chapter VII describes the state of municipal reform politics in Chicago and St. Louis and several other Midwestern cities at the turn of the century.

Chicago and St. Louis are not the whole world, of course, and communication is not the whole of politics. Generalization based on two case studies does not inspire great confidence, and generalization is further hampered here by the meager and uncertain character of historical data on phenomena such as public opinion.[11] But suggestion, conjecture, and plausibility have their place in the scholarly scheme of things. In writing about causation in history and economics recently, Peter McClelland said that one test of a satisfactory causal explanation is that it makes the reader sit back and say, "Now that's what I call a satisfactory causal explanation."[12] I'm not sure if this is a modest or an impossibly difficult standard. But to meet it is the goal of this dissertation.

# # #

NOTES ON THE INTRODUCTION

[1]Lincoln Steffens, "Tweed Days in St. Louis" and "The Shamelessness of St. Louis," in The Shame of the Cities (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957). Quote is from p. 98.

[2]Lincoln Steffens, "Chicago: Half Free and Fighting On," in The Shame of the Cities. Quote is from p. 164.

[3]William Allen White, "Editorial," McClure's, 23 (June, 1904), 220-21. See also Justin Kaplan, Lincoln Steffens: A Biography (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), p. 130.

[4]Stanley K. Schultz, "The Morality of Politics: The Muckrakers' Vision of Democracy," Journal of American History, 52 (Dec., 1965), 527-47; David P. Thelen, "Lincoln Steffens and the Muckrakers: A Review Essay," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 58 (Summer, 1975), 313-17.

[5]See, for example, Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 55 (Oct., 1964), 157-69; James Weinstein, "Organized Business and the City Commission and Manager Movements," Journal of Southern History, 28 (May, 1962), 166-82; Richard C. Wade, "Urbanization," in The Comparative Approach to American History, ed. by C. Vann Woodward (New York: Basic Books, 1968). See also James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

[6]See, for example, Alexander B. Callow, "Commentary," in The City Boss in America: An Interpretive Reader (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Lyle W. Dorsett, "The City Boss and the Reformer," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 63 (Oct., 1972), 150-54; Otis A. Pease, "Urban Reformers in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 62 (April, 1971), 49-58; J. Joseph Huthmacher, "Urban Liberalism in the Age of Reform," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 49 (Sept., 1962), 321-41; Zane Miller, Boss Cox's Cincinnati (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

This theme is paramount in several recent anthologies on urban political history. See Callow, City Boss in America; Blaine A. Brownell and Warren Stickle, eds., Bosses and Reformers: Urban Politics in America, 1880-1920 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); Bruce M. Stave, ed., Urban Bosses, Machines, and Progressive

Reformers (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1972); Michael H. Ebner and Eugene M. Tobin, eds., The Age of Urban Reform: New Perspectives on the Progressive Era (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977).

[7]See, for example, John M. Allswang, Bosses, Machines, and Urban Voters: An American Symbiosis (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977), pp. 32-35; Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (New York: Macmillan, 1957); Eric L. McKitrick, "The Study of Corruption," Political Science Quarterly, 72 (Dec., 1957), 502-14; Monte Calvert, "The Manifest Functions of the Machine," in Urban Bosses, Machines, and Progressive Reformers, ed. by Bruce Stave. See also Charles N. Glaab and A. Theodore Brown, A History of Urban America (New York: Macmillan, 1967), chapter 8.

[8]Leo Hershkowitz, Tweed's New York: Another Look (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1977). For a good review of Hershkowitz' book see Ari and Olive Hoogenboom, "Was Boss Tweed Really Snow White?" Reviews in American History, 5 (Sept., 1977), 360-66.

[9]For a fair summary of early studies of the political machines as well as a statement of the current consensus on political bossism see Allswang, Bosses, Machines, and Urban Voters.

[10]Theodore J. Lowi, "Machine Politics--Old and New," The Public Interest, 9 (Fall, 1967), 83-92; Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, City Politics (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), p. 148; James Q. Wilson, "Politics and Reform in American Cities," in American Government Annual, 1962-63, ed. by Ivan Hinderaker (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962). See also Chapter I.

[11]On the possibilities yet serious difficulties of studying public opinion in history, see Lee Benson, "An Approach to the Scientific Study of Past Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, 31 (Winter, 1967), 522-67.

[12]Peter D. McClelland, Causal Explanations and Model Building in History, Economics, and the New Economic History (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 80. See also Paul Reynolds' discussion of a "sense of understanding" in A Primer on Theory Construction (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), pp. 7, 151-53; and Arthur Stinchcombe talks about "the guts of the phenomenon" in Constructing Social Theories (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p. v.

# # #

CHAPTER I

THE NEW POLITICS AND PUBLIC OPINION

Reformers "were only mornin' glories," sniffed Tammany's George Washington Plunkitt at the turn of the century. "Looked lovely in the mornin' and withered up in a short time, while the regular machines went on flourishin' forever, like fine old oaks."[1] Plunkitt's Chicago counterpart, "Bathhouse John" Coughlin, used a different image but said the same thing several years earlier when he scoffed at the newly formed Municipal Voters' League: "This new movement is the mist which rises skyward before one's eyes."[2]

Like the stereotype of the old-time urban politician, which their careers helped to form, Plunkitt and Coughlin were full of folk wisdom and poetry. But in this case they were wrong. Beginning somewhere around the 1890s, reform took root, and in the twentieth century it was reform, not the Tammany-style machine, that grew into the fine old oak.[3] This fact is frequently lost sight of by historians who either pay too much attention to the failure of certain specific reform schemes or, at the other extreme, to the overall poor quality of city life.[4] It is true that the commission and city manager plans, proportional representation, absolute nonpartisanship, and a collection of other structural changes promoted by turn-of-the-century reformers have failed in large cities. It is also true that

municipal administration in large cities is still sometimes corrupt, usually dominated by special interests, and always more or less inefficient. And it is true that cities are still ugly, dirty, and broke. But key elements of reform have succeeded in many cities, including civil service, primary and other election reforms, municipal budget and accounting reform, stronger mayoralty, utility regulation, and even nonpartisanship. While charters and laws requiring nonpartisan elections and insulating officials and bureaucrats from partisan pressures have not eliminated politics from city government, these reforms have greatly reduced the role of national party politics and have encouraged local issue-oriented political systems in most cities. This is really all most reformers of the 1890s meant when they talked of taking "politics" out of government. This kind of "new politics" may well be the most important reform legacy of all.

An appreciation of the success of a reform orientation or style in urban politics, regardless of the success or failure of specific plans or programs, suggests that the key to progressivism in the cities may lie more with an understanding of changes in political organization than with changes in political or moral philosophy, policy, or program. How the mists of reform became substance may be more important than what that substance was. But discussion of reform in this era has focused much more on proposals of reformers than on the politics of reform, and this emphasis has contributed mightily to the perplexing diversity of interpretations of the

Progressive Era in American history.

Over the past fifty years, scholars looking at different issues and different reform proposals have portrayed progressivism as a continuation of agrarian radicalism,[5] as an essentially urban movement led by a declining middle class,[6] as a movement led by a rising middle class,[7] as an efficiency movement led by professionals and bureaucrats,[8] as a democratic movement of lower-class immigrant groups,[9] and as a conservative, upper-class movement against popular democracy.[10] The cacophony of interpretations finally led one historian, Peter Filene, to argue that "the more historians learn, the farther they move from consensus" and that the truth of the matter may very well be that "'the progressive movement' never existed."[11]

Filene's "obituary for 'the progressive movement'" came at an auspicious time. Other historians in the late 1960s and early 1970s were also coming to the conclusion that progressivism was much too varied and complex to categorize as "a movement" or to tag with a single theme or label.[12] In recent years, general accounts of the period have tended to stress the manifold diversity of progressivism and late-nineteenth century reform.[13] Similarly, much of the best recent scholarship on the Progressive Era has been monographic literature on specific issues, specific groups, and specific localities. We now have valuable studies of the settlement house movement and the role of the social worker in early progressivism,[14] of progressive education,[15] of prohibition and feminism,[16] of labor unionism

and socialism,[17] of ethnic politics,[18] of progressivism in cities and states,[19] and many other facets of the period.

Though most historians would probably agree that progressivism is somehow rooted in the mushrooming cities of the late nineteenth century,[20] urban historians in recent years have more and more turned their attention away from the study of politics and political institutions and toward such topics as the social and geographical mobility patterns of nineteenth-century city residents and the spatial development of manufacturing, transportation, and housing.[21] Recent political studies have been largely demographic analyses of voting in cities or reassessments of the role of the urban boss.[22]

One way out of this muddle of conflicting interpretations may be to focus more on political style and organization rather than specific issues -- on politics itself rather than political programs. Issues are important, of course, but perhaps more important is how issues emerged and how they were developed in a changing political system. The rise of a new kind of issue-oriented, group politics is perhaps of more lasting interest than the rise or fall of specific issues or interest groups. Robert Wiebe has argued that at the heart of progressivism is "modernization" in all its complexity.[23] Perhaps progressivism, especially in the cities, can be understood as the emergence of modern political organization. The outlines of such an understanding have already been drawn by John Buenker and David Thelen.

II

Buenker argues that the key to the Progressive Era is the idea of "shifting coalitions."[24] The diversity of political, social, and cultural goals of people and groups during this period makes it impossible to speak of a monolithic progressive movement. It was the movement idea that Filene sought to bury with his obituary. He wrote that "the progressive era seems to be characterized by shifting coalitions around different issues, with the specific nature of these coalitions varying on federal, state, and local levels, from region to region, and from the first to the second decades of the century."[25] This is also Buenker's theme. An issue-by-issue, state-by-state, or city-by-city survey of political activity in these years shows first the conflict and diversity of progressivism and then, just as clearly, the operation of coalition politics.[26]

This, of course, sounds more like a definition of politics in general than of progressivism in particular, but Buenker makes a strong argument that the politics of progressivism was a "new politics," the product of a new group-oriented organizational society. Relying heavily on the pioneering work of Samuel Hays, Buenker portrays the progressive era as "the response of Americans from nearly all walks of life to the conditions wrought by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration."[27] These great forces had a profoundly disorienting and disintegrating impact in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and people responded in the traditional American way -- by organizing. If the environment lacked

order, they would impose what order they could through voluntary association.[28] They came to believe, as Samuel Hays put it, that they must "organize or perish."[29] The urge to organize flowed through the society from top to bottom, perhaps more than in any previous era. Capitalists formed trusts, workers formed unions, professionals formed occupational associations, farmers formed alliances and co-ops, immigrants formed benevolent societies, reformers formed leagues and federations and associations of all sorts. At first most groups practiced and believed in voluntary action. But eventually, Buenker says, most turned to politics.[30]

As the political arena filled with these diverse, conflicting groups, compromise and coalition became imperative. A single group could never hope to achieve success unless it could sell its program to other groups. Some coalitions were fragile and short-lived, uniting generally hostile groups whose interests in a particular piece of legislation only momentarily crossed. Other coalitions were more stable, held together for years by an interest in general categories of issues such as welfare legislation, regulation of business, recognition of organized labor, taxation, political restructuring, and cultural conformity.[31] The issues involved in this political system were as varied as the groups that promoted them. The similarities lay in organization and style.

In the end, Buenker says, the issue-oriented coalition politics of this era "perished on the shoals of cultural reform."[32] Ethnic, religious, and cultural divisions destroyed the coalitions that had

been built on cross-class, cross-cultural socioeconomic and political issues. Yet in Buenker's judgment the real contribution of the Progressive Era was not lost. A modern political system had emerged which provided a framework and a precedent for managing social change in a pluralist society. "It is that process," Buenker writes, "rather than any specific reform measures that constitutes the most important legacy of the Progressive Era."[33]

David Thelen describes in detail the development of this kind of coalition politics in one state, Wisconsin. Thelen argues that the interesting question about progressivism is not what pulled people apart, but what pulled them together. Though Wisconsin's population was fragmented along religious, cultural, and economic lines, men and women, faced with common problems of industrial-urban life, were able to join together as citizens, taxpayers, and consumers.[34] It was the Depression of 1893-97, in Thelen's view, that precipitated this change. Everyone, regardless of class background, was threatened by local problems brought on by the depression. Declining public services, high taxes, loss of jobs and income, unsafe water -- these were concrete issues that could and did unite people of all classes.[35]

In Thelen's view, progressivism began in the cities. People joined together in political coalitions because they lived together and suffered together as victims of the same tainted water, high-priced streetcars, dirty streets, unsafe railroad crossings, deteriorating schools, and a host of other urban ills intensified by the

crisis of 1893-97. They united to fight against common enemies, such as public utility companies, and to fight for common goals, such as increased taxation of large corporations.[36] Though diluted later at the state level, this early urban progressivism in Wisconsin was genuinely radical. The struggle against public utility corporations, especially, proceeded from demands for such minor changes as lower rates to radical economic programs such as municipal ownership and corporate income tax and radical political programs such as the direct primary, the initiative, and home rule.[37]

But Thelen is as much impressed by the style of the new politics as by the results. Building broad, cross-class coalitions required a new kind of "mass politics." The urban progressives, he says, "were trying to build a new political style in which mass pressure -- protest meetings, petition campaigns, newspapers -- would break through the old political practices of patronage, caucuses, and established leadership."[38] This was a "new politics" of issues and ideology rather than of parties and partisan loyalty. In Milwaukee in particular, where the fight over a street railway franchise provided the burning issue, this new political style was largely successful. The old political system was not destroyed, but reformers proved the toughness of the new politics. And the Milwaukee experience guided progressive coalition-builders all over Wisconsin.[39]

A key feature of the new politics was mass communication. "If older politicians preferred the quiet of caucuses and legislative

corridors," Thelen writes, "insurgent progressives relied on techniques of mass communication. They knew that the new -- and truly popular -- newspapers that sprang up in the 1890s reached citizens across social barriers." Reformers sought and usually won the support of editors in their fights against tax-dodgers and arrogant corporations. They also rallied popular support with mass meetings, public lectures, reform leagues, and petition campaigns. In Wisconsin at least, according to Thelen, "the new agencies of mass communication, which transcended social backgrounds, would lead voters to reject their ethnic and job identities in favor of their common identities as consumers and taxpayers."[40]

III

The "new politics" described by Buenker and Thelen depended upon the interplay of political organization and mass communication. The new reformers of the 1890s sought to organize certain issues into the urban political system. They often talked of taking "politics" out of municipal government, but in fact what they wanted to do was to replace what they believed were irrelevant national party slogans with the real issues of the local impact of urbanization. Though they may have believed that municipal administration could be made nonpolitical in some sense, their first step was to politicize city life in general, that is to force the leading problems of urban life onto the political agenda. To push these issues, the new reformers developed two very modern political techniques. They formed issue-

oriented pressure groups and coalitions, and they used new forms of mass communication to cut through old political alliances, to stir up a broadly based public opinion, and to redirect the attention of citizens from personal and private concerns to issues of general, city-wide significance.

Mass communication, in the form of big city newspapers, lies at the heart of the new politics, and newspapers were taken very seriously by all political actors in the 1890s. In their struggles for power, reformers believed in public opinion and believed that the newspapers were indispensable allies. Those who fought reform also believed in public opinion and denounced, sued, and even bought newspapers that opposed them. Public opinion, public sentiment, and public interest were meaningful terms in the 1890s, used by those who practiced the new mass politics and by those who feared and fought it. Historians, on the other hand, have generally found less use for these terms. This neglect is understandable given the nature of historical evidence, or lack of it, on public attitudes and beliefs. But it is unfortunate, too, for changes in the way the public became caught up in urban politics in the 1890s may be the most important legacy of municipal progressivism.

Not all historians have neglected the role of mass communication and public opinion in late nineteenth-century urban politics, and, of course, political scientists and communication researchers are centrally concerned with the role of political communication in our own time. Though largely at loose ends, these threads of historical

interpretation and political theory can be tied together to form a communication model of reform politics.

# # #

NOTES ON CHAPTER I

[1]William L. Riordon, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1963), p. 17.

[2]Chicago Tribune, Jan. 13, 1896, p. 6.

[3]This argument grows out of Theodore J. Lowi, "Machine Politics -- Old and New," The Public Interest, 9 (Fall, 1967), 83-92; Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, City Politics (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), pp. 138-50; and Kenneth Fox, Better City Government: Innovation in American Urban Politics, 1850-1937 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1977). See also Murray S. Stedman, Jr., Urban Politics (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1972), pp. 123-27; Ernest S. Griffith, A History of American City Government: The Progressive Years and Their Aftermath, 1900-1920 (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974).

[4]See, for example, Richard Abrams, "The Failure of Progressivism" in The Shaping of Twentieth-Century America, ed. by Richard Abrams and Lawrence W. Levine (2nd ed.; Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971).

[5]John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1931); George E. Mowry, Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1947).

[6]George E. Mowry, The California Progressives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951); George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 1900-1912 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958); Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955).

[7]Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

[8]Martin J. Schiesl, The Politics of Efficiency (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964). See also the essays in Jerry Israel, ed., Building the Organizational Society (New York: The Free Press, 1972).

[9]J. Joseph Huthmacher, "Urban Liberalism in the Age of Reform," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 49 (Sept., 1962), 321-41; John D. Buenker, Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform (New York: Scribners, 1973).

[10]Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 55 (Oct., 1964), 157-69; James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968); Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

[11]Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" American Quarterly, 22 (Spring, 1970), 20 and 28. See also Daniel Levine, Varieties of Progressive Thought (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964).

[12]See, for example, John D. Buenker, "The Progressive Era: A Search for a Synthesis," Mid-America, 51 (July, 1969); David P. Thelen, "Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism," Journal of American History, 56 (Sept., 1969), 323-41; and David M. Kennedy, "Overview: The Progressive Years," The Historian, 37 (May, 1975), 453-68.

[13]See, for example, Robert H. Wiebe, "The Progressive Years, 1900-1917," in The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture, ed. by William H. Cartwright and Richard L. Watson, Jr. (Washington: National Council for the Social Studies, 1973); William L. O'Neill, The Progressive Years (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1975); Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., Progressivism in America (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974); John D. Buenker, et al., Progressivism (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1977); Lewis Gould, ed., The Progressive Era (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974).

[14]Allen F. Davis, Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlement and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); Roy Lubove, The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963); Roy Lubove, The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).

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[18]Humbert S. Nelli, Italians in Chicago, 1880-1930 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Moses Rischin, The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962); John M. Allswang, A House for All Peoples: Ethnic Politics in Chicago, 1890-1936 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971).

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[20]Richard C. Wade, "Forward," in Reform in Detroit, p. vii. This notion was recognized in 1915 by Benjamin Parke DeWitt who called the city "the workshop, the experiment station of democracy." See The Progressive Movement (New York: Macmillan, 1915), p. 278. See also Frederic C. Howe, The City: The Hope of Democracy (New York: Scribners, 1905).

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[23]Wiebe, "The Progressive Years," pp. 425-26.

[24]Buenker, Progressivism, p. 31. See also Buenker, Urban Liberalism, pp. 217-21; and Buenker, "The Progressive Era: A Search for Synthesis."

[25]Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" p. 33.

[26]Buenker, Progressivism, pp. 48-49.

[27]Buenker, Urban Liberalism, p. 218; Buenker, Progressivism, pp. 35-36. See also Samuel P. Hays, The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

[28]Buenker, Progressivism, pp. 43-44; Buenker, Urban Liberalism, p. 219.

[29]Hays, Response to Industrialism, p. 48. See also Wiebe, Search for Order; and Samuel Hays, "Introduction: The New Organizational Society," in Building the Organizational Society, ed. by Jerry Israel.

[30]Buenker, Progressivism, p. 45; Buenker, Urban Liberalism, pp. 219-20.

[31]Buenker, Progressivism, p. 49.

[32]Ibid., p. 62.

[33]Ibid., p. 63.

[34]Thelen, The New Citizenship, p. 288. See also Thelen, Robert M. LaFollette and the Insurgent Spirit (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1976), pp. 23-25.

[35]Thelen, The New Citizenship, p. 310.

[36]Ibid., p. 290.

[37]Ibid., p. 312.

[38]Ibid., p. 168.

[39]Ibid., pp. 282-98. Buenker thinks Thelen over-estimates the strength and durability of such consumer coalitions. See Buenker, Progressivism, p. 43. Clay McShane thinks Thelen over-estimates the success of the Milwaukee progressive coalition. See Clay McShane, Technology and Reform: Street Railways and the Growth of Milwaukee, 1887-1900 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1974), chapters 7-8.

[40]Thelen, LaFollette and the Insurgent Spirit, p. 26.

# # #

CHAPTER II

A COMMUNICATION MODEL OF REFORM POLITICS

"The function of the newspaper in a well-ordered society," Delos Wilcox wrote in 1900, "is to control the state through the authority of facts, not to drive nations and social classes headlong into war through the power of passion and prejudice."[1] Wilcox, an academic municipal reformer and public utility expert, nicely captured in this single sentence the paradoxical love-hate attitude of many reformers toward the press in the 1890s. They feared the power of an irresponsible "yellow press" to beguile the unthinking masses with fakes, libels, and sensations. Yet they believed in democracy, they trusted public opinion, and they clamored for facts, facts, and more facts. They recognized, though only dimly, that newspapers can have different kinds of influence. They can persuade or fool through argument or bombast, or they can, much more subtly, shape a reader's whole frame of reference by providing him the essential materials -- facts and perspectives -- with which he must construct his social reality.

Progressives believed that the truth would set men free. They were elitists in their conviction that they knew what truth was, but often they were democrats in their faith that truth could, should, and would have meaning only through public opinion and majority rule.

Even many of the academic reformers, the so-called "experts" such as Delos Wilcox, believed that grass-roots democracy and home rule must lie at the heart of municipal reform. Wilcox wrote his books and gave his lectures, on such esoteric topics as public utility franchises, because he hoped to provide the factual basis for public opinion, to "kindle a fire under every sleepy citizen till even the street gamins, the club women and the great merchants on Broadway know what a franchise signifies."[2] And Wilcox was not unique. A whole generation of reformers grew up who viewed the problems of modern life as information problems, problems that could be solved through the scientific gathering, ordering, and application of facts. Yet for many of them, these problems remained political problems, for they could be solved only when the facts were known and acted upon by the people.[3]

Newspapermen shared these beliefs. "Reporters in the 1890s," writes Michael Schudson, "saw themselves, in part, as scientists uncovering the economic and political facts of industrial life more boldly, more clearly, and more 'realistically' than anyone had done before."[4] In this they were part of the general wave of realism and empiricism that washed into all corners of American intellectual life in the 1890s, into literature, art, natural science, and social science. Journalists talked of "a scientific method of reporting" the way other new professionals linked their occupations to the new social sciences.[5] Of course, most journalists also still believed in the power of opinion, and the editorial page remained the

centerpiece of most newspapers. But even editorials were increasingly concerned more with practical, factual problems than with speculative political philosophy. Like many progressives, newspapermen believed that the bare facts were what the people wanted and needed. They themselves felt free from moralism, hypocrisy, and sham, and they were confident that the facts alone would provide their readers with all the moral direction they needed.[6] "Facts," said reporter Ray Stannard Baker, "facts piled up to the point of dry certitude, was what the American people really wanted."[7]

Contemporary critics of the role of the press in society were also impressed by the power of information. Frequently, these critics professed to believe that American newspapers in the 1890s had lost their ability to influence readers directly because of their turn toward sensationalism and commercialism.[8] Generally elitist and condescending in tone, the critics denounced the new mass circulation newspapers as vulgar and degrading. "If the average American journalist ever had such a thing as a conscience," The Dial commented in 1897, "it was killed long ago, and its place taken by a simulacrum of hypocritical accent and leering mien."[9] Critics hated these new papers, because the critics believed in democracy. They wanted desperately to believe that these new sensational newspapers lacked the kind of editorial influence wielded by such great old editors as Greeley, Raymond, and Bennett the elder.

Yet running through almost all of this criticism was a thread of understanding that the real influence of newspapers lay somehow with

facts and information, not with editorial opinion. Sometimes this understanding was largely implicit. In 1895, sociologist Jeremiah Jenks made the typical argument that the large commercial newspapers had lost most of their influence. Yet he obviously was speaking only of editorial influence, for he quickly added that people got nearly all of their facts and information from newspapers, either directly or indirectly.[10] Francis Leupp, a newsman and an advisor to Theodore Roosevelt, made the point more clearly that the control of facts themselves was a form of "indirect influence." Even though public confidence in the press had declined in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Leupp argued, "the influence of the press, through its ability to keep certain subjects always before its readers, has grown with its growth in resources and patronage. . . . So the constant iteration of any idea in a daily newspaper will presently capture public attention, whether the idea be good or bad, sensible or foolish."[11] The news could not be avoided in modern urban life, and the newspaper was everywhere. "Early every morning it blockades one's door, asking to be read."[12]

Oddly, journalism historians have paid scant attention to the information function of newspapers or to the role of newspapers in progressive politics. The muckraking reporters of the national magazines after the turn of the century have not been neglected, probably because they had the foresight and self-esteem to write volumes about themselves.[13] Accounts of the great dailies of the 1890s, however, while loaded with suggestive detail, generally lack

a communication perspective. Most journalism histories of the period are either very general surveys or biographies of great newspapers and their great publishers. The general surveys indicate that newspapers in the 1890s often came from a tradition of boosterism and mugwump reform. Reform crusades played an increasingly important role in the "new journalism" introduced by Joseph Pulitzer and E.W. Scripps.[14] None of these surveys, however, attempts to define the function or impact of the newspapers' involvement with reform politics. Reform crusades are portrayed as circulation builders, as part of the "yellow journalism" of the period. There is a recognition that the new mass journalism of the 1890s somehow played a role in forging a sense of community in the new, sprawling, polyglot metropolises.[15] But how and why the papers served this function, particularly in the area of municipal reform and reform politics, is only vaguely hinted at. Most of the attention of journalism historians has been lavished upon the New York papers and the Spanish-American War. Biographies of newspapers and publishers go into the involvement of specific papers in municipal politics in much greater depth.[16] Yet these works suffer even more than the general surveys from a lack of theoretical or conceptual organization, a lack of a communication perspective, and a lack of acquaintance with the basic historical literature of urbanization, municipal government, and early progressivism.

The most thoughtful, though sketchy, comments by a historian on the information function of newspapers probably remain those of

Richard Hofstadter. Hofstadter speaks of a new role for the daily newspaper press in the great, growing cities of the late nineteenth century. As city life became more complex, fragmented, and impersonal, newspapers began to undertake the task of "creating a mental world for the uprooted farmers and villagers who were coming to live in the city." The newspaper became not only a means for interpreting this new impersonal environment "but a means of surmounting in some measure its vast human distances, of supplying a sense of intimacy all too rare in the ordinary course of its life." The crusades, the stunts, the human interest stories all drew people together in a common frame of reference. The city itself became the spectacle, the show, that everyone could watch together.[17] The most popular newspapers of the 1890s clearly reflected this function, changing as cities changed. As Michael Schudson points out, they became what has recently been called the "use-paper" -- "the daily journal as a compendium of tips for urban survival."[18]

Much of this kind of general theorizing about the role of the press in the life of the cities is based upon the pioneering work of sociologist Robert Ezra Park. Park's central thesis is that the circulation of news is what makes collective political action possible in a complex modern society. Like Hofstadter and Schudson, Park argued that the real importance of the news is not that it persuades people, but that it provides the urban dweller with a frame of reference -- "it does not so much inform as orient the public, giving each and all notice as to what is going on."[19]

Very few historians or sociologists have followed up on the challenging work of Park and Hofstadter. There has been little empirical historical research to test Park's hypothesis about the role of the press in collective political action, and there has been even less explicit theorizing. One interesting exception is John Erickson's unpublished study of social values in Chicago newspapers, 1890-1910. Erickson finds that over the two decades at the turn of the century "a system loyalty replaced party loyalty" in the values espoused by Chicago papers.[20] In other words, the papers became increasingly interested in loyalty to the larger social system, usually the city, and less interested in political party or small group loyalties. Thus, the press helped to bring together diverse elements of the society in the fashion suggested by Park.[21]

II

Though all of these observations and interpretations are rather vague and speculative, they obviously all share the same insight. It is the insight that mass communication can influence a person indirectly by shaping his frame of reference or general view of the outside world. Strangely enough, it has only been in recent years that social scientists have begun to study just how this indirect, informational influence works. Reformers, journalists, and other political actors of the 1890s believed that information itself was a source of power and influence. Economists, communication researchers, and political scientists now tend to agree, though each group

approaches the problem in a different way.

The simplest way to think about information in a social setting is to view it as a commodity in an economic market. This is the approach taken by nearly everyone who has tried to build a communication model in history. Though the classical market model assumes perfect knowledge, economists have increasingly recognized that information is a scarce commodity like any other and that the supply and demand for information is an important variable that ought to be worked into economic models. This is particularly important for models of historical change in eras when information was even more scarce and costly than it is today.[22] An economic actor must weigh the costs of ignorance against the expense of gaining knowledge. Historical geographers have used this notion to explain some aspects of the growth of cities.[23] Urban agglomeration and spatial proximity offered great economies in the collection and dissemination of information, particularly in the days when communication was usually of necessity face-to-face. This explains in part why urban areas usually showed greater rates of invention and innovation than rural areas in the nineteenth century. Organization theorists have also recognized that the cost of information is a crucial factor in determining the size and effectiveness of an organization, coalition, or business firm. The key management aim is to keep costs down and to design decision-making strategies that will work even when based on partial or faulty information.[24]

About the only historian who has used an information market model

in the study of urban government is Seymour Mandelbaum. Mandelbaum explains the system of political pay-offs in Boss Tweed's New York as a functional substitute for adequate communication.[25] In the 1860s, communication was so poor and information so costly that decision making was necessarily decentralized. Thus, the automatic mechanisms of the marketplace, which give every commodity and every man a price, dominated society. Mandelbaum says that "the market knew only two criteria for choice: 'How much will you pay?' and 'How much do you want?' There appeared to be no other mechanism capable of making decisions on a more complex set of criteria."[26] He also explains how the high costs of information restricted the size and hindered the organization and management of social institutions, including charities, churches, and business firms.[27]

No one has really followed up on Mandelbaum's approach, though scholars have increasingly been impressed by the fragmented, decentralized nature of urban political systems in the late nineteenth century.[28] It seems clear that political structures, including the classic urban political machine, did not just materialize spontaneously because of the ethno-cultural predilections of city voters, as some recent political historians seem almost to suggest. Electoral majorities, then as now, had to be mobilized and disciplined through organization and communication.[29]

The market model of information suggests one way of looking at the "new politics" of the 1890s. The organization of reform groups and political coalitions, particularly across class and ethnic lines,

is a process costly in political resources. Information is especially costly (scarce) in such cases because of the almost complete lack of interpersonal channels of communication. One function of the new mass-circulation newspapers of the 1890s was to reduce greatly the cost of information and hence to aid the task of organization. We might predict that information costs would be reduced in two ways. First, information would be standardized. Indeed, newspapers did tend to focus attention on certain themes and issues, thus creating a shared environment for diverse groups and individuals. Second, the flow of some kinds of information would be speeded up from one group to another. Indeed, the newspapers of the 1890s did serve the function of passing information from one group to another extremely quickly in the midst of a political crisis.

The market model of information, however, is only of limited value. It predicts that a political organization will turn to mass communication if interpersonal communication is too costly. But in fact this may or may not happen, depending upon a host of other factors. The model says nothing about the relative quality or effectiveness of different forms of communication. If nobody pays attention to newspapers, mass communication would be a bad buy no matter how low the cost. The influence and power dimension of politics requires a more subtle understanding of the information function of mass communication.

In the past few years, mass communication researchers have been increasingly sensitive to this influence dimension of information.

Traditionally, due partly to its roots in wartime propaganda studies, mass communication research has been primarily concerned with the direct, overt, persuasive effects of mass media on public attitudes and behavior.[30] Recently, communication researchers have begun to turn their attention away from direct persuasion and toward information, which, despite the inattention of scholars, has always been what every journalist from the 1880s to the present believed to be the primary function of the press.

Communication researchers are still interested in influence, but influence of a different sort. One approach they have taken is to look at the "agenda setting" function of the press.[31] This is the idea that the news media may not be very successful in telling people <u>what</u> to think yet may be quite successful in telling them what to think <u>about</u>.[32] This is an idea that was dear to the hearts of progressive reformers and turn-of-the-century journalists. Political commentator Walter Lippmann expanded the idea into an elaborate theory of public opinion in 1922.[33] Yet it is an idea that was not really tested empirically until the early 1970s.[34]

The agenda-setting hypothesis tested by communication researchers states that the emphasis of mass media coverage will correlate with the importance of these topics in the minds of individuals in the audience. Researchers have used opinion surveys and media content analyses to prepare lists, ordered by decreasing importance, of topics the audience and the media think are significant, usually in an election campaign. These rank-orderings are then compared to see

how well they correlate. The results have been ambiguous.[35] The agenda-setting effect seems to operate with some issues, with some people, under some conditions -- some of the time. Most researchers who have worked in this area believe that the effect is real and perhaps the most important influence that the mass media have in modern life. But the task of building an adequate research program to study it has been hung up by methodological and theoretical snags.

The problem is that there is no sound theoretical reason for caring about the rank-ordering of issues. Just because the media and the public may fail to put the same relative emphasis on an issue does not necessarily mean the media have no agenda-setting influence. The important question may be whether or not an issue appears on the public agenda at all. This is the question that has most concerned political scientists who talk about agenda setting. Unlike communication researchers, they are not much concerned with the relative importance of issues, but rather with how issues get on the public agenda in the first place.[36] In fact, they are often even more interested in how issues are kept <u>off</u> the public agenda.

The political scientists also add the dimension of power to the agenda-setting idea. Communication researchers talk about the influence of the media in setting the public agenda, but they offer no explanation of how and why the media do it. Political scientists view the media as part of a conflict system, where groups contend for political "goods." The news media are important in two ways. They can provide the diverse groups with information about other parts of

the system so that they can intelligently make political decisions. More importantly, the media can expand a small, private conflict or game within the system and give it system-level status. Though the media managers and gatekeepers themselves may not be interested in one side or the other in such a private conflict, and in effect provide impartial information, the media's intrusion into and expansion of the range of public involvement can change the power alignments of the groups involved.[37]

Setting the public agenda, therefore, is an exercise of power that lies at the heart of politics. A classic statement of this view is the idea of "mobilization of bias." Political scientist E.E. Schattschneider writes:

> All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organization is the mobilization of bias. Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out.[38]

The key concept in Schattschneider's view is the scope of political conflict. Some groups want to limit or privatize conflict; others want to expand or socialize it. Typically, he writes, "it is the weak who wish to socialize conflict, i.e., to involve more and more people in the conflict until the balance of forces is changed."[39] It may be in the interest of some groups to get issues on the public agenda, while others may wish to keep them off.

Much of the research and debate within political science has been concerned with the negative side of agenda setting: how issues are suppressed. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz have developed a

theory of what they call "non-decision making." A non-decision is the suppression of a challenge to the interests of the decision-makers before that challenge is able to take shape as a full-blown political issue, before it achieves public agenda status. They argue that pluralist community power studies have ignored this indirect and more subtle face of power.[40] Their critics have charged that the Bachrach and Baratz approach is of little value, because "non-issues" that never become issues and "non-decisions" that never become decisions cannot be studied empirically.[41]

But the "mobilization of bias" idea can just as well be seen at work in positive agenda setting, that is, what items do get on the public agenda.[42] This process is what Roger Cobb and Charles Elder have called "issue expansion."[43] They explain how an issue is expanded from an "identification group" to wider and wider publics, and how an issue moves from private conflict to "the systemic agenda of controversy" and finally to "formal agenda standing." They suggest that the symbols and language a group uses provide clues to the group's intentions of either expanding or restricting conflict. The more general the symbols, the more likely the group is trying for broader appeal and issue expansion.[44] One of the few attempts to study issue expansion and issue suppression empirically is Matthew Crenson's study of how and why air pollution issues arose in some cities but not in others. Interestingly, he found that the process of expansion proceeded somewhat in the following sequence:

> First the local newspaper took a stand on dirty air, followed by the Chamber of Commerce, followed by the local labor council,

> followed by the two political parties. It was possible, then, to estimate the issueness of air pollution in a city by finding out how many of the steps in this sequence had been performed.[45]

Clearly, as Crenson points out, the media play a key role in the agenda setting process. They may not originate an issue, or even always pick up on it as early as Crenson suggests, but they regularly play a part in the process of issue expansion. The contribution of the media may be most noticeable in situations where groups have no power at all other than the ability to obtain publicity and to expand the scope of conflict.[46] This strategy, when used by poor blacks or anti-war students, has seemed like something new in political life. But it is really not substantially different from what all groups do when they seek to expand the scope of conflict. It is a hallmark of modern politics.

It also suggests a model of the "new politics" of municipal reform in the 1890s.

III

The "new politics" of the 1890s is essentially a politics of agenda setting. New groups emerged which had broad, system-level interests in urban problems and urban government.[47] These groups were unable to achieve their goals through traditional decentralized party and governmental structures or private market relations, so they sought to politicize or, as Schattschneider put it, to socialize these issues, to expand the scope of conflict to the city as a whole. These reformers sought to break out of the "game" of organizational

and brokerage politics characteristic of the time and to create a city-wide issue-oriented politics. Meanwhile, the traditional political groups which held the balance of power in the old organizational politics sought to keep conflict private and local. A standard strategy of the reformers was to use symbols and images of city-wide association to try to instill in the general public the kind of system-level identification that they themselves felt.

In this effort, the new urban reformers frequently found ready allies in the newspapers. Unlike most newspapers of mid-century, isolated along class, ethnic, and neighborhood lines, the new giant dailies were genuinely mass media. They came by their city-wide interests as naturally as the new reform associations, and they regularly urged such a system-level identification upon their readers. They were also, almost by their nature as dealers in facts and ideas, issue-oriented. Newspapermen, prominent in the Liberal Republican movement of 1872 and the Mugwump revolt of 1884, seemed always to prefer an ideological to an organizational politics.[48] Many, though not all, welcomed the chance to join the new politics of the 1890s.

In this new politics, the job of the newspaper was to provide the public with a vision of what the unified, organic city could be. Reform issues, schemes, plans, and proposals were kept always bubbling on the back burners of the public agenda through constant repetition in the newspapers. Then, when political crisis loomed, a single issue would be moved up to the front burner and brought to a

vigorous boil. Now the newspapers' job was to unify and focus the whole city's attention upon a single system-level issue -- to describe, to explain, but also to strip an issue to the bare bones of simplicity. Now the newspapers not only provided a flood of information but became political bulletin boards, uniting groups from all over the city. In such cases -- and such was the case in Chicago in 1897-98 -- citizens were politically unified, were, in fact, almost single minded in a way that seemed to confirm all the biases that reformers had about information, public opinion, and politics.

Of course, this kind of politics was not always or everywhere successful. Sometimes it was impossible for groups to break out of the old political structures and to expand the scope of conflict to system level. City-wide coalitions broke apart; reform organizations split along class, ethnic, or partisan lines; newspapers bickered, failed to develop reform issues, or failed to focus attention on issues at the right time. Such was the case in St. Louis in 1897-98.

But the failure of the new politics may be as instructive as its success. A look at both sides provides a comparative, multi-dimensional view of municipal reform politics in the 1890s.

# # #

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

[1]Delos F. Wilcox, "The American Newspaper: A Study in Social Psychology," Annals, 16 (July, 1900), 56.

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[3]Nord, "Experts Versus Experts," pp. 234-36; Melvin G. Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," in The Progressive Era, ed. by Lewis Gould (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), p. 140; Melvin G. Holli, Reform in Detroit: Hazen S. Pingree and Urban Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 162-63; Stanley P. Caine, "The Origins of Progressivism," in The Progressive Era, ed. by Lewis Gould, pp. 24-25. For a summary of the views of many well-known reformers in a variety of fields, see Mae Reid-Bills, "Attitudes Toward Public Opinion Held by Some Leaders of American Reform, 1880-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1977).

[4]Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York: Basic Books, 1978), p. 71.

[5]Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), p. 120; Schudson, Discovering the News, pp. 71-75. See also Thomas L. Haskell, The Emergence of Professional Social Science (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977).

[6]Schudson, Discovering the News, pp. 86-87.

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[8]See, for example, Charles Dudley Warner, "Newspapers and the Public," Forum, 9 (April, 1890), 198-207; C.R. Miller, "A Word to the Critics of Newspapers," Forum, 15 (Aug., 1893), 712-17; John

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[9]"The Decay of American Journalism," Dial, 22 (April 16, 1897), p. 237.

[10]Jenks, "The Guidance of Public Opinion," pp. 158-60.

[11]Francis E. Leupp, "The Waning Power of the Press," Atlantic Monthly, 105 (Feb., 1910), p. 145.

[12]Wilcox, "The American Newspaper," p. 56.

[13]The classic work on muckraking remains Louis Filler, Crusaders for American Liberalism (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Antioch Press, 1939). This work was updated and republished as The Muckrakers (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1976). Filler's other recent book is Appointment at Armageddon: Muckraking and Progressivism in the American Tradition (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976). It rambles, is oddly organized, and is of little use to scholars. See also David Chalmers, The Muckrake Years (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1974); David Chalmers, The Social and Political Ideas of the Muckrakers (New York: Citadel Press, 1964); Herbert Shapiro, ed., The Muckrakers and American Society (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1968); and Stanley K. Schultz, "The Morality of Politics: The Muckrakers' Vision of Democracy," Journal of American History, 52 (Dec., 1965), 527-47.

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[18]Schudson, Discovering the News, p. 102.

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[20]Erickson, "Newspapers and Social Values," pp. 435-36.

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[30]Sidney Kraus and Dennis Davis, The Effects of Mass Communication on Political Behavior (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1976), chapter 3. See also Lee B. Becker, Maxwell E. McCombs, and Jack M. McLeod, "The Development of Political Cognitions," in Political Communication, ed. by Steven Chaffee (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1975), pp. 22-24.

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[44]Cobb and Elder, Participation in American Politics, chapter 8.

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# # #

CHAPTER III

TWO CITIES AND THEIR NEWSPAPERS

In the late nineteenth century the great cities of the Midwest grew at a fantastic pace, racing each other for the prize of economic hegemony over America's heartland. Or so it seemed that they "raced," to writers and commentators of the time. Chicago and St. Louis were the chief rivals, vying for control of the great wealth of the West. Each city had its chorus of boosters, proclaiming the virtues of the "future great city of the world" (St. Louis) or the "future metropolis of the New World" (Chicago).[1] St. Louis was frequently depicted as the cautious and conservative old master, marching steadily toward the leadership position destiny had ordained. Chicago was the brash upstart, throwing railroads across the prairies and ordaining its own destiny. Boosters routinely labelled the relative growth of the two cities, recorded in statistics of population, commerce, and manufacturing as a struggle, a rivalry, a contest, or a great race.

Of course, in some ways, this was simply naive personification of economic market forces. The individual businessman's location, production, and marketing decisions had little to do with which city was the "leader" or which industry the "leading" industry. Millions still could be made by individuals in either place, and were.

Fundamentally, the nineteenth-century city was the product of individualism, of countless individual market decisions.[2] Yet, speaking of the life or future life of a city in human terms was more than personification for literary effect. The economic, political, and human life of a growing city demanded collective decisions and social vision of a new sort. For most businessmen and busy individuals, the collective life was of little direct interest. For other individuals and groups -- and newspapers were almost always in this category -- the collective or organic life of the city gradually grew to paramount importance. The conflict between the fragmenting influence of individualism in the city on the one hand and the physical and moral need for a collective, social consciousness on the other is surely the chief problem of modern urban life. And so it was in Chicago and St. Louis in the 1890s.

II

Though urbanization came to demand a self-consciously created collective life, its primary effects were quite the opposite. Most of the forces of urbanization were forces for fragmentation, segregation, and diversity. And these forces were felt throughout the fabric of city life -- in population, economy, government, and politics.

The most striking aspect of urbanization in the second half of the nineteenth century was simply the enormous population growth of American cities. No decade from the 1860s to the present has had as

fast a rate of urbanization as the 1880s, and much of this growth centered in the Midwest. Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City, and Minneapolis more than doubled in size; Milwaukee, Detroit, and Cleveland increased some 60 percent. Chicago was the wonder city. Notwithstanding the devastation of the Fire of 1871, Chicago by 1880 had 503,185 people, far surpassing St. Louis as the largest city of the Midwest. By 1890, Chicago had more than a million, making it the second largest city on the continent.[3] Though it lost its "race" with Chicago, St. Louis was also growing steadily in the late nineteenth century. St. Louis' population grew from 350,518 in 1880 to nearly 500,000 in 1890. By the early twentieth century it was the nation's "fourth city."[4]

This rapid population growth had a disintegrating impact on community life. In both Chicago and St. Louis (and in other Midwestern cities as well) many of the newcomers were Europeans. Both cities were frequently called "foreign cities" in the late nineteenth century, with Germans the chief ethnic group in each of them. One observer wrote that "Chicago is one vast crucible, wherein is being poured ingredients from all races, and one looks with wonder to see what strange amalgam promises to result."[5] In both Chicago and St. Louis the pot was slow to melt these diverse peoples. Neighborhoods, churches, social clubs, the immigrant press, mutual aid societies, patriotic and philanthropic associations, and political organizations were all isolated from one another along class, ethnic, and linguistic lines.[6] As the cities expanded in

physical size, residential districts also became increasingly segregated by ethnicity, race, and economic class, with the upper classes moving to the fringes of the city, leaving the central city to the poor.[7] With their citizens separated by language, culture, class, and residence, St. Louis and Chicago became aggregations of suspicious strangers.

Urbanization also involved a fragmentation of economic life in St. Louis and Chicago and in other metropolitan areas. Though they had emerged as commercial cities and financial centers, both Chicago and St. Louis evolved into great manufacturing cities by the 1890s. Unlike many smaller manufacturing cities, they were not very specialized, but engaged in the manufacture of every kind of product. In both cities, the manufacturing districts spread out along transportation lines and even spilled over into neighboring states, isolating residential sections from one another.[8] Though the large merchants and manufacturers were interested in their city, they were more interested in the regional and national economic systems. Their private interests frequently collided with each other and with the general needs of the city. In some cases, key economic decisions were not even made locally, but were made in New York City.[9]

Fragmented, disorganized government was another product of rapid, unplanned urban growth. Chicago is one of the best examples of this phenomenon. In the 1890s, there were so many overlapping governments and quasi-governments that no one seemed to know exactly how many there were. One observer at the time listed nineteen different

taxing bodies operating in Chicago; a civic group listed twenty; another group, twenty-one.[10] The chief governments and taxing authorities were the state, the county, the city, the school board, the library board, the drainage board, three park districts, and the various townships, including the North, South, and West towns in the central city and the towns of Jefferson, Hyde Park, Lake, and Lake View annexed in 1889. "It has been said," one critic wrote, "that one may take his stand on any street corner in Chicago and find himself amenable to at least five different governments; and that 'each one takes him and filches him, but gives him mighty little in return.'"[11]

Within limits imposed by state law and the city charter of 1875, the Common Council of Chicago was a powerful governing body. After the annexations of 1889, the Council was composed of sixty-eight aldermen, two from each of the city's thirty-four wards. Half of the aldermen, one from each ward, were elected each spring. The Council was granted by charter broad powers to organize executive departments, appropriate revenue, grant contracts and franchises, regulate certain businesses, construct and maintain streets, bridges, and sewers, and handle many other police and public welfare functions.[12] The mayor of Chicago originally merely presided over the Council, but by the 1890s that office had acquired most essential executive and administrative powers, subject to the advice and consent of the Council.[13]

Both the Council and the mayor, however, were hamstrung by the

decentralized tax system of Chicago. The civic reformer Frederic C. Howe saw the city as a giant "bound, Gulliver-like, by the thongs of a State Constitution."[14] The general municipal incorporation act of 1872, with later modifications, set a maximum levy for city purposes of 2 percent of assessed valuation. The municipal debt limit was fixed at 5 percent of assessed valuation. Unfortunately for the city, assessments were made by local township assessors, who had a political incentive to keep assessments low in their own areas. As a result, assessed valuation in the city of Chicago fell from $290 million in 1871 to $221 million in 1898, despite an obvious increase in real wealth. Since levy and debt limits were early reached, municipal revenue from general taxes actually fell during these decades of enormous urban growth. During this period of increasing demand for city services, the city could not increase its own revenues, except through the imposition of license fees, special assessments, and other miscellaneous charges.[15] Raising revenue was a key issue of municipal government and politics in Chicago in the 1890s.[16]

The governmental structure of St. Louis was more unified than Chicago's, yet that city also suffered from similar problems of overlapping authority. St. Louis holds the distinction of being the first city in America to achieve "municipal home rule." In 1876, the city took advantage of provisions in the new state constitution to frame its own charter, without interference from the state legislature. The new charter made St. Louis a "free city" of sorts,

outside the jurisdiction of St. Louis County and supposedly (though not completely) with full authority to conduct all purely local government business.[17]

The Municipal Assembly of St. Louis was bicameral, with a lower house called the House of Delegates and an upper house called the Council. The House of Delegates had twenty-eight members, one from each ward. The Council had thirteen members elected at large. The Assembly held broad legislative and fiscal power; executive functions were assigned to the mayor and other elected administrative officials. Most department heads were appointed by the mayor with the advice and consent of the Council. Perhaps the most unusual feature of St. Louis city government was the Board of Public Improvements. This six-member board was charged with planning and carrying out all public works. All ordinances for public works had to be introduced into the Municipal Assembly by the Board of Public Improvements. This requirement covered work done or contracted for by the city; it did not cover the franchising of private utility companies. Board members were the appointed commissioners of the departments of water, sewer, streets, harbor and wharf, and parks; a board president was elected directly by the people.[18]

Despite the home rule charter, the state government gradually expanded its interference in the affairs of St. Louis. Perhaps the most obvious examples of the intrusion of state authority were state control over the police department, local elections, and liquor licenses. Less obvious, but more important, were state constitutional

provisions limiting tax rates and levels of municipal debt. When St. Louis separated from St. Louis County in 1876, it assumed the county's debt and took over operation of hospitals, asylums, coroner's and sheriff's offices, and other functions ordinarily paid for by a county tax. Yet the tax levy limit of the city was not raised accordingly.[19] Thus, like Chicago, St. Louis suffered from a chronic shortage of tax revenue, and a good deal of official time and ingenuity was devoted to the seeking of revenue from other sources. Here, as in Chicago, the revenue problem lay behind many of the issues of municipal government and politics.

The decentralized governmental structure plus the rapid geographical and population growth of the cities tended also to fragment local political parties in the 1890s. This was especially true of Chicago. The annexation of the suburban towns in 1889 brought in 300,000 new people and an assortment of new politicians and political organizations, and made it impossible to organize a unified party machine.[20] The rule of the Democratic Party by Carter Harrison I and other old city politicians was challenged in the early 1890s by "political businessmen" such as John P. Hopkins and Roger Sullivan.[21] Throughout the decade the Democratic Party was constantly rent by factionalism. The Republican Party was also split, with one faction controlled by the old downtown business community and conservative newspaper publishers and the other faction led by West Side politician William Lorimer and his lower class, ethnic allies.[22] The city was simply too diverse and governmental power too diffuse for any

one faction to maintain centralized party control.

The political parties of St. Louis were also split by factionalism in the 1890s, due largely to the peculiar class and ethnic character of a large cosmopolitan city lying in a border state. While St. Louis had a viable two-party system, the state of Missouri was solidly Democratic, and this fact helped shape the party structure of the city. The Democratic Party of St. Louis was an interesting mix of the rich and the poor. The business elite of the city was extremely conservative, but Democratic.[23] They found themselves in uneasy tension throughout the decade with lower-class ward bosses such as the blacksmith/politician Ed Butler and with insurgent progressives such as Lee Meriwether. The silver issue of the 1890s, together with some important local reform issues, almost wrecked the party in 1897.[24] The Republican Party also was divided along class, ethnic, and neighborhood lines, with much of its strength in the South Side German community of St. Louis. The two major parties were fairly well matched in the 1890s, which meant that electoral success was possible for most any faction through compromise and coalition.[25]

Out of the dislocation of urbanization grew the politics and the great issues of municipal reform in the 1890s. The fragmentation of urban life encouraged some men to work for changes they believed would serve the collective interests of the whole city. The issues themselves were as varied as the men who faced them. Some reform efforts were simply struggles for cultural conformity in the face of foreign immigration. Sunday saloon closing, prohibition, and

anti-vice crusades were largely instances of the "better element" trying to tell the foreign riff-raff how to live. Other reform efforts were merely disguised struggles over political power and patronage. But the big issues of municipal reform involved the control and improvement of the physical environment of the fragmented metropolis. Public health, public works, public utilities -- these were the issues that had to be faced one way or another. And for reformers and politicians interested in the life of the whole city these were the primary concerns. Underlying all of these problems was the question of revenue: How to get it and from whom. How people organized city-wide movements to answer this question and to solve these problems is the story of the chapters to come. In this story, the newspaper press played no small role.

III

No institution or business, perhaps, was more influenced by urbanization in the late nineteenth century than the daily newspaper. In some ways, the U.S. newspaper industry was as much fragmented by urbanization as were other aspects of city life. Throughout the period 1880 to 1900, the number of daily newspapers increased proportionately faster than the urban population. There were 971 dailies in 1880 with a total circulation of 3.6 million. By 1900, there were 2,226 with a circulation of more than 15 million.[26] Many of these papers grew up in smaller towns that had not been large enough to support dailies before. But many sprouted in the already

crowded newspaper fields of the largest cities. Greater New York had thirty-three daily newspapers in 1880; fifty-eight in 1900. Chicago's corps of dailies increased from eighteen to thirty-seven over the same period. St. Louis had nine in 1880; thirteen by the turn of the century.[27] Most of these newspapers were specialized by subject matter, geographical area, or language, and even the general circulation papers usually appealed to a particular class or political clientele.

Though the proliferation of new dailies was one result of urban growth, another result seems almost the opposite -- the gathering of enormous circulations by a few great papers. While the number of daily papers grew rapidly between 1880 and 1900, their circulation grew twice as fast.[28] A large share of this increase in newspaper circulation was gathered in by a few of the large, general readership newspapers in the booming cities of the East and Midwest. The most amazing growth was in New York, where Joseph Pulitzer's World and William Randolph Hearst's Journal pushed circulations toward the million mark in the late 1890s, when a hundred thousand had seemed astonishing ten years before.[29] Hearst and Pulitzer developed whole new audiences among the middle and lower classes of the city. Their newspapers' appeal cut across class, ethnic, political, and geographical lines.[30] The Hearst/Pulitzer success was spectacular, but not unique. Many growing cities had similar, if more subdued, success stories. This period was not yet an age of failing papers and consolidations; even the weak survived. And the strongest papers did

very well indeed, becoming the nation's first mass media.

The important economic, and by consequence social, fact of newspaper growth was that no matter how large or successful a paper became it had to remain an essentially local business. In America, unlike the physically smaller countries of Europe, geography discouraged the establishment of a national newspaper. Newspapers could dominate their regions. They could syndicate their news and features. They could form ownership chains. Successful papers did all these things. But at base their prosperity rested upon their success in the local readership and advertising market.[31] Mass circulation was the goal, but it had to be mass circulation at home, drawing upon the whole range of the city's fragmented population. Thus, growth and prosperity for the city meant growth and prosperity for the newspaper. No other business was more intimately wedded to the fate of the whole city. No other business had more of a stake in the collective life of the metropolis.

In Chicago and St. Louis all the major newspapers were strident boosters of their cities. Much of this was plain, old-fashioned business promotion in the tradition of frontier journalism. According to the papers, local business was good and getting better. In a typical year-end business review in 1890, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch wrote that "altogether the past year has been one of remarkable achievement for St. Louis, which, rich as it is in actual results, is richer in promise." That same year the Post-Dispatch proclaimed a "New St. Louis" -- "a mighty hive of wealth, commerce, and varied

industry."[32] Similarly, the Chicago Daily News bragged that the 1890 census "brought out very clearly the fact that the future metropolis of this country will not be located on the Atlantic coast but on the shore of Lake Michigan." The Daily News was certain that Chicago would be "the metropolis of the Western Hemisphere."[33]

Though now big business, these papers still carried on the frontier tradition of vituperative press rivalry. A good example was the competition in early 1890 for the right to host the World's Columbian Exposition. All the Chicago and St. Louis papers were packed with news of how their cities' delegations were doing in Washington. Each paper thought its city the only logical choice and the other city a ludicrous pretender to first rank in the West. Col. Charles H. Jones, editor of the St. Louis Republic and chief spokesman for the St. Louis delegation, told the Senate committee considering the Fair site that "the pull of gravity is towards the center, and St. Louis is now, and so far as can at present be seen will continue to be, the great central inland metropolis of the United States of America."[34] In an editorial he denounced Chicago as "a settling basin for the refuse of the world." It is, Jones declared,

> the most un-American of all American cities. . . . No successful World's Fair could be held in Chicago, and the United States government will never disgrace the country by giving public sanction in any way to Chicago's claim that it represents anything besides the spirit and methods of an unsoaped and turbulent rabble of vagrants, refugees, speculators, and peculators.[35]

Meanwhile, Joseph Medill, editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune, damned Jones as "the notorious Georgia secessionist," and St. Louis as nothing more than a flag station on certain Chicago railroad

lines.[36]

Other papers were usually less scurrilous but not more charitable in their portrayals of the rival city. After Chicago won the right to hold the World's Fair, but then ran into snags over location and financing, the Post-Dispatch sniffed that "Chicago can get up a splendid fat hog show but that is her limit."[37] Again in 1890, the Chicago Daily News responded to an item in a St. Louis paper about the hot weather in Chicago:

> St. Louis is disposed to crow because no cases of sunstroke have occurred there this year, while in Chicago there have been several. Having little or no work to do the citizens of the Missouri town are not apt to become overheated. They are much more liable to become dizzy as they watch business rushing by their doors to Chicago.[38]

Three weeks later, the Daily News noted, with some hint of satisfaction, that there were thirty-one heat-related deaths in St. Louis on a single day.[39]

Toward the end of the decade, in a more good-natured spirit, the Post-Dispatch even saw fit to argue that St. Louis was a greater pie town than Chicago. "We make more pies and eat more pies than Chicago does," the paper declared. According to Post-Dispatch figures, St. Louisans ate 67,200 pies every week, compared to only 18,000 for Chicago. And St. Louis pies were larger and more toothsome as well. "Of course, the Chicago man has to fill up on something. And as the succulent pie is not to be had, he supplies the vacuum with pork."[40]

The promotion of local business and community pride was a job the newspapers of Chicago and St. Louis took seriously in the 1890s. At the same time all of them recognized in one way or another the

problems of modern urban life -- even in their own wonderful cities -- and all of them had ideas about how these problems should be solved. To a greater or lesser extent, they became involved with programs and movements for municipal reform. Each was caught up in the politics and reform climate of its own city. Yet each paper also brought to the reform arena a peculiar personality all its own, based on its history, its competitive position, and the spirit of its leading publisher or editor.

IV

Chicago newspapers in the 1890s, according to critics at the time, were generally solid in news coverage, lavish in the space allotted to editorials, and uncommonly chary of sensational and salacious material. Though the literary quality of the Chicago papers was usually considered inferior to the best papers of New York, critics were happy to report that Chicago's papers avoided "yellow" journalism and were edited for the family circle. They were pre-eminently news papers.[41] The leading dailies varied in their politics, but there was a kind of monotony about their news coverage. This had much to do with the close cooperation of newspaper publishers in the Daily Newspaper Association of Chicago, usually denounced as the "newspaper trust" by those who came up against it. The main morning papers (English language) in the 1890s were the Tribune, the Record, the Times, the Herald, the Inter Ocean, and the Chronicle. The leading afternoon papers were the Daily News, the

Evening Journal, the Evening Post, the Mail, and the Dispatch. (The Chicago portion of this study relies heavily upon a content analysis of the Tribune and the Daily News. The method is described in Appendix I.)

The Tribune was the oldest morning paper in Chicago in the 1890s and perhaps the most substantial and prosperous. It never had the runaway circulation of a popular penny paper like the Daily News, but it was a circulation leader in the crowded morning field, consistently topped only by the Record, the morning edition of the Daily News. The Tribune's circulation was about 75,000 at the beginning of the decade, rising to more than 100,000 by 1896. It was a fat paper for the time, with daily editions running from twelve to sixteen pages and Sunday editions up to sixty-four pages by the turn of the century.[42]

Joseph Medill was the guiding spirit of the Tribune from the time he took complete control in 1874 until his death in 1899. Medill was a conservative, puritanical, egotistical tyrant -- not unlike his grandson Col. Robert R. McCormick, who was to rule the family paper for half of the twentieth century.[43] Medill was a founder of the Republican Party and a friend of Abraham Lincoln. To his dying day he hated the Democratic Party as the party of disunion. In the 1890s, with Medill in his seventies, most of the day-to-day management was taken over by his son-in-law Robert W. Patterson, Jr. But the old polemics continued. Throughout the '90s, the Tribune fought against high tariffs, free silver, tax reform, and union

labor; for sound money, sound business, war, and imperialism.

Despite his crankiness, Medill had an instinct for news and a plain but trenchant style of editorial writing that seemed to attract a large audience in Chicago and around the Midwest. The paper was strong in all news departments, including foreign, society, and sports, and was excellent in features, illustrations, and typographical design. Medill, who served as mayor of Chicago after the Great Fire of 1871, always took an intense interest in local government and municipal reform. During the 1890s, the Tribune was a leading advocate of public works and public utility regulation. Chicagoans were apt then, as now, to say that if you could ignore its politics, the Tribune was the best paper in town.[44]

The largest circulation newspaper in Chicago in the '90s, and in many ways the most modern, was the Daily News. The Daily News was founded as a bright, four-page penny paper in 1876 and very quickly became the star of Chicago journalism. Including both its morning and evening editions, it reached 100,000 circulation in the mid-eighties and passed 200,000 by 1890. By 1895, the evening edition of the Daily News alone circulated 200,000 copies per day, more than twice the circulation of any other paper in town except the Record, the morning paper from the same shop. The paper increased in size as well as in circulation during the 1890s, averaging twelve to sixteen pages by the turn of the century.[45]

The founder of the Daily News was the brilliant Chicago journalist Melville Stone.[46] In 1888 he sold his interest in the paper

to his business partner, Victor Lawson, who became the archetypal modern newspaper manager. Lawson understood politics and he was devoted to the news, but his main devotion was to profit. He felt more at home in the business office than in the news room, though he never saw a conflict between the two. Lawson's newspapers were models of what modern mass-circulation papers were to become in the twentieth century. They were staffed by some of the best reporters in town, including such giants of Chicago journalism as Eugene Field. They had excellent Washington and foreign correspondents and the most popular feature writers. They were bright, concise, and clean, and they had something for everyone. It is telling that two chapters in Lawson's official biography are titled "the art of selling advertising" and "the art of building circulation."[47]

Politically, Lawson and the Daily News were independent. But the paper was neither soft on politics nor uninterested in political affairs. It was actively, sometimes militantly nonpartisan, believing that nonpartisanship was the antidote for most of the ills of municipal government.[48] The Daily News took an interest in the full range of municipal problems: the drainage canal, streets and sewers, water and air pollution, public health, governmental corruption, vice, utility regulation, and tax reform. Lawson was personally and financially allied with several of Chicago's leading reform associations. Though his own philosophy reflected the conservatism of the upper class business community to which he belonged, Lawson's newspaper was flexible and progressive in many ways. Most important,

Lawson always insisted that the Daily News be primarily a carrier of facts and information, not mere opinion, even in the editorial columns.[49]

Of the other morning papers in the 1890s, the Record was the largest, with a circulation of nearly 200,000. Founded as the morning edition of the Daily News in 1881, it was named the News-Record in 1892 and the Record in 1893, still under Lawson's management. It was identical to the Daily News in news and editorial philosophy, though it was probably even stronger than the News in local reporting. Many people considered it the best all-around paper in town, but because of stiffer competition in the morning field it never achieved the circulation or financial success of its evening partner.[50]

The Times was the major Democratic paper in Chicago in the 1860s and '70s, edited by the flamboyant Wilbur F. Storey, who boosted the paper to great heights of popularity through sensational coverage of murders, robberies, and adulteries. Storey was always defending himself against libel charges; once he was involved in twenty-four suits at one time. He is probably best remembered for a classic headline about the hanging of four repentant murderers in 1875: "Jerked to Jesus." After Storey died in 1884 the paper declined. It was purchased by Carter Harrison I in 1891 to serve as an organ for his Democratic Party faction and to boost his 1893 mayoral campaign. In the early '90s, the Times was the only Chicago paper to support free silver, the Pullman strikers, and other insurgent Democratic

causes. The paper was merged with the Herald in 1895, and then bought by Herman Kohlsaat, a bakery and fast-food restaurant tycoon, who reversed its editorial policy and made it an advocate for gold, protection, and William McKinley.[51] In local affairs, however, Kohlsaat was always a friend of municipal reform.

The Herald, founded in 1881 by James W. Scott and three other partners, was at times ahead of the Tribune in morning circulation. Scott was a newsman's publisher, and local reporters even made him an honorary member of their raucous Whitechapel Club. He was a Cleveland Democrat who dreamed of dominating the morning newspaper field in Chicago. His dream seemed near reality in 1895 when he consolidated his Herald with the Times to form the Times-Herald. But Scott died only six weeks later, and the Times-Herald fell to the conservative Republican Herman Kohlsaat. The new paper, with a circulation of about 70,000 in the late 1890s, was not as successful as the Herald had been alone.[52]

The motto of the Inter Ocean was "Republican in everything, Independent in nothing," and this pretty much tells the tale. The paper was dominated almost from its birth in 1872 by William Penn Nixon, surely one of the Republican Party's most loyal sons. Unlike the Tribune, which frequently drifted from the party path, at least in non-election years, the Inter Ocean was ever faithful. The Inter Ocean staff, like its politics, never changed, and reporters and editors grew gray in its service. The ubiquitous Herman Kohlsaat bought the paper in 1891 and tried to brighten it up a bit,

installing the first full-color newspaper press in America in 1892. But Nixon resisted and bought out Kohlsaat in 1894. Despite his partisanship, Nixon was a supporter of municipal reform movements of all sorts. In 1897, one of the most remarkable newspaper events of the decade occurred at the Inter Ocean. Charles T. Yerkes, the traction magnate, purchased the Inter Ocean to serve as a mouthpiece in his struggle with reformers and the "newspaper trust" over street railway franchise extensions.[53]

After the merger of the Times and the Herald, the Democrats of Chicago were left without a faithful newspaper. This void was quickly filled by the Chronicle, organized in 1895 by two Herald veterans, Horatio W. Seymour and Martin J. Russell. The paper immediately found its niche as an ably edited party organ, but like the Times-Herald never approached the circulation success of the Record or even the Tribune.[54]

The evening papers of Chicago in the 1890s were all over-shadowed by the enormous circulation of the Daily News. The Evening Journal was successful as an ultra-conservative, upper-class Republican paper noted for its hard-hitting partisan editorials. Founded in 1844, it was Chicago's oldest newspaper. The Evening Post was the afternoon edition of the Herald, and was known for its literary flavor and flippant editorials, written for a time by Finley Peter Dunne, who also developed in the Post his famous Irish-dialect "Mr. Dooley" feature. The Mail was a light, vivacious penny paper that tried to compete directly with the Daily News. It failed in 1895.

The Dispatch, founded in 1892 by Joseph R. Dunlop, was the only really sensational journal in Chicago in the 1890s. The readers seemed to like the salacious character of the paper, but the federal courts did not. In 1896, Dunlop was convicted of sending obscene literature through the mails and sent to prison.[55] Typically, the other papers did not defend Dunlop's right to press freedom. They were happy to see him go.[56] Thus ended yellow journalism in Chicago, until William Randolph Hearst arrived from New York in 1900.

St. Louis had fewer daily newspapers in the 1890s than Chicago had, but St. Louis journalism was considerably more raucous and in some ways more competitive as well. One critic ranked St. Louis as "a notable centre of yellow journalism" by the turn of the century, with all five of its leading dailies giving more than average space to such "yellow" subject matter as news of crime and vice, illustrations, want ads, medical ads, and self-promotion.[57] The leading newspapers of St. Louis were also more partisan than the leading papers of Chicago, especially in local affairs. But along with their sensationalism, the St. Louis papers were also widely known and respected for their aggressive coverage of the news. Two of the leaders of journalism in St. Louis, Joseph Pulitzer and Joseph B. McCullagh, were founding fathers of the modern American newspaper. The five principal English language newspapers in St. Louis in the 1890s were the Globe-Democrat, the Post-Dispatch, the Republic, the Chronicle, and the Star. Much smaller in circulation, but influential in its field, was the German-language daily, the Westliche Post.

(The St. Louis portion of this study relies heavily upon a content analysis of the Globe-Democrat and the Post-Dispatch. The method is described in Appendix I.)

The Globe-Democrat in the 1890s was the great Republican daily of Missouri and the Southwest, heir to the tradition of the Missouri Democrat, the newspaper Abraham Lincoln had said was worth more to the North in the Civil War than ten regiments of soldiers. Its chief competitor was the Missouri Republican. For decades these two oddly named papers battled for their parties -- the Democrat for the Republicans and the Republican for the Democrats. Despite being largely out of step with the politics of its region, the Globe-Democrat by the 1890s was successful in the circulation race. In the early '90s, it was the circulation and advertising leader in St. Louis, with papers distributed in Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Arkansas, and points southwest.[58]

Much of the Globe-Democrat's success could be attributed directly to Joseph B. McCullagh, editor from the 1870s until his death in 1896. McCullagh pioneered the kind of circulation-building techniques that Pulitzer took from St. Louis to New York. McCullagh is probably best remembered for his famous remark that "the great art of running a newspaper is the art of guessing where hell is likely to break loose next."[59] He preferred news that surprised or entertained -- disasters, crime, sex, violence, religion, and oddities. The paper grew increasingly sensational under his control. But McCullagh was also an able newsman, trained as a reporter. He

developed the journalistic interview in its modern form, and he became nationally known as a brilliant editorial paragrapher. He also spared no expense in getting the news, bragging that the Globe-Democrat spent more on telegraph tolls than any paper in the world. He was well supported on the business side by publisher Daniel M. Houser, who pioneered modern advertising management techniques in St. Louis.[60]

Both McCullagh and Houser were thoroughly at home with the conservative business elite of St. Louis, and part of the news coverage and all of the editorial philosophy of the Globe-Democrat reflected this connection. In the 1880s and '90s, businessmen recognized the paper as an important force behind the commercial revival of the "New St. Louis." A special interest of McCullagh's was railroad development, and a business news column called "The Railroads" was a standard feature for years. McCullagh was also a close friend of James Campbell, the leading street railway tycoon in St. Louis, and this connection also seemed to color the news columns. McCullagh's successor, Captain Henry King, continued the pro-business bias of the paper. "I feel that it is my duty, as it is always my pleasure," he once told the St. Louis Commercial Club, "to consult and cooperate with the business men of St. Louis, because I have learned that their success is indispensable in promoting the general welfare and progress."[61] The Globe-Democrat was always interested in the general welfare as its editors perceived it, and the paper advocated various programs of municipal reform.

Generally, however, both McCullagh and King believed that the best reform was the election of Republicans.

The Post-Dispatch was another proponent of the "new journalism" in St. Louis. In fact, the Post-Dispatch, founded in 1878 by Joseph Pulitzer, was the prototype for Pulitzer's New York World, the newspaper that, more than any other, ushered in modern American journalism. Though Pulitzer gave up active control of the Post-Dispatch in 1883, and never set foot in St. Louis after 1888, he continued to dictate the newspaper's policies until his death in 1911. Those policies made the Post-Dispatch the leading afternoon daily in St. Louis by the early 1880s. It passed the Globe-Democrat in circulation in the late 1890s, reaching 100,000 around the turn of the century.[62]

Pulitzer, himself a politician, was personally most interested in hard news and editorial opinion. But he also had a genius for turning up the kind of bright, entertaining feature stories that attracted readers. He told his staff on the Post-Dispatch to look for significant news, but also for "original, distinctive, dramatic, romantic, thrilling, unique, curious, quaint, humorous, odd, apt to be talked about" news.[63] In this respect, the Post-Dispatch was a lot like the Globe-Democrat. Also like the Globe-Democrat, the Post-Dispatch was a great proponent of St. Louis business and commercial growth. But Pulitzer also added another feature to the "new journalism" that the Globe-Democrat cared little about -- crusading for municipal reform. In the 1870s and '80s, the Post-Dispatch was

already working for the kinds of projects that urban reformers came to push more and more in the '90s, including street improvement and public works, increased municipal revenues and tax equalization, public utility regulation and control of monopolies.[64]

During the 1890s, the Post-Dispatch was independent in politics, but independent Democrat. It criticized the party severely and constantly jousted with the local party organ, the Republic (formerly Republican). But it generally supported Democratic candidates, and at a crucial time in St. Louis municipal history it became practically an official organ of free silver and Bryanism. From 1895 to 1897, the Post-Dispatch was controlled by former Republic editor Col. Charles H. Jones, a fiery southern Democrat who wrote the party's famous Chicago platform in 1896. Pulitzer, a "gold bug" and Bryan hater, tried to get rid of Jones almost from the start, but he had given the wayward editor such an iron-clad contract to manage the paper that he eventually had to buy him out.[65]

In local civic affairs throughout the '90s, the Post-Dispatch was usually on the side of urban reformers and usually in conflict with public utilities and other corporate monopoly interests. Pulitzer had taught his St. Louis staff to follow "a red thread of continuous policy," to stick with a crusade for days, weeks, or years until the victory was won.[66] Sometimes the Post-Dispatch lived up to the standards of its founder; sometimes it did not.

The third most prominent newspaper in St. Louis in the 1890s was the Republic. This was the old man of St. Louis journalism, founded

in 1808. (The Post-Dispatch liked to call it "Old 1808" when ridiculing its stodgy traditionalism.) The name was shortened from Republican to Republic in 1888 when Col. Charles H. Jones took over the editorship. The Republic was never a sensational sheet like the Globe-Democrat or the Post-Dispatch, but it was successful throughout the 1890s, achieving 100,000 circulation after the turn of the century.

The Republic was a solidly Democratic paper, but Col. Jones made it a personal organ, advocating his own brand of agrarian Democracy. After Jones maligned David R. Francis, a leading conservative Democrat in St. Louis and Missouri, the two men came to blows on the street.[67] Later Francis bought into the paper in order to oust Jones. Someone, it seems, was always trying to get rid of Jones in this period. Throughout the late 1890s, the Republic was the organ for that faction of the Democratic Party controlled by the anti-Bryan business elite of St. Louis. On local issues, the paper was the spokesman for banks, department stores, and street railways.[68]

The other St. Louis dailies seem to have been much less prominent. The evening Chronicle was a Scripps-McRae paper founded in 1880. Like all of E.W. Scripps' papers, the Chronicle was a small paper (only four pages until the mid-1890s) directed at the working-man. In the '90s, it had several years of great circulation success; for a time in the late '90s it claimed to have had the largest circulation in St. Louis. But quickly the circulation boom collapsed, and Scripps himself admitted that he could not compete with

Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch. The Chronicle was a perennial loser for the Scripps-McRae chain.[69] The St. Louis Star was another fairly successful evening paper, espousing Republican principles. (It was the Star-Sayings before 1896.) It too suffered from Post-Dispatch competition and was merged with the Chronicle in 1905.[70] The Westliche Post was the leading German-language newspaper in this German-American city. It never had a large circulation compared to the English-language papers, never exceeding 12,500 before 1900. It was basically a conservative Republican paper by the 1890s without a great interest in local reform politics. Earlier it had been a livelier sheet, with some of the features of the new journalism characteristic of the Globe-Democrat and Post-Dispatch. It is probably best remembered as the journalistic incubator of Carl Schurz and Joseph Pulitzer.[71]

V

Urbanization in the late nineteenth century had a fragmenting impact on people, businesses, governments, political parties, and newspapers. But newspapers, more than most businesses and institutions, had an incentive to resist fragmentation and segregation and to try to shape a collective life that all people could share. One approach to this end, common to almost all the papers of St. Louis and Chicago, was the promotion of civic pride and general commercial prosperity. All the newspapers also professed to believe in "municipal reform" of one sort or another. Beyond this narrow common

ground, each paper developed its own peculiar view of the collective life and its role in it. Despite these individual idiosyncrasies, however, some differences between newspapers reflected differences between the cities rather than merely between individual papers. Some of these differences can already be suggested. By and large the leading newspapers of St. Louis in the 1890s were more competitive, more partisan, and more closely connected with public utility interests than were the newspapers of Chicago. These differences had important implications for the development of municipal reform politics in these two cities.

# # #

NOTES ON CHAPTER III

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[2]Sam Bass Warner, Jr., The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), pp. x-xi.

[3]U.S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Report on the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1, p. lxvii. See also Charles N. Glaab and A. Theodore Brown, A History of Urban America (New York: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 110-11; Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. III: The Rise of a Modern City, 1871-1893 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), p. 20.

[4]Report on the Population of the United States: 1890, p. lxvii. See also Julian Ralph, "The New Growth of St. Louis," Harper's Monthly, 85 (Nov., 1892), 921; Wyatt Belcher, The Economic Rivalry Between St. Louis and Chicago, 1850-1880 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), p. 206; Selwyn K. Troen and Glen E. Holt, eds., St. Louis (New York: New Viewpoints, 1977), pp. xxv-xxvi; Walter B. Stevens, St. Louis: The Fourth City, 1764-1911, Vol. I (St. Louis: S.J. Clarke, 1911), pp. xi-xii.

[5]F. Herbert Stead, "The Civic Life of Chicago," Review of Reviews, 8 (Aug., 1893), 179.

[6]Glaab and Brown, History of Urban America, pp. 141-42; Pierce, History of Chicago, chapter 2; Delos F. Wilcox, Great Cities in America (New York: Macmillan, 1913), chapter 6. See also John M. Allswang, A House for all Peoples: Ethnic Politics in Chicago, 1890-1936 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971).

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[8]Sam Bass Warner, Jr., The Urban Wilderness: A History of the American City (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), chapter 4; Troen and Holt, St. Louis, p. xxiv. See also Homer Hoyt, One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), pp. 53-59.

[9]See, for example, Alexander Scot McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch': A Business Elite in the Life of a City, St. Louis, 1895-1915" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1976), pp. 107-10.

[10]Charles Waldo Haskins, "The Municipal Accounts of Chicago," in Proceedings of the Rochester Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1901), p. 306. This problem in cities in general in the late nineteenth century is discussed in Ernest S. Griffith, A History of American City Government: The Conspicuous Failure, 1870-1900 (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974), chapter 12.

[11]Ibid., p. 307. A good, detailed description of Chicago's governmental structure in the 1890s is Samuel E. Sparling, Municipal History and Present Organization of the City of Chicago, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, No. 23 (Madison, May, 1898). See also Wilcox, Great Cities in America, chapter 4.

[12]Sparling, Municipal History, chapter 8.

[13]Ibid., chapter 9.

[14]Frederic C. Howe, "The Municipal Character and Achievements of Chicago," World's Work, 5 (March, 1903), p. 3243.

[15]The best summary of Chicago's revenue system in this era is Charles E. Merriam, Report of an Investigation of the Municipal Revenues of Chicago (Chicago: City Club of Chicago, 1906).

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[20]Michael P. McCarthy, "Businessmen and Professionals in Municipal Reform: The Chicago Experience" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970), p. 24. See also Michael P. McCarthy, "The New Metropolis: Chicago, the Annexation Movement and Progressive Reform," in The Age of Urban Reform: New Perspectives on the Progressive Era, ed. by Michael H. Ebner and Eugene M. Tobin (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977).

[21]Paul Michael Green, "The Chicago Democratic Party, 1840-1920: From Factionalism to Political Organization" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1975), pp. 46ff. See also Pierce, History of Chicago, chapter 10.

[22]Joel Tarr, A Study of Boss Politics: William Lorimer of Chicago (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), chapter 2.

[23]McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" pp. 209ff. See also Hodes, "Urbanization of St. Louis," p. 146.

[24]Jack Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform in the 1890s: A Study in Failure," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 25 (Oct., 1968), 46-47. See also Jack Muraskin, "Missouri Politics During the Progressive Era, 1896-1916" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 1969); C. Joseph Pusateri, "A Businessman in Politics: David R. Francis" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1966); Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," chapter 3.

[25]McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" pp. 197-98.

[26]U.S., Dept. of the Interior, Census Office, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Manufactures, Vol. 9, Part 3, "Printing and Publishing," p. 1046. This special report, written by William S. Rossiter, reviews statistics on newspapers and other print media from 1880-1900.

[27]Ibid., pp. 1051-52. This expansive era of American journalism and its relationship to urbanization and industrialization is discussed in Edwin Emery and Michael Emery, The Press and America (4th ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), chapters 15-17. See also Sidney Kobre, The Yellow Press and Gilded Age Journalism (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1964); and Alfred McClung Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America (New York: Macmillan, 1947), chapter 4.

[28]Census Office, Twelve Census, "Printing and Publishing," p. 1047. On the growth of large newspaper businesses in the late nineteenth century, see Bruce M. Owen, Economics and Freedom of Expression: Media Structure and the First Amendment (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1975), pp. 44-48; Lincoln Steffens, "The Business of a Newspaper," Scribner's Magazine, 22 (Oct., 1897), 447-67.

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[30]The kind of journalism created by the Hearst and Pulitzer papers is nicely discussed by Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York: Basic Books, 1978), chapter 2.

[31]Owen, Economics and Freedom of Expression, chapter 2. See also James N. Rosse, "Daily Newspapers, Monopolistic Competition, and Economies of Scale" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966).

[32]St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Jan. 1, 1890, p. 4; and June 8, 1890, p. 4. See also, for example, St. Louis Republic, Jan. 6, 1890, p. 4; St. Louis Globe-Democrat, July 10, 1890, p. 6.

[33]Chicago Daily News, Dec. 31, 1890, p. 4; and July 6, 1891, p. 4. See also Chicago Tribune, Feb. 25, 1890, p. 1.

[34]Republic, Jan. 9, 1890, p. 1. This issue includes the complete text of Jones' statement to the Senate committee.

[35]Ibid., Jan. 30, 1890, p. 4.

[36]Chicago Tribune, Jan. 10, 1890, p. 4.

[37]Post-Dispatch, March 13, 1890, p. 4.

[38]Daily News, June 3, 1890, p. 4.

[39]Ibid., June 28, 1890, p. 4.

[40]Post-Dispatch, Feb. 1, 1898, p. 4.

[41]Z.L. White, "Western Journalism," Harper's Monthly, 77 (Oct., 1888), 678-99; Willis J. Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers and Their Makers," Review of Reviews, 11 (June, 1895), 646-65; F. Leroy Armstrong, "The Daily Papers of Chicago," Chautauquan, 27 (Aug., 1898), 538-45; Delos F. Wilcox, "The American Newspaper: A Study in Social Psychology," Annals, 16 (July, 1900), 71. See also John Erickson, "Newspapers and Social Values: Chicago Journalism, 1890-1910" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, 1973), chapter 5.

[42]N.W. Ayer & Son, American Newspaper Annual (Philadelphia: Ayer, 1890-1900). See especially the issues of 1892, 1897, and 1900. The story of the Tribune has yet to inspire a general scholarly history. Two laudatory in-house histories are Philip Kinsley, The Chicago Tribune: Its First Hundred Years, Vol. III (Chicago: The Chicago Tribune, 1946); and The WGN (Chicago: The Chicago Tribune, 1922). Critical histories include Wayne Andrews, Battle for Chicago (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1946); and John Tebbel, An American Dynasty (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1947).

[43]Tebbel, American Dynasty, chapters 3 and 7. This picture of Medill comes through even in eulogies. See for example James O'Donnell Bennett, Joseph Medill: A Brief Biography and an Appreciation (Chicago: The Chicago Tribune, 1947).

[44]Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," p. 649.

[45]Ayer & Son, American Newspaper Annual, 1887, 1889, and 1895. The best business history of the Chicago Daily News is Donald J. Abramoske, "The Chicago Daily News: A Business History, 1875-1901" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1963).

[46]See Melville Stone, Fifty Years a Journalist (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1921).

[47]Charles H. Dennis, Victor Lawson: His Life and His Work (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935). Good summaries of Lawson's principles and practices are Royal J. Schmidt, "The Chicago Daily News and Illinois Politics, 1876-1920" (unpublished Ph.D.

dissertation, University of Chicago, 1957); and Robert L. Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson and His Newspapers: A Study of the Chicago 'Daily News' and the Chicago 'Record'" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1959). See also Abramoske, "The Chicago Daily News," chapter 7.

[48]Schmidt, "The Chicago Daily News," p. 387.

[49]Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson," pp. 54-55, 66.

[50]Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," pp. 657-59. See also Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson."

[51]Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism: A History, 1690-1960 (3rd ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 466-67; Kobre, Yellow Journalism, pp. 187-88; Armstrong, "The Daily Papers of Chicago," pp. 541-42. The headline "Jerked to Jesus" is from the Chicago Times, Nov. 27, 1875.

[52]Kobre, Yellow Journalism, pp. 194-95; Pierce, History of Chicago, p. 410; Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," pp. 652-54; Armstrong, "Daily Papers of Chicago," pp. 541-43.

[53]Kobre, Yellow Journalism, p. 187; Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," pp. 654-57; Emery and Emery, Press and America, p. 235. See also Walter E. Ewert, "The History of the Chicago Inter Ocean, 1872-1914" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Northwestern University, 1940). On Yerkes and the Inter Ocean see Chapter VI.

[54]Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," pp. 659-60; Armstrong, "Daily Papers of Chicago," pp. 543-44.

[55]Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers," pp. 654, 660-62; Armstrong, "Daily Papers of Chicago," pp. 544-45.

[56]The Daily News, for example, was glad to see Dunlop sent up. The Inter Ocean was a little more charitable and suggested that he only be fined for his offense. See Daily News, Feb. 5, 1896, p. 4.

[57]Wilcox, "The American Newspaper," p. 81.

[58]Much has been written about the Globe-Democrat. See especially Jim Allee Hart, A History of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961). See also Walter B. Stevens, "The New Journalism in Missouri," Missouri Historical Review, 17 to 19 (April, 1923 to July, 1925), article in every issue; and Stevens, St. Louis: The Fourth City, Vol. 1, chapter 7. Stevens was a long-time Globe-Democrat writer and editor and a local historian.

[59]Globe-Democrat, Dec. 31, 1883, quoted in Hart, Globe-Democrat, p. 144.

[60]Hart, Globe-Democrat, chapters 11-12. See also Charles C. Clayton, Little Mack: Joseph B. McCullagh of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969); and Walter B. Stevens, "Joseph B. McCullagh," Missouri Historical Review, 25 to 28 (Oct., 1930 to April, 1934), article in every issue.

[61]Quoted in Stevens, St. Louis: The Fourth City, Vol. 1, p. 189. See also Clayton, Little Mack, pp. 182-83.

[62]Ayer and Son, American Newspaper Annual, 1898, 1900, and 1904.

[63]Joseph Pulitzer, quoted in Edwin Emery, The Press and America (2nd ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 374.

[64]Julian S. Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, 1878-1883 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), chapter 10. See also Charles G. Ross and Carlos F. Hurd, The Story of the Post-Dispatch (St. Louis: Pulitzer Publishing Co., 1949).

[65]Swanberg, Pulitzer, pp. 182-90, 217. See also William R. Reynolds, "Joseph Pulitzer" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1950), chapter 14.

[66]Pulitzer, quoted in Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, p. 239.

[67]Stevens, "New Journalism in Missouri," Missouri Historical Review, 17 (April, 1923), 323. See also William Marion Reedy, "What's the Matter with Missouri," in Complete Works of Brann the Iconoclast, Vol. 10 (New York: Brann Publishers, 1919), pp. 303-04; Pusateri, "Businessman in Politics," pp. 230-32.

[68]McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" p. 153. See also Iseult Kuyk, "Behind the Scenes in St. Louis," in Complete Works of Brann, Vol. 10; Walter B. Stevens, "The Tragedy of the St. Louis Republic," Missouri Historical Review, 22 (Jan., 1928), 139-49; Walter B. Stevens, One Hundred Years of the St. Louis Republic (St. Louis: Saint Louis Republic, 1908); and Lee Meriwether, More Yesterdays: A Biographical Post Script (St. Louis: Mark Twain Memorial Association, 1955), chapter 13.

[69]Gilson Gardner, Lusty Scripps (New York: Vanguard, 1932), pp. 115-17: Negley D. Cochran, E.W. Scripps (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), pp. 59-60; William Hyde and H.L. Conard, eds., Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, Vol. 3 (New York: Southern Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 1635-36.

[70]Mott, American Journalism, p. 565; Hyde and Conard, Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 1636.

[71]Harvey Saalberg, "The Westliche Post of St. Louis: German-Language Daily, 1857-1938," Journalism Quarterly, 45 (Autumn, 1968), 452-56, 72.

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CHAPTER IV

REFORMERS AND NEWSPAPERS, 1890-1893

In 1890, no municipal reform organizations existed in either Chicago or St. Louis that embraced the "new politics." None represented a broad cross-section of citizens; none possessed a broad understanding of the problems of urbanization; none made effective use of the new mass media. Like most urban institutions of the time, those reform groups that did exist were fragmented along class, neighborhood, or partisan lines. They were usually nonpolitical voluntary associations engaged in philanthropy, mutual assistance, or business promotion. Politics was the province of parties or political clubs or ad hoc nonpartisan committees that disappeared after election day.

Like the reform groups of the cities they served, the newspapers also had interests that frequently linked them to class or partisan ideology or to sporadic crusades that led nowhere. But in some ways the newspapers of Chicago and St. Louis in the early 1890s were already proponents, if not yet skilled practitioners, of something like the new politics of municipal reform. To a greater or lesser extent, because of political philosophy and an interest in boosting circulation, they all sought to politicize concrete local issues of urban life and to expand political conflict to involve and unite a

broader electorate. In this respect, the newspapers were slightly out of step with the middle class, mugwump reform procession of the time, and they were not very successful in their efforts. Though the newspapers' agendas for reform were not always consistently articulated and were not apparently very influential on public electoral behavior in the early 1890s, they did lay out, sometimes in depth and detail, the issues that would rise to public prominence later in the decade. In this early period, municipal reform movements and especially the newspapers' involvement with them were fairly similar in Chicago and St. Louis. But already in the early 1890s the newspapers of these two cities differed in ways that would become by 1897-98 part of the rise or fall of the new politics of municipal reform.

II

In Chicago in the early 1890s political reform was a jumble of activities and ideas. There were silk-stocking partisan societies such as the Republican Union League Club and the Democratic Iroquois Club. There were political education groups such as the Sunset Club, the Single Tax Club, and others. There were ad hoc pressure groups such as the Society for the Prevention of Smoke in Chicago.[1] And there were short-lived nonpartisan political movements in the municipal elections of 1891 and 1893. The closest thing Chicago had in the early 1890s to a leading reform group, to a central clearing-house for reform thought and activity, was the Citizens' Association.

Founded in 1874 as the nation's first permanent municipal reform organization, the Citizens' Association grew out of the need to improve the fire department, the water supply system, and the municipal fire codes after a major fire in July 1874 burned over the downtown business district for the second time in less than three years. Despite its ad hoc origin, the Citizens' Association was determined from the start to be a permanent, multi-issue pressure group, "organized to look carefully and thoroughly into the whole framework of our city and county system."[2]

In several major campaigns of the 1870s and '80s, the Citizens' Association was largely successful. Most of its proposals for reorganizing the fire department, expanding the fire limits of the city, and in other ways reducing the risk of general conflagration were carried through. The group also spearheaded the movement to establish a sanitary canal to solve Chicago's perennial problem of sewage disposal and lake water pollution. This effort led directly to the creation of a regional sanitary district in 1889 and to the opening in 1900 of the great drainage canal that redirected the flow of the Chicago River from Lake Michigan into the Mississippi basin. The Association also coordinated the territorial annexation movements of 1887 and 1889 that boosted the size of the city of Chicago from 35 to 169 square miles. On other issues, where there was less public agreement on what to do, the Association was usually less successful. Throughout the 1870s and '80s, the Citizens' Association made little progress in its quest for charter and other structural reforms of

local government, and the Association also worked largely in vain for the suppression of gambling and vice.[3]

The Citizens' Association embraced the spirit and philosophy of mugwumpery, in the broad meaning that has been attached to that term by recent historians of late nineteenth-century reform.[4] Some of its leading members, such as its first president, Franklin MacVeagh, were Mugwumps in the traditional meaning of the term; they were men who bolted the Republican Party in favor of Grover Cleveland in 1884. The general spirit of mugwumpery, however, was broader than this. The Citizens' Association members believed in individualism and voluntary association, in government by the "better classes," in education and professionalism, in social harmony, order, and morality. In keeping with its mugwump philosophy, the Association often took a negative, restrictive stance toward local government and politics. The group generally supported crusades against vice and gambling, limits on taxation and municipal indebtedness, and prosecution of corrupt government officials. In addition, the Association avidly worked for the structural reform of local government, including for such changes as civil service reform, the secret ballot, and various charter revisions designed to centralize government and taxing authority and to reduce the power of politicians and the multitude of elected officials in Chicago's many overlapping governmental subdivisions.[5]

The Association's mugwumpery, however, was tempered by the pressure of the modern city. Its members recognized that the

collective urban life required positive government action in some areas. Though fundamentally conservative and distrustful of government paternalism, these mugwumps recognized that moral suasion would not reverse the flow of the Chicago River.

The tactics of the Citizens' Association reflected its mugwump spirit. As much as possible, the group tried to avoid electoral politics. It preferred instead to act as a lobby group, working to collect information on public policy questions and to pressure governmental bodies to take appropriate action. Though it sometimes engaged in public education crusades, such as in charter, drainage, or annexation elections, the Association usually avoided election campaigns and in general had a low opinion of the average voter. In his presidential address of 1874, Franklin MacVeagh said a prime purpose of the Association would be to conserve and promote "the good public impulses of this community." But he made it clear that he was talking about the impulses of "the better portion of the community." He saw the Citizens' Association as representing the "good citizens," who were largely disenfranchised by a corrupt political system. He believed it was generally futile to try to "elect good men" under a bad system, and he hoped that the system could be changed structurally, through civil service, election reform, and more centralized authority, to guarantee the hegemony of the "better classes." In the meantime, MacVeagh proposed that the Citizens' Association operate as a kind of "supplemental political organization" collateral with the system of elected officials.[6]

To this end, the Citizens' Association usually stayed out of the public eye. The group's annual reports reflected a tactical preference for investigation, research and report-making, litigation and prosecution, legislative bill drafting, and lobbying.[7]

Probably because of its quiet, behind-the-scenes approach -- "careful, deliberate, studious, laborious"[8] -- the newspapers of Chicago gradually cooled in their enthusiasm for the Citizens' Association. This falling out of favor is interesting because in principle and philosophy the Association and most of the newspapers were very close. From the beginning, the newspapers were usually allied with the Association in its major efforts, such as charter reform, annexation, and the drainage canal. MacVeagh thought the Association should be "an auxiliary to the press," helping to carry through to reality the "reservoir of good suggestions" provided by the papers.[9] Joseph Medill of the Tribune was an active member of the Association in its early years; Victor Lawson of the Daily News was a strong supporter; Herman Kohlsaat, publisher of the Inter Ocean, and Melville Stone, general manager of the Associated Press and founder of the Daily News, were both on the executive committee in the early 1890s.[10] But the Citizens' Association was not really interested in the kind of active politics, the style of political publicity that attracted the press. In 1892, for example, the Citizens' Association published a list detailing the strengths and weaknesses of aldermanic candidates. But the list was prepared, not for general circulation to the public through the newspapers, but

for the private edification of Association members, the "best citizens." The Association declared that it was almost impossible to judge a candidate's fitness for office on the basis of Chicago's partisan journalism. Thus, instead of serving as an auxiliary to the press, the Association in this instance became a substitute for the press, and it drew some flak in the process.[11]

By the early 1890s, both the Daily News and the Tribune had little good to say about the Citizens' Association. On the rare occasions that the group made the papers at all, the comments were unfriendly. In early 1890, the Tribune denounced Association secretary John C. Ambler for seeming to suggest that nothing needed to be reformed in Chicago. In an editorial, the Tribune said the Association did nothing but issue annual reports and attack Republican candidates at election time. In the Tribune's opinion, the Citizens' Association was too friendly with the Democratic machine and was "a positive injury to the cause of good government in the City of Chicago."[12] Meanwhile, the Daily News, while having no partisan complaints, joked about the Association's appeal for funds in early 1891, commenting that it "can scarcely be counted a brilliant success as a great, spontaneous movement of the people."[13]

Herein lies what may have been the key difference between the Citizens' Association and the newspapers. In the early 1890s, despite partisan loyalties, most of the Chicago papers shared with the Citizens' Association a mugwump philosophy of reform. They opposed gambling and government corruption, and they favored low

taxes. They pushed for "businesslike" government of the city. They also recognized, as did the Citizens' Association, that active government involvement was imperative in public works, utilities, and other physical needs of the city. But the newspapers were much more interested than the Citizens' Association in people and politics. True, they preferred some classes of people to others, but they believed that the majority fell into the right classes. They also had an economic (circulation) incentive to reach out to as wide a readership as possible. Thus, their efforts were intended to increase citizen participation in the political process, not to restrict it through structural reform of government. The newspapers believed that the people could elect "good men" if they chose to, and they would choose to if they were properly informed. This belief was perhaps naive in the early 1890s, but in it lay the idea of the new politics, an idea that became increasingly practical later in the decade.

The most widely read newspaper in Chicago, the Daily News, was also the most thoroughly mugwumpish. Politically, the Daily News was completely nonpartisan and had been since its birth in 1876. Like the reformers in the Citizens' Association, it stood for businesslike city government and for the defeat of party bosses, for the enforcement of Sunday closing and anti-vice laws, and for the election of "able and faithful public servants."[14] But even in 1890, the Daily News believed that the chief problem of municipal government lay, not with corrupt officials, but with business corporations

seeking special privileges. Though sometimes inconsistent and class biased, the Daily News usually argued that the solution to this problem had to come through more, not less, citizen participation in government.

Sometimes the Daily News expressed a simple, direct faith in the power of the electorate. Praising the good work done by the voters (and the newspapers) in electing the nonpartisan Citizens' Ticket to the new drainage board in 1889, the Daily News commented in early 1890 that "one good city council of honest, upright men who are irreconcilably opposed to the betrayal of the people, to the private sale of public franchises, a city council genuinely in favor of the city being a real government instead of a collection agency for monopolies -- one such board of aldermen would almost insure perpetual good government to the city of Chicago."[15] The Daily News believed that the people could elect good officials if they would only take the time to participate in the nomination and election process. Throughout the early 1890s, the paper strongly supported independent electoral movements, arguing that the people were beginning to wake up to their interests and that reform could be won at the polls.[16]

Sometimes the Daily News was not so sure that electing "good men" would do the whole job, for even good men seemed to be corrupted by special interests that fed off government privilege. Even in this more pessimistic mood, however, the Daily News usually argued for more public control -- for more government, not less. "The root of

the evil lies, not in the wrong uses of money," the paper declared, "but in the abdication of sovereignty. . . . Cities are badly governed because they are irresponsibly governed. The people have granted away their social functions to private citizens and to corporations which find themselves under the stern necessity of corruption in order to protect themselves. . . . Abolish special privileges, and very soon municipal corruption will in the main disappear."[17]

Such thinking led the Daily News as early as 1890 to a reluctant endorsement of municipal ownership of public utilities. It was reluctant because the paper, rooted in mugwumpery, believed in private enterprise, feared government paternalism, and hated the spoils system of the professional politician. But though it opposed paternalism and class legislation, the Daily News argued that government itself was not a necessary evil but a positive good, an essential form of social cooperation. When government abdicated its social duties, which in cities logically included the provision of public utilities, the power vacuum was filled by private trusts and monopolies. The Daily News in the early 1890s seldom explained the ramifications of municipal ownership or discussed the practical problems involved in making municipal ownership a reality, but the paper did believe that something should be done. The Daily News disagreed with Franklin MacVeagh and other local mugwump reformers, who opposed municipal gas service so long as the city administration was under the spoils system of party politics. While strongly

favoring civil service reform, the paper said the real source of corruption lay outside the government. The council was corrupted by private corporations, not by municipal agencies such as the water or street departments. The Daily News believed that "municipal gas might give -- and, indeed, would give -- a new field to the spoilsmen; but it would, at the same time, rid us of a more dangerous foe."[18]

In the opinion of the Daily News, the most dangerous foe of all was Charles T. Yerkes, the leading street railway magnate in Chicago. Daily News publisher Victor Lawson hated Yerkes, and Yerkes hated Lawson. This mutual hatred came into full flower in 1897, but its roots reached back into the 1880s, when Yerkes first came to Chicago. In the late 1880s, Lawson began a vituperative, personal crusade against Yerkes that did not end until Yerkes left Chicago in 1899.[19]

The Daily News attacked Yerkes as a corrupt monopolist who bribed aldermen to secure street railway franchises without proper compensation to the city. In the early months of 1890, for example, virtually every story and editorial comment about the city council talked of franchise grabs and giveaways, and Yerkes usually was singled out as the chief culprit. On council meeting days, the Daily News regularly included a notice like this: "The city council meets to-night at the usual time and place for the usual purpose. It will look over the field and see what public property there is left that it can give away to its favorites. Mr. Yerkes expects to get several good streets at to-night's session." The Daily News denounced the whole process of granting franchises to street railway corporations,

arguing that the streets must be retained as common property of the people -- "exclusive or special privilege in the use thereof must never again be bestowed."[20]

Though hostile to Yerkes and some other utility interests, the Daily News was not opposed to utility expansion. During the early 1890s, the paper devoted as many stories to the growth and business activities of utilities as to utility corruption, poor service, or regulation. (See Table 4 in Appendix II. This and other quantitative statements about newspaper content, including such seemingly vague terms as "more," "less," "handful," etc., are based upon the content analysis described and reported in the appendices and referred to from time to time in chapter footnotes.) Most of these stories of utility expansion were about elevated railways, and this issue became another point of conflict with "Baron Yerkes." The Daily News opposed Yerkes' plan for a surface cable loop downtown, favoring elevated lines instead. In a bitter exchange of personal letters in the fall of 1889, Yerkes accused Lawson of misrepresenting his plans, and Lawson declared that he was "absolutely antagonistic to all street railroad 'projects and improvements' as a whole like those you have thus far inflicted upon the city."[21]

The Daily News in the early '90s was almost entirely uncritical of the elevated approach to rapid transit. It wanted "elevated roads, and plenty of them." The paper thought the city itself should build the "els" under the same authority that empowered it to build streets.[22] Besides providing needed transportation, the Daily

News believed elevated railways would break the back of the Yerkes-led surface streetcar "monopoly." Many of the stories about the scramble for el franchises in early 1890 carried this anti-Yerkes theme.[23]

The Daily News' crusade against Yerkes was not limited to attacks on his corrupting influence in the council or his attempts to control competing elevated lines. Scarcely a week passed without some news items or editorial paragraphs about poor service, overcrowding, cable breakdowns, fatal accidents, lack of heat in the cars, nasty drivers, or simply Yerkes' general arrogance. Sometimes the comment was frivolous: "The West Side Cable company carried 75,152,694 passengers last year. Quite a number had seats." Frequently, the paper was deadly serious: "Yesterday was not much of a day for Mr. Yerkes' patent juggernaut. Only one boy was fatally injured by the cable cars."[24] The most striking feature of the Daily News' street railway coverage was that it almost invariably held Yerkes himself personally responsible for everything bad that happened on his lines. Furthermore, Yerkes was always portrayed as an outsider, a "Philadelphia baron," a carpetbagger who, the paper asserted, admitted that he liked to make money in Chicago but spend it in New York. In the Daily News' opinion, Yerkes was absolutely indifferent to the general welfare of the city: "Unlike the late William H. Vanderbilt, he does not accord the public even the small notice of wishing them damned."[25]

Altogether the Daily News devoted about one-third of all its local government and public affairs stories to utility matters in

1890-91, but this was far from its only interest in municipal reform.[26] In the early 1890s, the paper regularly carried stories and editorials favoring a more active government role in street cleaning and repair, smoke abatement, sewage control, and the elimination of railroad grade crossings. The Daily News also devoted some attention in this period to tax equalization and reform, arguing for increased revenue through fair assessments and compensation for public franchises.[27] In all these matters, the paper had been pushed beyond traditional mugwumpery by the imperatives of the urban environment. In other matters, however, especially in its crusades against gambling and Sunday saloons, the Daily News remained in the mugwump tradition of moral reform. In May, 1890, Lawson brought together a group of prominent citizens to begin a crusade against gamblers, a crusade that continued throughout the year.[28] This was a leading reform issue for the paper throughout the decade. On the average during 1890-91, the paper carried about two stories and an editorial a week exposing or denouncing gambling, vice, and Sunday saloons.

In some ways, the Daily News' editorial philosophy and news coverage reflected the mugwumpery of the Citizens' Association. In other ways, especially in its analysis of utility regulation, the paper had begun to move beyond mugwumpery, though exactly where it stood was not yet clear in the early 1890s. Perhaps the most telling difference between the reform spirit of the Daily News and the Citizens' Association lay in the area of structural reform of local

government. Though the paper agreed in principle with the Citizens' Association on civil service reform and centralization of authority, in practice the Daily News devoted practically no attention to these matters. Only a handful of items appeared in all of 1890-91.[29] The Daily News was interested in practical politics, in getting non-partisan businessmen elected to office. To this end, it was committed to increasing citizen knowledge about and involvement in the great issues of municipal life.

In the lexicon of the Chicago Tribune, "mugwump" was a term of derision, synonymous with "renegade," "apostate," and "moral scratcher," suited to reform groups like the Citizens' Association and newspapers like the Daily News who dared attack Republicans in the name of nonpartisanship. But despite its party loyalty, the Tribune espoused most of the reform values of the Citizens' Association. It believed in morality, individualism, low taxes, and businesslike government. It differed from the Citizens' Association in the same way as did the Daily News. The Tribune in the early 1890s was little interested in structural reform of government, but very much in the expansion of city services and public utilities. With an unavoidable growth in public enterprise, the need was to get the voters to elect "honest, capable, and prudent men," and the job of the newspaper was to help them do it.[30]

The editorial philosophy and news selection of the Tribune in the early 1890s reflected the dilemma of the ideological conservative caught up in the practical problems of making life liveable in the

modern city. The Tribune was much more skeptical than the Daily News of municipal enterprise and the higher taxes needed to support it. While the Daily News blamed outside corporate influences for most of the problems of municipal government, the Tribune blamed Democratic "bummers, loafers, and rounders" -- "taxeaters" who howled for plunder and spoils like "a pack of famished wolves in quest of prey." In the Tribune's opinion, the administration of Mayor DeWitt C. Cregier in the early 1890s was one of unparalleled jobbery, of "shameless, willful, disgraceful extravagance."[31] Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the Tribune opposed municipal ownership and higher taxes. "The only good feature of this intolerable municipal sloth and shiftlessness is that it discourages State socialism."[32]

The Tribune had a philosophical as well as a practical aversion to socialism and public ownership. In a series of editorials in 1890, the Tribune argued against the cooperative theories of the Bellamy Nationalists and in favor of acquisitiveness -- yes, even of greed. "No greed, no surplus; no surplus, no railroads," the paper declared with uncharacteristic brevity.[33] On the municipal level, the Tribune supported private enterprise in public utilities, even street railroads, the great malefactors in the Daily News' social scheme. The Tribune admitted that streetcar service was sometimes bad and that the city should get a larger share of the monopoly harvest, "yet it cannot be said that the people have gained nothing or that their nickels buy them no more today than in 1860. . . . Some

men have grown rich through the street-car system, but the people in general have been largely the gainers."[34]

This ideology was reflected in the Tribune's news coverage and editorial comment. Like the Daily News, the Tribune devoted a large proportion (about one-fourth) of its local government and public affairs stories to utility matters, but significantly more of these stories were about utility business and expansion than about regulation or service complaints.[35] The Tribune also was not hostile to Charles T. Yerkes in the early 1890s. Like the Daily News, the Tribune usually mentioned him by name in stories about his street railways, and it sometimes reported on citizen hostility toward him. But the Tribune did not attack Yerkes; it did not suggest that he was trying to sabotage the elevated system; and it even sometimes published stories that flattered him. After he returned from a European trip in 1890, the Tribune carried a very pleasant front-page interview with Yerkes about art (he was an avid and knowledgeable collector) and about European interest in the upcoming World's Fair. When the paper criticized the street railways for overcrowding or poor service, it usually blamed Chicago's great growth, not the companies' avarice.[36]

In spite of its homage to private business and its scorn for public enterprise, the Tribune was forced by the circumstances of the city to support, even to fight for, public works on a grand and sweeping scale. In editorials outlining the needs of the city in preparation for the World's Fair, the paper listed some traditional

mugwump concerns about crime and gambling. But more important, the Tribune said, were physical improvements to be done by the city -- streets repaired and cleaned, new water intake tunnels built, the municipal electric light plant expanded, the river and canal water quality improved, the smoke nuisance abated.[37] Much of the Tribune's local news coverage in 1890-91 dealt with these issues. Most important of all was "the Great Drainage Channel," a project the Tribune had pushed and carried detailed information about for years. This was one of the largest and most expensive local public works projects anywhere in the country in the nineteenth century, and the Tribune was its great champion. Everything connected with drainage and sewage was prime news for the Tribune, including all the financial and engineering details.[38]

Here, then, was the Tribune's dilemma. It opposed positive, paternalistic government; yet it wanted government to act against the problems of the city. It denounced high taxes; yet it listed ways to spend money. It resisted public enterprise; yet it recognized that the public's work must be done. The solution lay with the election of honest men who would administer the city as a business and who would put the welfare of the city above party interests. But this would still have to come through the political system as it was. The Tribune had little faith in structural reform. Editorially, it dismissed as irrelevant suggestions to abolish the ward system of aldermanic elections. It denounced the Citizens' Association's city-county consolidation plan as a plot to expand the

payrolls.[39] In the news columns, it devoted little attention to structural reform. Instead, the Tribune advised that "as the political system of managing municipalities has come to stay, the only thing to do is to make the best of it and to see that all possible is done to make the voters intelligent and honest."[40]

To help make the voters intelligent and honest, the Tribune was filled with information -- about twice as many stories on the average as the Daily News -- covering the range of local government and reform news. Like the Daily News, the Tribune was nearly as interested in the suppression of gambling and vice as in public utilities. It also conducted its own crusade in the early 1890s against smoke pollution.[41] The Tribune touched on many other reform issues as well. But perhaps the most interesting feature of the Tribune was the depth of coverage, in both news reporting and editorials. The details of waterflow rates in the polluted South Fork of the Chicago River, the fine points of the Single Tax theory, the specifics of the municipal government of Glasgow, Scotland -- everything warranted extended description and comment. The aim, and the great difficulty, of municipal reform, the Tribune believed, was to wake up "the great masses of honest voters."[42]

III

If the municipal reform movement was fragmented in Chicago in the early 1890s, it was atomized in St. Louis. There was no umbrella organization of middle class reformers similar to the Citizens'

Association of Chicago, and certainly no group that pretended to represent a broad cross-section of society. Reform sentiment and interest in the problems of urbanization was apparently growing in the early 1890s in St. Louis, with a variety of new groups being organized during those years. But except for the older businessmen's groups, most of these were study and discussion groups or short-lived "citizens' movements" in the municipal elections of 1891 and 1893.

One of the oldest municipal reform traditions in St. Louis was represented by the Commercial Club. The Commercial Club was an elite group of businessmen founded in 1881. Its membership was limited to sixty men. Though the chief interest was the promotion of business in St. Louis, business promotion sometimes led into municipal reform.[43] In the early 1880s, for example, the Commercial Club came into conflict with the real estate and conservative corporate interests that had favored too rigid taxing limitations on the city in the home rule Charter of 1876. During these years, the Commercial Club led a successful crusade, backed by the Post-Dispatch, to pave the downtown streets with granite blocks. Though the Club's interest in paving and public works grew out of sound business motives, its efforts were considered rather too progressive at the time by some of the more conservative leaders of the St. Louis business community.[44] St. Louis businessmen liked to consider themselves sober, thrifty, hard-headed, and conservative. St. Louis businessmen's reform programs had a similar solid, if not stolid, character, limited mainly to large-scale physical improvements that would

contribute to the economic infrastructure of the city or would enhance the beauty or value of real estate. This reform tradition was carried on by the Business Men's League, founded in 1893, and the Civic Improvement League, founded in 1902. This approach came to dominate St. Louis reform by the turn of the century.[45]

Probably because of the tightly knit character of St. Louis' business community and the businessmen's associations, other middle class reformers in the early 1890s gravitated to a variety of neighborhood improvement groups and political study and discussion societies. Some of the more prominent of these organizations were the Christian Socialist-oriented Social Science Club, the local branch of the Union for Practical Progress, the Bellamy Clubs, and the Single Tax League.[46] The Single Tax League was probably the most influential of these in the early 1890s, counting among its members some of the leading clergymen, lawyers, and smaller businessmen of St. Louis. The general social goals of the league were vague and its political influence slight, but throughout the 1890s it was a prominent advocate of tax reform, particularly the taxing of municipal franchises.[47]

One of the leading lights of the Single Tax League and of other civic groups in this period was N.O. Nelson, an early Bellamy Nationalist who became a follower of Henry George and Samuel "Golden Rule" Jones and a strong advocate of cooperative industry. He ran his plumbing supply factory on a profit-sharing plan and was as much interested in creating a classless industrial society as in reforming

municipal government. Nelson was involved in all sorts of civic movements during the early 1890s, ranging in 1891 from organizing an independent ticket in the municipal election to chairing a fund-raising committee to buy zoo animals.[48] The kind of flexible, wide-ranging reform interest that motivated Nelson, and many other middle class men in St. Louis, did not link up with the businessmen's reform tradition until the formation of the St. Louis Civic Federation in 1895. And then it was a short-lived coalition.

Middle class reform sentiment in St. Louis, then, was even more fragmented than it was in Chicago. In Chicago, middle class reformers were split on many issues, but they tended to share a kind of mugwump approach to the problems of the city that later in the 1890s permitted the growth of a lasting reform coalition. In St. Louis, the ideologies of influential middle class reformers and reform groups ranged from ultra-conservative to almost radical, from upper-class City Beautiful schemes to soak-the-rich tax reform. In politics, too, there was less chance in St. Louis for a common mugwump meeting ground between parties. The leaders of the parties were separated by sectional and ethnic differences as well as by principles. The silk-stocking Democrats in St. Louis were not born-again Republican Mugwumps like Franklin MacVeagh, but were Democrats by birth. This diversity was also reflected in the newspapers of St. Louis in the early 1890s. Their approaches to municipal problems were sometimes similar to the Chicago papers, but they were at once more radical and more conservative. On one point, however, they

usually agreed with their Chicago contemporaries: the key to municipal reform lay in increased citizen participation in politics.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch had a reputation in the 1890s, which it still carries today, of being a fighter for municipal reform. And so it was. But in some ways it was more fighter than reformer. Its rhetoric was bold, and its reform interests wide-ranging. It styled itself the champion of the common man and the enemy of plutocracy. Some of this was fair description, but a good deal of it was bluster. In general, the Post-Dispatch was no more radical in its analysis of the problems of urban government in the early 1890s than the Chicago papers. On some issues, its analysis was less penetrating and its news coverage lax compared to either the Chicago Daily News or the Tribune. The Post-Dispatch was solidly in the middle class reform tradition, and already in the early 1890s it reflected something of the difference between the Chicago and the St. Louis variants of this tradition.

"The Post-Dispatch is the friend of the weak, the stout advocate of all who suffer wrong," the paper declared in 1891. "The Post-Dispatch is the people's organ. . . . Every reform which touches the 'plain people' finds favor with this paper."[49] To some extent this was true. The Post-Dispatch carried more stories about labor and labor legislation than either the Daily News or the Tribune. The paper was much more pro-labor, arguing that the workingman had suffered greatly since the Civil War because of "class legislation" in favor of the "Money Power."[50] In most ways, however, the Post-

Dispatch was thoroughly middle class in outlook and news interest, and it had been since the days of Joseph Pulitzer's active management in 1878-83. In those days, the Post-Dispatch worked with the Commercial Club to push for street paving. It also crusaded for increased efficiency in the police and fire departments, for suppression of gambling, for stricter saloon regulation, for increased rapid transit, and for other mugwump reforms.[51] These interests had changed little by the early 1890s. In proclaiming a "New St. Louis" in 1890, the Post-Dispatch listed paving, sprinkling, and cleaning of streets, improved railroad terminal facilities, and extension of street railways as keys to the new prosperity.[52] The paper also still devoted in the early 1890s much space to stories and comment on gambling and vice. It had less news than the Chicago papers about air and water pollution, sewage treatment, and other urban health regulation problems.[53]

The Post-Dispatch also called itself the enemy of plutocracy. To some extent this was true, too. The paper hated trusts and monopolies, and had from its earliest days. Pulitzer believed that the unfair market power of large corporations based outside the city had helped to defeat St. Louis in its economic rivalry with Chicago. The Post-Dispatch, like many newspapers, came to consider itself a spokesman for businesses like itself -- small, competitive, local.[54] In the 1890s, the paper was an avid promoter of commercial and manufacturing development. In early 1890, a new and much more thorough market and business news section was added, and the paper

claimed that as the circulation of the Post-Dispatch grew, commerce grew as well. Meanwhile, the paper continued to denounce "monopolies," particularly non-local corporations such as the railroads that dominated St. Louis business. Jay Gould, the New York financier who controlled important St. Louis railroads, was the chief villain. The paper feared that if Gould and his fellow robber barons were not stopped in their efforts to stifle competition in transportation, "the reign of plutocracy will be absolute, and the Republic will remain only as an empty form, such as the Roman Republic was under the Caesars."[55]

The Post-Dispatch was also a strong defender of the rights of the city in dealing with local public utility monopolies. This was another long-standing interest of the paper.[56] In the early 1890s, the St. Louis Municipal Assembly was as much embroiled in utility matters as was the Chicago Council, and the Post-Dispatch frequently criticized the Assemblymen for giving away valuable franchises without compensation to the city. The Post-Dispatch believed that "the granting of municipal franchises for any business purpose without reserving to the municipality all the profits above a remunerative percentage, and thus securing the 'unearned increment' to the community at large, has been the great blunder and crime of municipal government in this country." It argued that franchises should be treated as valuable public assets and sold to the highest bidder in a strictly businesslike fashion.[57] The Post-Dispatch during the early '90s was not a consistent advocate of municipal ownership of

utilities, however. Between 1890 and 1893, its position seemed to develop from an interest in public ownership as a last resort to a vague affirmation that it should be an ultimate goal.[58] The paper carried very few stories on municipal ownership in the 1890-91 period.

Despite its editorial skirmishes with corporate "franchise grabbers," the Post-Dispatch in the early 1890s was much less concerned about local monopolists and much less critical of public utilities than was the Chicago Daily News. The Post-Dispatch was a supporter of street railway development and devoted twice as many stories to utility business and growth as to utility regulation or service problems.[59] The paper reported with obvious civic pride on the extension and electrification of the streetcar lines. Unless it suspected bribery, it covered franchise grants without comment in routine meeting stories. The Post-Dispatch was sometimes critical of St. Louis' leading street railway magnate, James Campbell, for his connections with Democratic ward boss Ed Butler. But on other occasions it published completely uncritical and unprobing interviews with Campbell and other street railway men.[60] Only rarely were these men mentioned at all. The Post-Dispatch had nothing in its utility coverage like the Daily News' vendetta against Yerkes or even the Tribune's fairly benign tendency to personify street railway matters with Yerkes' name.

The Post-Dispatch linked most of the problems of city government, not to utility interests, but to political bosses. The paper believed that "our municipal corporations never became the synonym

for inefficiency, extravagance and corrupt betrayals of the public trust, till they were, in an evil hour, surrendered to the control of the modern political machine."[61] Political bossism was the favorite subject for reform stories in 1890-91, and was the subject of some 20 percent of all the paper's major editorials. To the Post-Dispatch, bossism and boodle went hand in hand. As long as political machines controlled the parties, the government would be run for private gain rather than the public welfare. The Post-Dispatch believed that the situation was deteriorating in St. Louis in the early 1890s, and that corrupt bosses were in control of both parties -- Ed Butler in the Democratic Party and Chauncey I. Filley in the Republican.[62]

The Post-Dispatch's attack on political bosses and boodlers was more than rhetorical. In January, 1890, for example, the paper began a crusade to secure grand jury indictments against several Councilmen for taking bribes to pass railroad and utility bills. This effort had all the trappings of a standard Pulitzer crusade. The crusade began with the publication of facsimile bills of indictment against the men -- the grand jury needed only to fill in the names. Next came daily stories and blistering editorials and editorial paragraphs. Then came the self-congratulations: "In the arduous labor of securing evidence of corruption and forcing it upon the attention of the authorities the Post-Dispatch had to bear the brunt of the fight alone." What didn't come were the indictments. The Post-Dispatch, however, was undaunted: "The boodlers have secured a respite, not an escape."[63]

While grand juries and bills of indictment made good newspaper copy, the Post-Dispatch believed that politics was the real key. "Best the Bosses with Ballots" -- that was municipal reform. To this end, the Post-Dispatch constantly talked about nonpartisanship in municipal affairs. In this effort the paper was much like the Daily News and Tribune in Chicago, arguing for a strictly business government separated from irrelevant national party slogans. The paper even went so far as to call for a permanent Independent Municipal Party in 1891.[64] Yet the Post-Dispatch considered itself a Democratic newspaper, and, unlike the Daily News, was more interested in reforming the local parties than in eliminating them. The Post-Dispatch claimed to be against politics in municipal government. In fact, it simply tried to force into the political system its own agenda of municipal issues. The Post-Dispatch believed that organized independent movements could tame the machines and recapture the parties for the people.[65]

Like the Chicago papers, the Post-Dispatch had little faith in the structural reform of city government. The paper supported civil service reform and favored "experts" for seats on the Board of Public Improvements. But in general the Post-Dispatch criticized the centralization of authority as an assault on popular democracy.[66] The paper found just as much wrong with the City Council, elected at large, as with the House of Delegates, elected by ward. In fact, the Council, which was composed largely of businessmen and professionals, could be even more untrustworthy in dealing with privilege-

seeking corporations. "Franchises are usually sought by men with whom the better class of councilmen are on familiar, sometimes friendly footing," the Post-Dispatch pointed out; "often they have business or social relations and meet on terms of intimacy every-day. . . . Members of the same club who swap jokes two or three times a week are likely to oblige each other."[67]

The Post-Dispatch in the early 1890s believed that the majority of people wanted the kind of government it wanted. "If the respectable members of both parties would go to voting instead of idly railing at the bosses there would be no bosses," the paper declared. "The greatest public benefaction to St. Louis would be the discovery of some method of inducing all the voters of St. Louis to cast their ballots on election day."[68] Of course, the paper admitted that success was not quite this simple. People often did not vote because they did not know what they were voting about; they did not know what the vital issues of city government were. The Post-Dispatch believed all that the people needed were facts. They did not need to be told what to think, just told what to think about. And the Post-Dispatch proposed to do just that.[69]

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat was a newspaper very different from the Post-Dispatch, the Daily News, or the Tribune. Compared to those three papers, it was strikingly deficient in news reporting and editorial comment on local government and public affairs. It devoted only about half as many of its stories to these matters as did the other papers, and most of this coverage was relegated to routine

columns labelled "Municipal Matters" or "The Municipal Assembly." The Globe-Democrat in the early 1890s was simply more interested in the nation and the world than in its own backyard. It devoted more than twice as many editorials to foreign countries as to local affairs, a complete inversion of the priorities of the other three papers.[70] When the Globe-Democrat did touch on municipal reform, its views were conservative and partisan but not much different from the central core of mugwumpery in the other three papers.

The Globe-Democrat was not a stodgy businessman's paper. It was filled with sensational stories of crime and violence and oddities, and it appealed to a large general audience in St. Louis and around the region. But business was its main business, and it rarely carried anything negative about the local business community. The Globe-Democrat opposed monopoly in the abstract, but loved railroads and upbraided farmers and other chronic complainers for carping about high rates. On the local level in the early 1890s, the paper carried twice as many news stories about public utility business and growth as about regulation or service complaints.[71] Most stories about street railways in the Globe-Democrat in this period were buried in "The Municipal Assembly" column as routine franchise grants without comment. The few separate items that appeared were largely laudatory interviews with street railway managers about electrification or some other improvement.[72]

When the Globe-Democrat did see fit to complain about municipal affairs in the early 1890s it was usually about bosses and political

"rings." In this period the paper, like the Post-Dispatch, strayed from a strict party line. In the local elections of 1890 and 1891, the Globe-Democrat denounced both local parties as boss ridden and undeserving of support. In the 1891 election, the paper supported a nonpartisan Independent Movement, arguing, like its mugwump contemporaries, that party was irrelevant to city government and that "men of sobriety, common sense, and integrity" should be elected regardless of party label. Despite this brief flirtation with non-partisanship, the Globe-Democrat remained always a Republican organ, and refused to go along in 1893 when the independent movement endorsed a Democrat for mayor.[73]

The reform that the Globe-Democrat really wanted was the "purification" of the local Republican Party. The elimination of Republican boss Chauncey I. Filley would have solved most of the problems of municipal government, in the opinion of the Globe-Democrat. Beyond this, the paper had little to say about reform issues. The Globe-Democrat, like the other papers, had little interest in structural reform and believed that the solution to the problems of city government would come if people, the decent majority, would only wake up and take an interest in politics.[74] In 1890, for example, the paper denounced a city garbage contract, calling it "one of the steals that are so frequently pushed through the City Hall without attracting public attention, but which are easily killed if a little sunlight is thrown upon them."[75] This contract may have attracted little public attention partly because

the Globe-Democrat had practically nothing to say about it before it passed. This is a fair example of the Globe-Democrat's approach to local news reporting and to local municipal reform.

IV

The Chicago Daily News, the Chicago Tribune, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and the St. Louis Globe-Democrat were all large newspaper enterprises and circulation leaders in their cities in the early 1890s.[76] Each achieved its success through a canny combination of standardized mass appeal and individualistic flair. All were highly departmentalized, with something for every reader. All more or less played up sports, human interest news, and light features in the style of the new metropolitan journalism of the time. All carried enormous amounts of information in the form of market reports, daily lists of all sorts, and routine business and governmental intelligence. And all, in some ways, had similar ideas about municipal government and reform. Yet these newspapers were very different, too, in their political loyalties and in their handling of political and government news. Some of these differences were differences within cities, having nothing to do with the newspaper's local environment. The Post-Dispatch, for example, was closer politically to the Daily News, and the Globe-Democrat to the Tribune, than each was to its local competitor. But in the early 1890s some between-cities differences in the newspapers were also evident, differences which were to take on significant political importance

later in the decade.

In view of the deep-seated partisan disagreements among these four newspapers, the similarity of their approaches to municipal politics and government is striking. A strain of middle-class mugwumpery ran through them all. They all cried for honest, decent, businesslike government. They railed against the party bosses, even of their own parties, and they pleaded with the respectable citizens to wake up and reclaim control of government. They supported nonpartisan movements that shared these goals. They pushed for traditional mugwump reforms, such as the suppression of crime and vice. They also all recognized the need for a positive government commitment to public works. They were local business boosters and proponents of public utility expansion. They also all varied from the mugwump tradition in a significant way. None of these newspapers had much interest in structural reform of government; none favored eliminating traditional democratic decision-making systems; all believed, and acted upon the belief, that the solution to the problems of local government lay in educating and arousing the masses of people to political action.

The newspapers were not wholly similar, however. Perhaps the most important difference already apparent in the early 1890s was a difference in coverage of public utilities. Both cities were undergoing great change in utility growth and development, and both city governments were constantly involved in the franchising of new utility systems and facilities. But the Chicago papers in this

period gave more attention to utility affairs in their news columns, and this coverage was frequently more detailed and penetrating. The Chicago papers focused a great deal of attention on the personal career of street railway magnate Charles T. Yerkes, and the Daily News was positively hostile in its coverage of his activities. In St. Louis, even the Post-Dispatch, while critical of monopolists and franchise boodlers in the Municipal Assembly, was not hostile to the companies and devoted more stories to utility expansion than to regulation. The Globe-Democrat and the Republic, another circulation leader, were almost totally uncritical of street railway company affairs.[77] Some other kinds of serious city problems, such as smoke and sewage pollution, also received more attention from the Chicago papers.[78]

Another important difference in the early 1890s between the newspapers of the two cities involved the local atmosphere of competition and partisanship. While newspaper competition was increasing in St. Louis, it was on the decline in Chicago. The Post-Dispatch in this period was aggressively trying to overtake the Globe-Democrat and the Republic in circulation and influence. This competition was evident in all the papers in editorial attacks upon each other, disputes over circulation claims, and partisan bickering.[79] In Chicago, despite partisan and ideological differences, the newspapers were beginning to cooperate closely on news gathering, advertising, and business matters. The formation in 1890 of the City Press Association, a cooperative news gathering agency, and in 1893 of the

Chicago Daily Newspaper Association marked the early stages of a continuing effort by publishers to ease the rigors of competition.[80] Though the publishers were chiefly concerned with collusion on advertising, production, and labor policy, they were also able to cooperate more easily on other matters, such as municipal reform politics. They had already worked together with the Citizens' Association on the great drainage canal project, and in the early 1890s they were eager to join together to prepare Chicago for the coming World's Fair.

The impact on newspaper practice of these diverging spirits of competition and cooperation can be seen clearly in the independent electoral movements in Chicago and St. Louis in 1891 and 1893. These election campaigns not only brought reform sentiment in these years into focus, however briefly, they also suggested something about the future role of newspapers in municipal reform politics.

In 1891, middle-class reformers in both Chicago and St. Louis decided to try to beat the party bosses by running independent businessmen's tickets for municipal office. Councilmen were to be elected in both cities, and a mayor in Chicago. The movement in each city had its chief champion. In St. Louis the Post-Dispatch quickly adopted the Independent Citizens' movement, calling it "a popular revolt against the rule of the bosses and boodlers in City Hall." The main issues in the campaign were franchise grabs, bribes, and spoils politics, and the goal was the "triumph of business government." The Post-Dispatch gave extensive coverage and support

to the campaign, and after it had failed, the paper pushed for a permanent independent organization to continue the fight.[81] In Chicago, the Daily News was blatantly biased in its news coverage in support of Elmer Washburn, the "Citizens'" candidate for mayor. Here, too, the issue was business versus bosses. Publisher Victor Lawson believed the time was ripe for real nonpartisanship, and he committed his personal prestige, his own money, and his newspaper's news and editorial columns to the fight. This campaign also failed, but the Daily News, like the Post-Dispatch, viewed it as a great lesson for the people in nonpartisan politics.[82]

The other newspapers in both cities took a milder interest in these 1891 campaigns. In St. Louis, the Globe-Democrat supported the Independent movement largely because the paper opposed the machine-picked Republican ticket. It thought that a citizens' movement might teach the bosses to nominate good men.[83] The St. Louis Republic dismissed the Independent movement as a "parlor party" with no real constituency other than a few large business firms. The Republic, with its usual hardline party loyalty, argued that the Democratic ticket was a good, business ticket and electing it would be the best thing for municipal reform. Its news coverage reflected these sentiments.[84] In Chicago, too, most papers were cool to the independent movement in 1891. The Republican Tribune and the Republican Inter Ocean supported the Republican candidate for mayor, Hempstead Washburne, in editorials and news coverage; the Democratic Times supported the regular Democratic candidate, DeWitt C. Cregier.[85]

The Tribune offered the usual argument that the Republican nominees were good enough and that an independent ticket merely played into the hands of the corrupt Democrats. For similar partisan reasons the Journal denounced the Citizens' movement as a "farce" and "humbug"; the Times called it a "big fizzle."[86]

By 1893 this situation had changed considerably. The Independent movement had deteriorated in St. Louis. It was also now endorsing regular party candidates rather than running its own. Both Republicans and Democrats were endorsed for Council seats, but the movement's choice for mayor was the Democratic candidate, James Bannerman. This was ideal for the Post-Dispatch, which liked nothing better than to support Democrats on nonpartisan tickets. The Post-Dispatch again gave extensive coverage to the Independent cause, calling it a fight against corrupt franchise grabs in the Council.[87] But now the Globe-Democrat had no interest in nonpartisanship. It favored the Republican, Cyrus Walbridge, whom the Post-Dispatch accused of being a supporter of franchise giveaways while in the Council. Though the Globe-Democrat and the Post-Dispatch had been on the same side in 1891, they now fell into bitter, old-fashioned partisan feuding. Meanwhile, the Republic virtually ignored the Independent campaign in its news coverage and called for the election of all the regular Democrats.[88] The election of 1893 signalled the end of nonpartisanship in St. Louis mayoral elections in the 1890s, and the newspapers seemed rather little concerned to see it pass. The day after the election, even the Post-Dispatch mourned, not the death of the

Independent movement, but the defeat of "an exceptionally good Democratic ticket."[89]

In Chicago the trend was quite the opposite. From partisan splits in 1891, the Chicago newspapers had by 1893 moved to an unprecedented level of cooperation. All the major English and German language dailies, with the exception of the Times, publicly joined together in March, 1893, to start their own nonpartisan movement to defeat Democratic perennial Carter Harrison's bid for a fifth term as mayor.[90] The press-sponsored Citizens' ticket was headed by Samuel W. Allerton, a millionaire meat packer. To the cooperating papers, it was the solid businessman versus the "gang candidate."[91] To the Times, by then owned by Carter Harrison, it was a "tyrannous, grasping, remorseless, conscienceless" conspiracy by a "newspaper trust" to terrorize Chicago voters. "Smash the press oligarchy!" was the Times' daily cry for weeks before the election.[92]

Despite its nearly solid front, the "newspaper trust" lost the election in 1893, and everyone suspected that the result suggested something fundamental about the power of the press. The Times put it most bluntly in its predictions of a Harrison landslide: Allerton had the newspapers, but no organization in the wards. Thus, he never had a chance. The Daily News agreed in its election post mortem that organization had been the key to Harrison's victory.[93] The Post-Dispatch, viewing the Chicago election from a distance, believed that the outcome did not prove, as some people were suggesting, that newspapers have no influence. In this case, the papers

gave the facts about Harrison that they thought would damn him. Instead, on the basis of those very facts, he won support. The press has its influence through the facts, the Post-Dispatch declared: "The influence of a newspaper on public opinion is measured by the information it imparts to men capable of doing their own thinking, and not by its control of the votes of a few persons who depend on somebody else to think for them."[94]

Though it was a St. Louis newspaper that provided the insight, it was the Chicago papers and reformers that learned the lesson. Information was vital. The issues of municipal reform involved practical, substantive, frequently physical problems -- not abstract questions of ideology or philosophy. Political involvement in the modern city required knowledge as well as passion. The newspapers preached this message throughout 1890-93. But information apparently would not suffice. Organization, as well as information, would be required for the new politics of municipal reform.

# # #

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

[1]Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. III: The Rise of a Modern City, 1871-1893 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), pp. 189-91, 395-99, 484, and Chapter 7; Chicago Daily News, Jan. 3, 1890, p. 2; Nov. 7, 1890, p. 4; Dec. 24, 1891, p. 1; Dec. 29, 1891, p. 4. See also Edward G. Mason, "Chicago," Atlantic Monthly, 70 (July, 1892), 33-40; and Sunset Club, Annual Report of the Sunset Club (Chicago, 1890-1900).

[2]"Address by Franklin MacVeagh," Addresses and Reports of the Citizens' Association of Chicago, 1874-1876 (Chicago: Hazlitt and Reed, 1876), pp. 8-9; Constitution of the Citizens' Association (Chicago: Citizens' Association, n.d.), in Citizens' Association Papers, Chicago Historical Society. See also William H. Tolman, Municipal Reform Movements in the United States (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1895), pp. 56-57. The Citizens' Association Papers at the Chicago Historical Society contain very little material from before 1900.

[3]These and other projects of the Citizens' Association are described in detail in Sidney I. Roberts, "Businessmen in Revolt: Chicago, 1874-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1960), chapter 1; Michael McCarthy, "Businessmen and Professionals in Municipal Reform: The Chicago Experience, 1877-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970), chapter 1; and Donald D. Marks, "Polishing the Gem of the Prairie: The Evolution of Civic Reform Consciousness in Chicago, 1874-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), chapter 3. See also Citizens' Association, Annual Reports, 1874-1900.

[4]See for example David P. Thelen, The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), pp. 10-11, 139-41. See also Gerald W. McFarland, Mugwumps, Morals, and Politics (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975), pp. 173-77.

[5]Marks, "Polishing the Gem of the Prairie," pp. 58-60, 67-68.

[6]"Address by Franklin MacVeagh," pp. 5-6.

[7]See, for example, Citizens' Association, Annual Report, 1889, pp. 3-4.

[8]"Annual Report of the President," Addresses and Reports of the Citizens' Association, p. 13.

[9]"Address by Franklin MacVeagh," p. 11. See also Marks, "Polishing the Gem of the Prairie," p. 69.

[10]Roberts, "Businessmen in Revolt," p. 16; Robert L. Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson and His Newspapers: A Study of the Chicago 'Daily News' and the Chicago 'Record'" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1959), p. 81; Citizens' Association, Annual Report, 1893, p. 2.

[11]Citizens' Association, Annual Report, 1892, p. 10.

[12]Chicago Tribune, Feb. 13, 1890, p. 4; April 21, 1890, p. 4; Jan. 7, 1891, p. 4.

[13]Chicago Daily News, Jan. 7, 1891, p. 4.

[14]A good general statement of the Daily News' editorial position on municipal reform is expressed in several editorials in the issue of Jan. 2, 1890, p. 4.

[15]Daily News, Jan. 11, 1890, p. 4.

[16]Ibid., Jan. 2, 1890, p. 4; July 16, 1890, p. 4; Nov. 8, 1890, p. 4; March 26, 1891, p. 4; April 8, 1891, p. 4.

[17]Ibid., May 2, 1890, p. 4; June 25, 1890, p. 4.

[18]Ibid., Sept. 17, 1890, p. 4; June 14, 1890, p. 4.

[19]On Lawson's feud with Yerkes, see Royal J. Schmidt, "The Chicago Daily News and Illinois Politics, 1876-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1957), p. 383. See also Chapter VI. Yerkes' career is summarized in Sidney I. Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron: Charles T. Yerkes," Business History Review, 35 (Autumn, 1961), 344-71. For a positive view of Yerkes as something of a modern urban transportation planner, see Robert D. Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers: Chicago Local Transportation in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971), chapters 7-9.

[20]Daily News, Feb. 24, 1890, p. 4; Jan. 23, 1890, p. 4.

[21]Victor Lawson to Charles T. Yerkes, Nov. 19, 1889; Nov. 25, 1889; Nov. 30, 1889; in Victor Lawson Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. See also Charles H. Dennis, Victor Lawson: His Life and His Work (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), pp. 284-85.

[22]Daily News, Jan. 25, 1890, p. 4; April 11, 1890, p. 4; April 17, 1890, p. 4.

[23]Ibid., Jan. 20, 1890, p. 5; Feb. 7, 1890, p. 3; Feb. 11, 1890, p. 6.

[24]Ibid., Jan. 14, 1891, p. 4; Aug. 22, 1890, p. 4. Service complaints against Chicago street railways were common in all the papers and were usually exaggerated, according to Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 120-35.

[25]Daily News, Oct. 11, 1890, p. 4; Oct. 25, 1890, p. 4; Oct. 28, 1890, p. 4; June 30, 1891, p. 4; Sept. 19, 1891, p. 4.

[26]See Table 3.

[27]Daily News, Feb. 18, 1890, p. 4; April 21, 1890, p. 4; Sept. 15, 1890, p. 4; Sept. 14, 1891, p. 4.

[28]Ibid., May 27, 1890, p. 1. See also Donald J. Abramoske, "The Chicago Daily News: A Business History, 1875-1901" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1963), p. 70.

[29]See Table 8.

[30]Tribune, Feb. 26, 1890, p. 4.

[31]Ibid., May 18, 1890, p. 4; June 5, 1890, p. 4; June 8, 1890, p. 1; Oct. 1, 1890, p. 4.

[32]Ibid., Aug. 21, 1890, p. 4.

[33]Ibid., Feb. 9, 1890, p. 12.

[34]Ibid., Aug. 3, 1890, p. 12; July 6, 1890, p. 12.

[35]See Tables 3 and 4.

[36]Tribune, Oct. 9, 1890, p. 1; Aug. 31, 1890, p. 1; Dec. 31, 1891, p. 4.

[37]Ibid., Feb. 26, 1890, p. 4; June 1, 1890, p. 12.

[38]During the first months of 1890, pollution in the South Fork of the Chicago River was practically a daily item, and the coverage was quite detailed. See, for example, Tribune, June 17, 1890, p. 4.

[39]Ibid., Dec. 7, 1890, p. 12; Feb. 6, 1891, p. 4; March 20, 1891, p. 4.

[40]Ibid., Dec. 14, 1890, p. 12.

[41]Ibid., daily stories, early July 1890. See, for example, July 10, 1890, p. 1.

[42]Ibid., Oct. 26, 1890, p. 12.

[43]William Hyde and Howard L. Conard, eds., Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, Vol. 1 (New York: Southern History Co., 1899), pp. 441-42.

[44]Thomas S. Barclay, The Movement for Municipal Home Rule in St. Louis, University of Missouri Studies, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Columbia, 1943), p. 56; Julian S. Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, 1878-1883 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 240-45.

[45]Alexander S. McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch': A Business Elite in the Life of a City, St. Louis, 1895-1915" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1976), pp. 199-202; Jack Muraskin, "Municipal Reform in Two Missouri Cities," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 26 (April, 1969), 222-23. See also Julian Ralph, "The New Growth of St. Louis," Harper's Monthly, 85 (Nov., 1892), 917-19; St. Louis Civic League, Yearbook, 1903 (St. Louis, 1903); and Civic League Collection, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

[46]Jack Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform in the 1890s: A Study in Failure," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 25 (Oct., 1968), p. 39; McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" 199-200.

[47]Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 39; Hyde and Conard, Encyclopedia, Vol. 4, pp. 2071-72.

[48]Hyde and Conard, Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, pp. 1620-22; Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," pp. 38-39. See also N.O. Nelson Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. This collection is small but includes interesting correspondence between Nelson and Bellamy and Nelson and "Golden Rule" Jones. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, March 8, 1891, p. 8; Aug. 16, 1891, p. 4; Aug. 19, 1891, p. 5.

[49]Post-Dispatch, Nov. 8, 1891, p. 4.

[50]Ibid., July 25, 1891, p. 4; Aug. 3, 1891, p. 4.

[51]Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, pp. 237-59.

[52]Post-Dispatch, June 8, 1890, p. 4.

[53]See Table 7.

[54]Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, pp. 265-66.

[55]Post-Dispatch, Jan. 28, 1890, p. 4; Feb. 12, 1891, p. 4.

[56]Rammelkamp, Pulitzer's Post-Dispatch, pp. 266-76.

[57]Post-Dispatch, June 9, 1890, p. 4; June 11, 1890, p. 4; June 25, 1890, p. 4.

[58]Ibid., Jan. 7, 1890, p. 4; Oct. 30, 1891, p. 4; March 23, 1893, p. 4.

[59]See Table 4.

[60]Post-Dispatch, June 8, 1890, pp. 14-15; July 2, 1890, p. 8; April 1, 1891, p. 4.

[61]Ibid., April 5, 1891, p. 4; March 27, 1891, p. 4.

[62]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1890, p. 4; Aug. 27, 1890, p. 2; Oct. 3, 1890, p. 4.

[63]Ibid., Jan. 5, 1890, p. 10; Jan. 24, 1890, p. 4; Feb. 1, 1890, p. 4.

[64]Ibid., Nov. 3, 1890, p. 4; April 9, 1891, p. 4.

[65]Ibid., Jan. 12, 1891, p. 4; Oct. 2, 1890, p. 4.

[66]Ibid., June 20, 1890, p. 4; Dec. 3, 1891, p. 4.

[67]Ibid., March 23, 1893, p. 4.

[68]Ibid., Sept. 23, 1890, p. 4; April 9, 1891, p. 4.

[69]Ibid., Jan. 7, 1891, p. 4; April 8, 1893, p. 4.

[70]See Tables 1 and 2.

[71]St. Louis Globe-Democrat, July 22, 1890, p. 6; Sept. 22, 1890, p. 4. See also Table 4.

[72]Globe-Democrat, July 2, 1890, p. 4; Jan. 2, 1890, p. 7; Aug. 8, 1890, p. 5.

[73]Ibid., Oct. 19, 1890, p. 6; March 12, 1891, p. 6; Feb. 26, 1891, p. 9; March 29, 1891, p. 6; April 2, 1893, p. 6; April 5, 1893, p. 6. See also Charles C. Clayton, Little Mack: Joseph B. McCullagh of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), pp. 162-63.

[74]Globe-Democrat, Oct. 26, 1890, p. 6; Feb. 2, 1890, p. 6; May 29, 1891, p. 6.

[75]Ibid., Sept. 18, 1890, p. 6.

[76]In the 1890-93 period, only the Daily News was a runaway circulation leader in its city. The Tribune was slightly behind the Herald, and the Post-Dispatch and the Globe-Democrat were no larger than the Republic. But these four were solid properties then and grew in prosperity and circulation throughout the 1890s. See Chapter III.

[77]See, for example, St. Louis Republic, Feb. 21, 1890, p. 4.

[78]See Table 7.

[79]Donald B. Oster, "Community Image in the History of Saint Louis and Kansas City" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1969), pp. 158-59. See also Jim Allee Hart, A History of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961), chapter 11.

[80]Abramoske, "The Chicago Daily News," p. 122.

[81]Post-Dispatch, March 1, 1891, p. 4; April 1, 1891, p. 4; April 8, 1891, p. 6; April 9, 1891, p. 4.

[82]Daily News, March 11, 1891, p. 4; March 20, 1891, p. 4; April 8, 1891, p. 4; Victor Lawson to S.S. Gregory, March 21, 1891; Lawson to F.M. Atwood, March 24, 1891; Lawson to Frank Drake, March 30, 1891; in Lawson Papers. See also Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson," pp. 92-101; Schmidt, "The Chicago Daily News," pp. 74-76.

[83]Globe-Democrat, Feb. 26, 1891, p. 9; April 6, 1891, p. 4.

[84]Republic, March 20, 1891, p. 6; April 4, 1891, p. 4; April 6, 1891, p. 4.

[85]Tribune, March 13, 1891, p. 4; March 19, 1891, p. 4; Chicago Inter Ocean, March 20, 1891, p. 4; March 24, 1891, p. 4; Chicago Times, March 23, 1891, p. 4; April 3, 1891, p. 1.

[86]Tribune, March 13, 1891, p. 4; Chicago Journal, March 18, 1891, p. 4; March 20, 1891, p. 4; Times, March 23, 1891, p. 4.

[87]Post-Dispatch, March 28, 1893, p. 4; March 29, 1893, p. 4; March 30, 1893, p. 1.

[88]Ibid., March 17, 1893, p. 4; March 20, 1893, p. 4; March 30, 1893, p. 1; March 31, 1893, p. 4; Globe-Democrat, April 1, 1893,

p. 4; April 2, 1893, p. 6; April 4, 1893, p. 6; Republic, April 2, 1893, p. 1; April 3, 1893, p. 1.

[89]Post-Dispatch, April 5, 1893, p. 4.

[90]See the newspapers' announcement carried March 9, 1893, p. 1, by the Tribune, the Inter Ocean, the Herald, the News-Record, the Staats-Zeitung, the Abendpost, the Daily News, the Evening Journal, the Evening Post, and the Dispatch. See also Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. 3, pp. 376-77.

[91]Tribune, April 1, 1893, p. 12; April 3, 1893, p. 4; Daily News, March 27, 1893, p. 4; March 29, 1893, p. 4.

[92]See, for example, Times, April 2, 1893, p. 4.

[93]Times, April 3, 1893, p. 2; Daily News, April 4, 1893, p. 4; April 4, 1893, p. 4. See also Pierce, A History of Chicago, Vol. III, p. 377.

[94]Post-Dispatch, April 8, 1893, p. 4.

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CHAPTER V

REFORMERS AND NEWSPAPERS, 1894-1896

In the years 1894 to 1896, the issues of municipal reform in Chicago and St. Louis changed a little, while the mood and style of reform efforts changed quite a lot. In both cities, citizens began to organize political coalitions that relied on the new politics of municipal reform. These groups (the Chicago Civic Federation and Municipal Voters' League and the St. Louis Civic Federation) were fairly broadly based, cutting across class, ethnic, and neighborhood lines. They were issue-oriented, seeking to politicize some of the nagging problems of urbanization. They were more or less devoted to information and publicity, believing that what citizens most needed were the simple facts about concrete urban problems.

In both Chicago and St. Louis, the impetus for this change in reform mood and organization was the depression of 1893. The impact of this economic crisis was enormous all across the country. Between 1892 and 1894, real income fell 18 percent and unemployment reached 20 percent nationwide. The large cities were hit the hardest. Though their own local industries were failing, the cities attracted the unemployed from the smaller towns and countryside, and were soon filled with masses of hungry, desperate people.[1] The depression also badly hurt municipal governments. While the demand for city

services and public works increased because of the economic crisis, city revenues, already inadequate, fell off.[2] The impact on municipal reform was not so much to change the issues as to aggravate them. Utility expansion and regulation, street paving and cleaning, taxes and assessments, economy and honesty in government -- these were the same concerns that had long filled the newspapers and the agendas of at least some municipal reformers. Now, with services deteriorating and city expenses mounting, these issues became more important to more people. The economic crisis of city government brought together individuals and groups from all classes and sections of the city in support of municipal reform.

Another event of 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition, also influenced the organization of the Chicago and the St. Louis Civic Federations. The great Chicago Fair deeply touched popular thought on urban planning, municipal organization, and social cooperation. The beauty and order of the White City stood in stark contrast to the ugly chaos of the city that surrounded it.[3] The Chicago Civic Federation grew up in the flush of social concern and cooperation that came with the Fair, and the St. Louis Civic Federation was directly modelled after its Chicago counterpart.

Though born of the same crisis and organized on the same model, the two Civic Federations moved separate ways. The trend in Chicago after 1894 was toward the new politics. Reformers turned more and more to political activity and election campaigns. They learned how to use traditional political organization in combination with mass

communication to politicize key issues of municipal reform, especially public utility regulation. And they were successful. In 1896 and after, the Municipal Voters' League, an off-shoot of the Civic Federation, became a powerful political force in Chicago. The St. Louis Civic Federation, on the other hand, never became an important political force in that city. For a brief moment, it united the fragmented reform interests of St. Louis, but partisan, class, and ethnic tensions were too great. By the end of 1896, the St. Louis Civic Federation already showed signs of the impending collapse that would come in early 1897.

The newspapers of Chicago and St. Louis reflected and anticipated these divergent paths of reform. The papers of both cities welcomed the new Civic Federations in 1894 and 1895. These new organizations promised the kind of middle-class mugwump reforms that the papers had supported for years. With their interest in the life of the city as an organic whole, the newspapers liked the notion of a central clearinghouse for reform ideas and activities. But the newspapers' support for and involvement with the new reform movements in 1894-96 were not the same in Chicago and St. Louis. The interests and traditions of the Chicago press turned out to be much more useful to the new reform movement there than was the case in St. Louis. The Chicago papers became closely linked to the reform movement and closely allied with each other in reform politics. The St. Louis movement, on the other hand, was wrecked by partisan competition and involvement with public utility corporations -- influences that

likewise colored the newspapers' news and editorial policy in 1894-96 and had for many years before.

II

The Chicago Civic Federation was born in an extraordinary mass meeting held November 12, 1893. The World's Fair had closed just a few days before, the economic depression was deepening in Chicago, and the spirit of civic concern and cooperation flowed throughout the city. One participant in the meeting remembered it as a gathering unlike any other that had ever been held in Chicago. All classes, occupations, and sections of the city were represented. There were preachers and professors, businessmen and club women, saloonkeepers and gamblers, and even one of the men convicted in the Haymarket affair.[4] That night the gathering selected a committee of five to name a larger organizing committee. This larger committee, unlike the old Citizens' Association, included trade unionists, ministers, educators, and social workers as well as businessmen and lawyers. The goal was to unite all the philanthropic and reform forces of the city.[5]

The new Civic Federation quickly began to plan attacks on a variety of municipal problems, but within a month it became clear that unemployment relief was the single most urgent need of the city. Forty percent of the workers in Chicago's 2,000 largest firms were unemployed, and thousands faced starvation in the winter of 1893-94. Concern for the suffering of the unemployed and fear of possible

social violence led Federation organizers to postpone plans for other reforms and to concentrate their efforts on the development of the Central Relief Association to coordinate relief and charitable work.[6] "The emergency which existed in the fall of 1893 was one with which existing agencies were unprepared to deal," a prominent participant wrote. "It was necessary to extemporize agencies for meeting the extraordinary and appalling demand for special relief."[7]

While relief was the first concern that winter, the Civic Federation in 1894 quickly expanded the scope of its activities to embrace most of the traditional programs of local municipal and social reformers. The work was conducted through six departments: political, municipal, philanthropic, industrial, educational, and moral. Much of the Federation's effort was in the mugwump reform tradition. The Municipal Department in 1894, for example, was interested almost exclusively in structural reforms, such as securing from the legislature a new city charter, a civil service system, a primary election law, a corrupt practices act, and changes in the laws regulating revenues and special assessments. Meanwhile, the Moral Department, in perhaps the most visible of the Federation's activities, led a vigorous and temporarily successful battle against organized gambling in Chicago.[8] Though the social trauma of the depression had begun to weaken many reformers' traditional faith in individualism, the old mugwump ideals died hard, even for those who worked in the new "scientific" relief efforts. Journalist Ray Stannard Baker nicely captured this lingering mugwump spirit when he

wrote in 1895 that "the Philanthropic Department is now engaged in the work of driving beggars from the street."[9]

What set the Civic Federation apart from the Citizens' Association was not so much its reform projects as its organization and style. Because of the impact of the depression and the Fair, reform sentiment ran deeply in Chicago in 1894-96, uniting diverse groups and interests. Active branches of the Civic Federation were set up in every ward, and even some precinct councils were organized. The leaders of the Civic Federation claimed to be more pragmatic and practical, less tied to theory and ideology, more devoted to simple facts than previous reform movements. The Federation also embraced the idea that publicity was the key to reform. Federation leaders believed that all sane people would support their reform programs if they only knew the facts. To this end, the Civic Federation actively courted the favor of the Chicago press, and the press was easily wooed.[10]

Most of the newspapers of Chicago heartily welcomed the new Civic Federation. When the Federation was incorporated as a permanent organization in February, 1894, most papers wished it well. The Daily News and the Tribune were especially happy to see a cross-section of nationalities, creeds, and occupations united in the cause of municipal reform. The papers believed that the Citizens' Association had become too exclusive in its old age, and they hoped the new Civic Federation would avoid this tendency.[11] The Federation later drew some partisan fire from the press from time to time. The Herald

sometimes thought it was too Republican, or the Tribune thought it not Republican enough. But in general the Civic Federation's policies and programs were congenial to the mainline newspapers of Chicago.[12]

The Daily News and the Tribune, two of the leading newspapers of Chicago, both gave extensive coverage to Federation activities in the period 1894-96. The two papers regularly carried accounts and commentary on the work of the Central Relief Association in early 1894, on the Federation's crusades against gambling and filthy streets in the fall of 1894, and the campaign for municipal civil service reform in the spring of 1895. But the reform agendas of the Civic Federation and the newspapers were not identical in 1894-96. Both the Daily News and the Tribune were more interested than the Civic Federation in public utilities and politics. As in the early 1890s, the newspapers' chief goal was to involve more people in political campaigns and to elect "good men," and the definition of "good men" increasingly involved stands on public utility questions. To some extent the Civic Federation shared this goal, and the newspapers applauded the Federation's effort to broaden the constituency for reform. But the newspapers were less enthusiastic about the Federation's faith in legal and structural reform. The editorial philosophies and news coverage of the Daily News and the Tribune in 1894-96 anticipated a kind of new politics of reform somewhat different from the modified mugwumpery of the Civic Federation.

Of the major Chicago newspapers, the Daily News was probably the

Civic Federation's most faithful ally. The spirit of mugwumpery united the paper and the Federation on many issues of reform. The Daily News, for example, avidly promoted the charitable work of the Central Relief Association. Like the organizers of the relief efforts, the paper also believed that feeding lazy people would breed paupers and that vagrants should be run out of town.[13] The Daily News remained a crusader against gambling, race tracks, and all-night saloons, and it praised the Civic Federation's campaigns on this front. Civil service reform was another mugwump interest shared by the Daily News and the Civic Federation. Publisher Victor Lawson was a board member of the Joint Civil Service Reform Committee, and the paper pushed for passage of the Federation-sponsored civil service act in the city referendum of April, 1895.[14] The Daily News was happy with the Federation's general commitment to "honesty and efficiency." Lawson served on the Federation's Central Council, and throughout the period he supported the work of the Federation directly with Daily News money.[15]

The Daily News, however, had its own ideas about what was wrong with the city and what the Civic Federation should do about it. As in the early 1890s, the Daily News believed that the chief problem of municipal government was the corrupt influence of public utility corporations. When the Civic Federation was incorporated in February, 1894, the first suggestion the Daily News had for the fledgling group was that it investigate a recent gas franchise that the paper opposed.[16] What to do about public utility franchises, a

problem of secondary importance to the Civic Federation, was of central concern to the Daily News. About one-third of its local government and public affairs stories in 1894-95 dealt with utilities, and half of these were about regulation or service complaints and problems.[17]

This high interest in public utilities in the mid-1890s was related to the effects of the World's Fair and the depression. In January, 1894, with the city sinking into economic stagnation and poverty, Charles T. Yerkes reported that the Fair had been a financial bonanza for his street railways and that 1893 had been a year of enormous profits. The great crowds of 1893, however, had generated public resentment as well as profit, according to the Daily News. Despite Yerkes claims that service was satisfactory, the Daily News said that people were increasingly angry over irregular service, crowded cars, insolent conductors, and the tendency of the cable system to break down completely for hours at a time. But the main issue was money. With the city government strapped for revenue and the people unable or unwilling to pay higher taxes, the Daily News sought ways to squeeze money out of public utility corporations that held municipal franchises.[18]

Making the utilities pay for their special privileges was a theme with several variations. The "franchise grab" was the Daily News' most common target. Virtually every time the city granted a utility franchise, the paper complained that inadequate compensation was guaranteed to the city. Usually the paper charged that boodle

was involved -- that the companies bribed the aldermen to avoid paying the city for the use of city streets. The Daily News gave detailed coverage to many gas, electric, and railway franchise grants in 1894-96 and in virtually every case charged the Council with boodling or at least with failure to exact adequate compensation.[19] To a lesser extent, the Daily News pressed for higher taxes on street railway and other corporate properties as a source of revenue. In 1896, the paper also gave some attention and support to a movement in Chicago for lower streetcar fares. The paper argued that the agitation for lower fares was the natural result of the companies' greed. The street railway managers should not have been surprised that people were no longer willing to pay five cents for three cents worth of service.[20]

Franchise compensation and revenue were not the only utility interests of the Daily News. The period 1894-96 was a time of rapid electrification of Chicago's horse and cable railways, and the Daily News was a vigorous opponent of overhead trolley wires and excessive speed on the new electric lines. Whenever a company asked the Council for permission to electrify a line, the paper raised the spector of the "deadly overhead trolley." The paper usually argued that the overhead wires were ugly as well as dangerous and would hurt property values.[21] The Daily News was especially opposed to allowing overhead trolleys and fast electric cars in the congested downtown business district. When one company proposed a trolley line for busy Clark Street, the Daily News called the idea "simply robbery

and murder." The paper applauded an agreement in 1896 between the city and one of the Yerkes lines to keep trolleys out of downtown: "The Dearborn street horse cars are slow; but they don't kill anybody."[22]

Though the Daily News was hostile to the overhead trolley and to most public utility franchises, it was not in principle opposed to rapid transit or to the growth of public utilities. Half the paper's stories on utilities were about expansion or routine business matters.[23] To the Daily News, the overhead electric trolley was simply a cheap, inferior technology. The paper favored an underground wire or storage battery system for electric surface lines. Electric propulsion could be a step forward, the paper told its readers, but not in the form of the dangerous overhead trolley. The Daily News believed that the best solution lay with elevateds and subways, especially in congested areas.[24]

The Daily News admitted that the trolley problem was caused partly by the tremendous and rapid growth of Chicago. The immediate solution to a problem, not the best solution, was sometimes the only choice.[25] But the Daily News also argued that greedy, arrogant corporations were much to blame. Yerkes and other street railway managers professed to believe that the underground electric system was impractical in Chicago because of the wet climate and poor drainage, and they may have been right. But the Daily News viewed such arguments as covers for schemes to make excessive profits at the expense and peril of the public.[26] On other fronts, too, the

Daily News fought what it perceived to be the public's battles against "swinish" corporations. Throughout 1894 and 1895, for example, the paper regularly and vigorously campaigned against the Illinois Central Railroad's "hoggish" control of the city's lake front and its defiance of various city orders. The paper always referred to the IC as the "All Hog" line and rarely missed a chance to expose its latest outrage. Front-page news stories regularly carried headlines such as "'All Hog' Shows Tusks," "'All Hog' Needs a Pen," and "'All Hog's' Latest Grunt."[27]

The Daily News also devoted an unusually large number of stories to health and pollution regulation. Many of these were attacks on businesses for ignoring smoke control ordinances. The paper denounced selfish corporations for putting their "petty profit" ahead of the "health and happiness of 1,600,000 people."[28]

In much of its news coverage and commentary on municipal government in 1894-96, the Daily News professed this kind of interest in the city as a whole. For example, the paper frequently asserted that the whole people, not just owners of abutting property, owned the streets of the city. The paper consistently argued against the plan of some reformers (especially the Tribune) to give veto power over utility extensions to frontage property owners.[29] Instead of taking power away from city government and giving it to property owners, the Daily News preferred that city power be extended to include municipal ownership of lighting and transit utilities. In its advocacy of municipal ownership, the paper believed that it was

being completely practical and non-ideological. Municipal enterprise was simply the people doing collectively for themselves what private capital could not be trusted to do properly.[30]

Of course, the people could act collectively only through the City Council, and this was the rub for municipal reformers. Like most reformers of the time, the Daily News believed the Council was thoroughly corrupt. Denunciation of the "shamelessness, insolence, and depravity" of the "cheap, ignorant, vicious pot-house politicians" in the Council was a standard theme of the paper's local government reporting and commentary, especially around election time.[31] Sometimes the Daily News became so thoroughly disgusted with the Council that it endorsed such structural reforms as a stronger mayor or fewer wards. But this was rare. As in the early '90s, the paper paid little attention to structural reform schemes. The Daily News was wary of the Council's power but unwilling to curtail it.[32]

The solution to the problem of a corrupt Council was simply to elect better aldermen. This was the Daily News' constant refrain. The paper was skeptical of structural and organizational reform plans, arguing that the people were supreme and got what they wanted and that "the unifying influence of public opinion will put an abrupt end to machine politics in Chicago one of these days."[33] The Daily News believed that voting was the key. If only all eligible voters would vote, especially in the primaries to elect nominating convention delegates, all would be well. This long-standing faith

in the electoral process led the Daily News to endorse and to give enthusiastic coverage to the Civic Federation's fledgling efforts in March, 1895, to conduct research and publish information about aldermanic candidates. The paper believed that the people would vote for the right men if they knew the facts. In the opinion of the Daily News, "nothing in a political way that is stirring now deserves more consideration or heartier support than the effort to get decent men nominated for aldermen in the different wards."[34]

The Chicago Tribune was a little more skeptical than the Daily News of the Civic Federation in 1894-96, but generally it liked the new group's programs and style, and it gave regular coverage to Federation activities throughout the period. The Tribune remained an organ of Republicanism in the mid-'90s, and it was sometimes dismayed that the Federation did not limit its criticism to deserving Democrats. After a Republican became mayor in 1895 the Tribune decided that the Civic Federation was a bit too negative and should occasionally find something nice to say about city government.[35] But on substantive projects and programs the paper was almost always supportive. The Federation's work in unemployment relief, its attacks on gambling and vice, its efforts to clean up the city's streets, and its crusades for a civil service act and other legislation all fit nicely into the Tribune's generally mugwumpish view of municipal reform.[36]

The Tribune, however, had a reform agenda that differed in some respects from that of the Civic Federation. Like the Daily News, the

Tribune was chiefly concerned with public utilities and the politics of public utility franchises. During 1894-95, the paper devoted to utility matters about a third of all its stories on local government, politics, and public affairs. Like the Daily News, the Tribune's first suggestion to the newly incorporated Civic Federation was that it investigate and expose the "whole iniquitous history" of a recent gas franchise ordinance.[37] As in the early '90s, the Tribune still blamed the corrupt City Council more than the corrupting utility corporations for what it saw as a never-ending parade of franchise scandals. But in the mid-'90s, the paper became more critical of the companies as well. To the Tribune, these depression years were years of great crisis for the city, and the paper reacted with great conservatism. With neither government nor private business to be trusted with power over taxes and utilities, the Tribune urged that power be returned to the people, to individual taxpayers and property owners.

The Tribune could scarcely have thought worse of the Chicago City Council in 1894-96. In the Tribune's opinion, the Council was nothing but a gang of "knaves and scoundrels" hungry for boodle and patronage. The paper carried five or more stories a week about local bosses, boodle, and corruption in 1894-95, and the majority of these were shots at the Council. Probably the two chief problems of city government in 1894-96, according to the Tribune, were extravagant spending and utility franchise grabbing. The underlying causes of these problems were easily identified and simply put: "negligence,

sloth, and wrongdoing."[38]

To the Tribune, even the financial crisis facing the city government in early 1894 was the work, not so much of the general economic depression, but of an extravagant Council. The problem was not hard times but hardened Democratic politicians and stuffed city payrolls. "It is in the power of the municipal authorities to save hundreds of thousands of dollars," the paper declared, "by dropping the loafers, the bummers, the sluggards, the political pensioners, and the incorrigible pap-suckers who consume now so large a share of the city's revenue and who do no work."[39] The Tribune also argued throughout the early months of 1894 that the city should reduce municipal salaries. The paper frequently suggested sarcastically that city workers would surely not object to reduced salaries since they were Democrats and the Democratic Party was the party of low wages. With their free-trade tariff, the Democrats had already arranged for low wages in the factories. Why not in the city government, too?[40] Though municipal revenues were decreasing because of falling assessments during the depression, the Tribune was adamantly opposed in 1894-95 to increasing either assessments or tax levies. The Tribune liked the low tax and debt limits. The "tax-eaters" squealed, but the taxpayers rejoiced.[41] The Tribune almost seemed to view the depression as a kind of blessing for municipal reform. It chastened a corrupt Council.

Besides stuffing the payroll with bummers, the aldermen also robbed the city by giving away valuable utility franchises in exchange

for bribes and boodle. This was another of the Tribune's recurrent charges against the Council. Virtually all stories about franchise grants charged that the Council was bribed or at least that inadequate compensation was guaranteed to the city. Several franchise grants were big, continuing stories for the Tribune in this period.[42] The Ogden Gas and the Cosmopolitan Electric franchises, passed in February, 1895, were perhaps the ultimate "monuments of corruption" in the Tribune's view. The Council could simply not be trusted with valuable public property. The paper declared:

> The Legislature is now in session. It ought not to adjourn until it has passed a law taking out of the hands of the idiots and the boodlers whom the people seem to prefer to send to the Council the power to grant franchises. If the Council chamber must be a den of thieves, so be it, but do take the precaution of putting out of the reach of its inmates the property of citizens or nothing will be left to them.[43]

The Tribune was scarcely more pleased with the utility companies than with the Council. Much more than in the early '90s, the Tribune took up the fight against Charles T. Yerkes. The paper almost always mentioned him by name when discussing his street railways, and by 1896 had virtually nothing but contempt for him. News stories carried headlines such as "Yerkes' Amazing Effrontery" and "Yerkes' Latest Scheme." Front-page cartoons depicted him as an octopus or in a streetcar running down the public. The paper made much of Yerkes building a "palace" for himself on Fifth Avenue in New York with money wrung out of the working people of Chicago.[44] The Tribune had every kind of complaint against Yerkes. It was a daily litany, ranging from corrupting the Council to running cold cars in

winter.

Many of the complaints against Yerkes had to do with electrification and the overhead trolley. Like the Daily News and most of the other papers of Chicago, the Tribune regularly carried stories and editorials denouncing the overhead trolley as dangerous and unsightly. Throughout the period, the paper continually attacked the Council for permitting Yerkes and other traction magnates to use the trolley. The Tribune also carried stories arguing in some detail the practicality of underground wire systems.[45] In 1895, the paper accused the Council of "criminal folly" in allowing overhead wires, which the Tribune claimed had killed forty-six people around the country in the previous eighteen months.[46] In 1896, the Tribune also fought the Yerkes companies and other street railways over the issue of lower fares. The paper believed the five cent fare was exorbitant, and it supported and gave detailed coverage to movements for lower fares in May and December, 1896.[47]

While the Daily News believed that the corrupt symbiosis between the Council and the utility corporations could be ended by municipal ownership, the Tribune was always opposed to anything that smacked of socialism. Municipal ownership would only mean more spoils for the wily politicians and more taxes for the beleaguered property owners.[48] Apparently, no man and no institution could be trusted with the public's business. In 1894 and 1895, the Tribune seemed increasingly to fear power itself in municipal government. While some reformers sought to centralize power to make power holders more

accountable, the Tribune sought to diffuse it -- to return power to individual citizens.

The Tribune argued that the aldermen should be stripped of the power to grant utility franchises. "If there is no other way of making Aldermen honest than by leaving nothing lying around loose for them to steal," the paper reasoned, "then that way will have to be adopted."[49] But then where should that power reside? The Tribune was against a plan frequently proposed by reformers to give the power to a regulatory board, because corporations could influence a board of like-minded businessmen as easily as they influenced a corrupt Council. Instead, the Tribune favored simply giving the power to property owners. Throughout the period, the paper pressed for the state legislature to give abutting property owners veto power over any utility installations on their street. The Tribune also favored a system that would allow public works improvements only upon petition of a majority of property owners.[50]

In other ways also the Tribune sought to decentralize power. The paper was a great proponent of civil service reform and of other measures to reduce the influence of partisan politics. The Tribune liked the ward system of Council representation, suggesting that general elections or other structural reforms might lead to worse problems because of concentrated power.[51] One of the favorite reform panaceas of Tribune editor Joseph Medill was the limitation of the mayor to a single term. This, Medill reasoned, would free the mayor from partisan worries about re-election and allow him to think

only about the public's business. If the one-term limit failed to take the mayor out of politics, the Tribune suggested that "any five respectable citizens" should be able to have him impeached in a court of law.[52]

Such a conservative attitude about power colored much of the Tribune's municipal reporting and commentary in the mid-1890s, but it was seemingly inconsistent with some of the paper's other local interests. As in the early '90s, the Tribune was frequently a proponent of active government, devoting many stories and editorials to the need for street cleaning and paving, garbage and sewage improvements, and smoke abatement.[53] When the right kind of mayor came into office, such as the Republican businessman George B. Swift in 1895, the Tribune softened its stand against the "tax-eaters." Suddenly, the paper began to talk about the problem of low assessments and low revenues and even the need for a higher city tax levy.[54] With Swift in charge, the Tribune grew less worried about the public's power or its pocketbook.

In this the Tribune was not really inconsistent. The paper admitted that taking power away from the Council was a clumsy, stop-gap suggestion. In the long run, the paper believed that the only real solution lay in the election of honest aldermen. The only real reform would come through the education of voters.[55] The Tribune had little faith in most structural reforms of government. In rejecting the idea of at-large aldermanic elections, the paper declared that "mechanical devices for improving the quality of the Council are

useless. Reform cannot be wrought by statute. It can be secured only by hard and persistent work in the wards."[56] Like the Daily News, the Tribune was very enthusiastic about the Civic Federation's efforts in the 1895 elections to collect and publish information on aldermanic candidates. The Tribune believed that the Federation should operate largely as an educational force for reform. And no one, the paper believed, needed or wanted education more than the voter at election time.[57]

III

The St. Louis Civic Federation had a beginning rather less auspicious for the new politics than its Chicago prototype. While the Chicago Federation was born in a monster mass meeting of all kinds of citizens, the St. Louis group was hatched by a group of businessmen in a series of private conferences. The idea was suggested by a visiting Chicago man who was a member of the Chicago Federation. A small group of upper-class businessmen took up the idea in October, 1895; they persuaded their friends in the business community to sign incorporation petitions; and within a couple of weeks the St. Louis Civic Federation was ready for work. The aims of the Federation were vague and thoroughly mugwumpish: to secure "honesty, efficiency, and economy of municipal government."[58]

Despite its upper-class business origin, the St. Louis Civic Federation in early 1896 began to attract the interest of reformers from a broader range of classes and occupations. The economic

depression hit less severely in St. Louis than in many other large cities, but its impact was nonetheless traumatic. No banks or key corporations failed in St. Louis, but thousands of workers were laid off, and municipal government was sorely pressed for funds.[59] As in Chicago, the depression in St. Louis pushed diverse groups together to work on problems of mutual concern. In April, 1896, the Civic Federation was reorganized to unite a wider range of reform-minded groups and individuals. The leader of the revived Federation was the Rev. W.W. Boyd, pastor of the upper-class Second Baptist Church. Though he had close ties with the downtown business community, Boyd was something of a Single Taxer in social sentiment, and he had good relations with local Socialists and organized labor. By the summer of 1896, the St. Louis Civic Federation had become a cross-class reform organization, supported by labor leaders and social reformers as well as by mugwumps and conservative businessmen.[60]

The St. Louis Civic Federation in May of 1896 was a remarkably diverse collection of reformers -- remarkable mainly because they had managed to get together at all. In its brief summer of unity, the Civic Federation probably represented a broader range of reform interests than its Chicago counterpart. But unity was fragile. Boyd's aim was to commit the Federation to a variety of progressive reforms, including stricter control of utility franchises, tax reform, and improvements in sanitation and public health. But pressures from the more conservative business faction made it difficult for the Federation to move much beyond a general call for "clean

city government."[61] Factions within the Federation continued to work at cross purposes until the organization was torn apart in the spring of 1897.

The organization and style of the St. Louis Civic Federation under Boyd's leadership resembled the Chicago Federation. The work was divided among six departments, just as in Chicago: political action, municipal, philanthropic, industrial, educational, and moral. Ward and precinct councils were organized to carry on projects at the local level, and some neighborhood reform groups were brought in as local affiliates. Like the Chicago group, the St. Louis Civic Federation was nonpartisan and largely nonpolitical. Its tools were "investigation, publication, agitation, and organization."[62] Boyd believed that exposure of the facts of municipal corruption would arouse the people and the people would prevail. He told a Post-Dispatch reporter that getting "the real facts" should be the first step:

> In municipal reform it is not theories we want but facts. The second practical thing to be done would be to give the widest publicity to these facts, for that is the radical treatment of diseased public conditions. Let the people know what their servants are doing. Promote public intelligence and this knowledge of the facts would soon pass into public opinion as to civic duty. This public opinion would become irresistible.[63]

The newspapers of St. Louis were favorable in their reactions to the Civic Federation, though from the beginning their comments reflected their conflicting interests in local politics and reform. The two rival Democratic newspapers, the Post-Dispatch and the Republic, were friendly but cool. The Democratic Party of St. Louis

was breaking up in 1895-96 over the currency issue, with the Post-Dispatch firmly on the side of free coinage of silver and the Republic on the side of "sound money" but trying desperately to straddle the chasm between the two party factions. In their first comments on the Civic Federation, both papers warned of great dangers ahead if the Federation were to become the tool of party factions or special interests.[64] Meanwhile, the Globe-Democrat, in keeping with its habitual indifference to local public affairs, had no editorial comment at all on the founding of the Civic Federation. When the Federation was reorganized in April, 1896, the Post-Dispatch praised it for embracing all classes of citizens. The Globe-Democrat praised it for embracing the "best citizens."[65] None of the St. Louis newspapers carried more than a handful of stories about the work of the Civic Federation in 1896.

Like the factions of the Civic Federation, the newspapers of St. Louis could agree on only the most general themes of municipal reform. They were against "the bosses" and for "the people." They believed in the power of facts and of public opinion. But even more than in the early 1890s, they were split on specific issues and programs, especially the key issue that most united the newspapers of Chicago: public utilities. The St. Louis newspapers were still sometimes more radical, sometimes more conservative, and always more contentious and partisan than the newspapers of Chicago. Though the Chicago papers disagreed on details of policy in 1894-96, they encouraged and supported the involvement of the Civic Federation in

electoral politics as the most effective road to reform. The St. Louis papers feared that political action by their city's Civic Federation might play into the hands of the wrong party or party faction.

The Post-Dispatch in the mid-1890s continued to be the chief newspaper proponent of municipal reform in St. Louis, as it had been since its founding in 1878. The paper's news reporting and commentary on city government and politics reflected its ideological stance in the left wing of the Democratic Party. Though never an obsequious party sheet, the paper under Joseph Pulitzer usually supported Democrats and opposed high tariffs, trusts, special economic privilege, and the power of large institutions in general (except newspapers, of course). Col. Charles H. Jones, who took over management and editorial direction of the Post-Dispatch in February, 1895, continued this policy and also made the paper an organ of free silver and Bryanism. The Post-Dispatch's approach to municipal problems was shaped by this economic world view. Jones in particular was most at home with talk about fighting the "money power" and "standing with and for the people against the encroachments of plutocratic monopoly and usurping privilege." But for Jones only the rhetoric was radical. He affirmed the rights as well as the obligations of property; he believed in the harmony of capital and labor; and he committed his newspaper to work above all for "the progress, the prosperity, and the glory of St. Louis."[66]

In the city as in the nation, the big problem of government, the

Post-Dispatch regularly declared, was special privilege. Business corrupted government because business could make money through government. "Good government is not possible while private business is made the special care of legislation," the paper said. "When 'business' is taken out of politics, the occupation of the good government clubs will be gone."[67] As in the early 1890s, the Post-Dispatch devoted considerable space to attacks on party bosses and political machines, especially the local Democratic boss, Ed Butler. But in 1894-96, the paper laid more of the blame for bad government at the feet of "the big rascals," the respectable and wealthy businessmen who made money from special legislation. Throughout the period, in stories and editorials, the Post-Dispatch argued that "as long as it is possible for private individuals to make money out of legislation or save money by defeating proposed legislation, the boss will have a natural place in politics."[68]

In a large city like St. Louis, public utility franchises were the chief source of private profit in government and hence the chief source of corruption. The Post-Dispatch in 1894-95 gave somewhat less attention to utility matters than did the Chicago papers, but still nearly one-fourth of its stories on local government and public affairs were utility stories. Most of these dealt with regulation or service problems, and almost always when discussing franchise grants the paper complained that the city was giving away valuable privileges for nothing.[69] These franchises were then capitalized up to the limit of their earning power, with the unearned increment going

to the "monopolists" instead of the people. This was a standard Post-Dispatch theme in stories about franchise grants throughout the period. The paper also covered and supported the few attempts made by the Municipal Assembly to force companies to compensate the city.[70]

As in Chicago, the depression had something to do with the Post-Dispatch's intensified interest in franchise giveaways. The city government was broke. City institutions were neglected; important public works were postponed. The Post-Dispatch regularly blamed the lack of sufficient revenue on franchise grabbing and tax dodging by street railways.[71]

Since money was the issue, the Post-Dispatch had a simple solution to the utility problem: sell franchises to the highest bidder. The paper had pushed this idea sporadically in the early '90s, but in 1895 it became a regular feature of most stories and editorials on franchises. The Post-Dispatch believed this policy would purify politics and raise revenue at the same time.[72] The Missouri legislature passed a law in 1895 (the Julian Law) that embodied this principle. It required cities to grant a franchise to the bidder who offered to pay the highest percentage (above two percent per year) of gross revenues. Though the Julian Law was never enforced and was found unconstitutional in 1898, the Post-Dispatch loved it and gave much coverage to it.[73] The paper also believed the street railways should pay more property taxes, including taxes on the value of their franchises. In January, 1896, for example, State Labor

Commissioner Lee Meriwether released a preliminary report on an investigation of street railway franchise values and property assessments in St. Louis. The statistics showed that street railway properties were assessed at much lower value than other property. The Post-Dispatch gave the report big play and argued that it was convincing proof that the companies were swindling the city.[74]

The Post-Dispatch battled the street railways on other fronts as well. The paper was particularly critical during this period of the companies' indifference to safety. In late 1894 and early 1895, the Post-Dispatch conducted a crusade to force the street railways to install safety fenders to prevent pedestrians hit by cars from going under the wheels. The crusade took the usual form, with stories of bloody accidents, editorials denouncing the companies, a petition campaign to influence the Municipal Assembly, and daily editorial paragraphs. The paper was aggressively serious, declaring that "the managers of our electric roads who run cars without fenders are nothing less than murderers, and the lowest kind of murderers -- those who murder innocent beings for the sake of a few paltry dollars."[75] In March, the Municipal Assembly passed a fender ordinance, but because of technical problems and probably deliberate delays by the companies, years passed before the problem was satisfactorily resolved.[76] The Post-Dispatch was also a proponent of the three-cent fare. The three-cent fare movement never made much headway in St. Louis, but the paper reported on the movement's progress in other cities, especially in Detroit and Chicago.[77]

Though the Post-Dispatch fought the street railways over the issues of compensation and safety, it was not as hostile on some other matters as the Chicago papers were. From time to time, the paper carried stories that had no other purpose than to boast that St. Louis had "the finest street railroad system in the world." In 1895, St. Louis had more miles of electric railways than any other city in the United States, and the Post-Dispatch believed the system was one of the wonders and great economic assets of the city.[78] Electrification was never a public relations problem for the companies in St. Louis. On a few occasions, the Post-Dispatch expressed a preference for underground wire systems, but it was never hostile to the overhead trolley. The companies were able to adopt the trolley without opposition, much to the surprise of some observers who were familiar with the Chicago experience. A writer in Engineering Magazine remarked in 1894 that "St. Louis has been so fortunate as to escape the effects of the bugaboo of 'the deadly trolley' in the hands of the sensational press."[79]

Perhaps most important, the Post-Dispatch's whole approach to the utility problem -- selling franchises to the highest bidder -- was hardly a radical assault upon the companies. It was simply an attempt to shift the pay-off from the Assemblymen's pockets to the public treasury. Even the St. Louis Republic, which was controlled by the political cronies of the street railway magnates, endorsed the Julian law.[80] This approach was quite different from the radical proposals of the Chicago papers. The Daily News sought to increase

government control over street railways through municipal ownership. The Tribune sought to give control directly to property owners. The Post-Dispatch was content to leave control with private businesses so long as they paid the right people for it.

The Post-Dispatch took this same sort of laissez-faire, Jeffersonian stance on labor questions. The paper was very sympathetic toward labor and blamed labor's difficulties on "corporate rapacity" and government paternalism in favor of capital. It was very distressed by the plight of the unemployed in 1894, and it helped organize a large work relief project in St. Louis.[81] The paper reserved some of its harshest rhetoric for the corporate despoilers of labor, charging that men like Rockefeller should be locked up as common thieves.[82] But the Post-Dispatch also opposed pro-labor government paternalism. It supported President Cleveland's intervention in the Pullman strike in 1894 as necessary to uphold the rule of law, and it opposed the aims of Jacob Coxey's army of the unemployed in its march on Washington. The Post-Dispatch believed that Coxey's rag-tag soldiers were as much "paternalistic parasites" as the "greedy plutocrats" who "hold up the government."[83]

Despite some radical rhetoric, the Post-Dispatch in 1894-96 still had a rather mugwumpish agenda for reform. On the municipal level, the paper was interested mainly in "good streets and clean streets, good ordinances and an honest enforcement of law, protection against nuisances and menaces to health and life, the honest collection and economical expenditure of revenues and such a disposition of

franchises and privileges as will guard the interests of citizens."[84] The paper regularly covered such issues as smoke abatement and took credit for some measure of success in this area, but it generally devoted fewer stories to this kind of issue than did the Chicago papers.[85] Though the Post-Dispatch believed that good government was impossible so long as special privileges were available, the first and best step toward reform was still to elect good men. The Post-Dispatch had little interest in the structural reform of municipal government. Indeed, it viewed too much legislation as the heart of the problem. In the end, voting was still the key: "The only reform needed by the American people to secure the full blessings of liberty, peace and plenty is to restore their Government to its proper function as the guardian of the rights of all. That can be done through the ballot-box without the change of a single principle or fundamental law."[86]

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat was so unlike the Post-Dispatch in its treatment of local government and reform issues that it scarcely seemed possible the two papers were reporting on the same city. As in the early '90s, the Globe-Democrat was generally less interested in local affairs than was the Post-Dispatch or the two Chicago papers.[87] The paper relegated most local government news to brief mention in a "Municipal Matters" column, and it rarely lavished editorial comment on anything but the leading issues of national government and politics. The Post-Dispatch and the Globe-Democrat were similar in their circulations and their popular, sensational

style of journalism. But where the Post-Dispatch attacked business, the Globe-Democrat promoted it. Where the Post-Dispatch fought the street railways, the Globe-Democrat defended and praised them. Where the Post-Dispatch sympathized with workingmen, the Globe-Democrat denounced them. Where the Post-Dispatch called for the election of honest men, who were usually Democrats, the Globe-Democrat had no doubts that honest men were always Republicans.

In one significant way, the Globe-Democrat did expand its coverage of local public affairs in 1894-96. During this period the paper became the virtual house organ of the St. Louis street railways. Though the street railway men in St. Louis were generally conservative Democrats, they had close philosophical and personal ties to the Republican Globe-Democrat. One of editor Joseph McCullagh's closest personal and business friends was James Campbell, the leading street railway broker in the city. McCullagh regularly visited Campbell's office on Monday mornings to chat about the stock markets. Campbell once helped recruit a group of McCullagh's business friends to raise money to buy the editor a nice house.[88] In November, 1894, McCullagh added a new feature to the Globe-Democrat called "The Street Railways." This feature was a weekly collection of business news stories, interviews, human interest items, and notes that covered street railway matters at the national as well as the local level. It ran regularly until May, 1897.

"The Street Railways" column, which carried virtually everything the Globe-Democrat had to say about utilities, was essentially a

public relations tool for the companies. The information and opinions in the stories and notes came almost exclusively from local street railway managers or from national street railway trade journals. Stories about boodle, bribes, and franchise grabs scarcely ever appeared. The usual theme was how lucky St. Louis citizens were to have such a great street railway system. "The inhabitants of this city are enjoying conveniences unheard of in magnificent equipment, fast time, and with a system of transfers that is unequaled," the paper gushed.[89] Week after week, the Globe-Democrat carried long stories, often with detailed business and technical information, about street railway growth and improvement. Everything was getting better thanks to "the enterprising St. Louis managers" -- better electrical equipment, better brakes, better cars, better car heaters, better transfer systems, better everything.[90]

Many street railway items in the Globe-Democrat were interviews with company managers answering public criticism. The paper rarely printed the criticism, just the answers to it. The main theme was always that the companies were doing the best they could, despite unwarranted public complaints, unfair government regulations, and excessive taxes. Most managers agreed that "the St. Louis public has been humored to an extent that is remarkable." People complained only because they were spoiled by great service.[91] Many stories talked about how street railways could hardly make a profit because of high costs and low fares. Yet companies were constantly menanced

by a hostile city government and tax reform cranks. Any dispute with the Municipal Assembly or the mayor was explained totally from the viewpoint of the companies.[92]

The Globe-Democrat's coverage of street railway safety was perhaps most remarkable compared to the Post-Dispatch. While the Post-Dispatch was appalled by the incessant slaughter on the streets of St. Louis, the Globe-Democrat reported that many more streetcar accidents occurred in other cities and that the cars really weren't going as fast as it seemed. While the Post-Dispatch was demanding that the Municipal Assembly pass a safety fender ordinance, the Globe-Democrat carried stories about how expensive and ineffective fenders were, even suggesting that fenders sometimes caused more serious accidents than they prevented. Furthermore, the whole problem was exaggerated, the Globe-Democrat said. Often people were hurt through their own carelessness or simply pretended to be hurt to hold up the companies. The paper quoted one local manager who said fully two-thirds of the personal injury claims were exaggerated or wholly bogus.[93]

The Globe-Democrat's love affair with street railways was part of the paper's overall passion for business. To the Globe-Democrat "the laws of commerce are entirely consistent with justice and integrity" and "the business man really represents our best type of citizenship."[94] The paper had no use for organized labor or strikes. It denounced Coxey's army as a "gathering of cranks and tramps," and it advocated shooting the Pullman strikers. The Globe-Democrat

believed that American workmen were well paid and were poor only because of their own "extravagant and improvident habits." In the depression, the paper was not opposed to private charity, but it believed that "the surpassing need of society" was "to defeat fraudulent claimants."[95]

Beyond a few scattered calls for economy and business methods in government, the Globe-Democrat in 1894-96 had little to say about municipal reform. The paper sometimes professed to believe in non-partisanship in municipal elections. Before the city election in 1895, for example, the paper declared that "the best men" should be elected to the Council -- "politics should count for little and men for everything in a municipal election." Once the nominations were made, however, the paper told the voters that "St. Louis is a Republican city, and therefore cannot afford to permit the election of a single Democrat Councilman next Tuesday." The Globe-Democrat believed in the principle of party as much as in the principles of business. In the Globe-Democrat's world view, public utilities were simply private businesses, and municipal reform was simply a matter of electing Republicans.[96]

IV

The year 1896, a political pivot for the nation, was likewise a turning point for the new politics in Chicago and St. Louis. Reformers in Chicago, already united in the Civic Federation, now moved into direct political activity through the Municipal Voters'

League. They adopted a reform program and political style that complemented and reinforced the predilections of local newspapers, and the newspapers responded with editorial support and news coverage. After its first election campaign in April, 1896, the Municipal Voters' League appeared to be a rising political power in Chicago. Reformers in St. Louis tried to move their Civic Federation in the same direction, but unsuccessfully. They were unable to unite warring factions and warring newspapers around a reform program or political style. The November, 1896, election set the stage for the collapse of the Civic Federation in 1897.

The reformers who founded the Municipal Voters' League in January, 1896, had a specific, limited aim: to influence the nomination and election of aldermen in the April election. The League was designed to be, not a third party, but a pressure group to influence the two major parties. It was set up something like a political machine. Power was centralized in a president and a nine-member executive committee; subsidiary committees and League workers were organized at the ward, precinct, and block levels. The League's first president, George E. Cole, who described himself as a "second class businessman," was a reformer with a penchant for practical politics. He was willing to make political deals as well as to fight political fights. His only goal was to elect men who would subscribe to the League's program.[97]

The League's program in 1896 had four objectives: (1) to elect "aggressively honest and capable men"; (2) to secure businesslike

local government and enforcement of civil service laws; (3) to secure "a just and equitable assessment of property"; and (4) to permit the granting of utility franchises only with full compensation to the city, and to arrange for the eventual municipal ownership of all lighting and transportation systems.[98] For the Municipal Voters' League, the utility issue was paramount. In its analyses of the records of incumbent aldermen, the League looked mainly at franchise votes to determine a man's honesty. Cole believed that "the city council was owned by one man, a Napoleon of fraud and chicanery, Charles T. Yerkes."[99] Throughout its first decade, the Municipal Voters' League always made the utility question the key issue of its election campaigns.[100]

The style of the League was a mixture of old-fashioned political organization and modern mass communication. The League organized in every ward, and it was happy to cooperate with party machines as long as the party men would agree with the League's brief platform.[101] But the Municipal Voters' League was primarily a bureau of information. Its work was based on a belief in public opinion, on the belief that the people would vote for the right men if they knew the facts. To this end, most of the work of the League involved the investigation and publication of facts about candidates, especially information on the voting records of incumbents.[102] The League was careful to stick to purely factual matters as much as possible in its evaluations of candidates. As a result, of 987 libel suits filed against the League at one time or another, none ever came to trial.[103]

The Municipal Voters' League used letters, pamphlets, advertisements, and mass meetings to disseminate campaign information. The main channel for League publicity, however, was the newspaper press. With the exception of the new conservative Democratic organ, the Chronicle, all the daily newspapers of Chicago supported the program of the League and cooperated in the League's publicity campaign. The League apparently had almost free access to the columns of the Chicago newspapers. The minutes of the executive committee for practically every meeting during the 1896 campaign talk casually about "placing" a story, a speech, or some other material in the newspapers.[104]

Such easy access suggests how closely the Municipal Voters' League represented the kind of new politics the Chicago papers had promoted since the early 1890s. The League was a practical political organization willing to work in the parties and the wards. It believed in public opinion and the power of information. It sought no structural reform of the Council, but only to elect "good men." And its leading issue was utility regulation. Both the Daily News and the Tribune loved the Municipal Voters' League. In the weeks before the April, 1896, election both papers carried numerous stories and editorials reporting on League investigations and concurring in League endorsements.[105]

Victor Lawson and his two newspapers, the Daily News and the Record, were especially close allies of the Municipal Voters' League. Besides publishing a flood of information from the League, Lawson

personally worked with Cole and League secretary Edwin Burritt Smith on investigations of candidates. He even loaned Record staff member George C. Sikes to the League, while still on the Record payroll, to help out with investigations, writing, and editing.[106]

The Municipal Voters' League was successful in 1896 far beyond the expectations of Chicago reformers. Sixteen of twenty-six incumbent aldermen opposed by the League were not even renominated. In the general election, the League endorsed candidates in thirty of the city's thirty-four wards. Twenty-five of these thirty were elected.[107] Reformers and newspapers were jubilant. A few sober souls cautioned against a premature celebration of the passing of boodle in Chicago, warning that 1896 was just one battle in a long war. But in the flush of first victory, many League supporters thought the war already won: "Napoleon Yerkes had met his Waterloo."[108]

George Cole and others close to the work of the Municipal Voters' League believed that the League's success in 1896 was due chiefly to the support of the newspapers. In his president's report in April, Cole wrote:

> What has been accomplished in this campaign is very largely due to the constant and cordial cooperation of the press. The newspapers have been untiring in furthering the purposes of the league, and have rendered a very valuable public service in connection with its work. Without their powerful support we would have made but slight impression in a first campaign.[109]

As in the municipal election of 1893, the newspapers of Chicago had been able to cooperate closely in an election campaign. This time, however, they had an organizational ally and a lively issue that they

had been explaining to the public for years. Cole and his newspaper associates believed that they had in 1896 laid the foundation for a successful new politics of municipal reform.

Some St. Louis reformers in 1896 hoped to see their Civic Federation develop into an organization like the Chicago Municipal Voters' League. Led by Federation secretary Walter Vrooman, this faction of the St. Louis Civic Federation believed, like the Chicago reformers, that utility regulation was the most important issue of municipal reform. The group was given a boost in early 1896 by the release of statistics on St. Louis street railway assessments and taxation compiled by State Labor Commissioner Lee Meriwether that seemed to show clearly that street railways were grossly under-assessed, that they failed to pay the city fair compensation for the use of valuable public franchises. Throughout 1896, the Vrooman faction made good progress in organizing branches of the Civic Federation around this issue, especially among the middle-class and union workmen of the predominantly German sections of St. Louis.[110]

Unfortunately for Vrooman and his associates, this faction of the Civic Federation was only a faction. The balance of power was held by downtown businessmen. Unlike many of their counterparts in Chicago, these businessmen were not hostile to street railway tycoons. In fact, some of them <u>were</u> street railway tycoons.[111] There was no Yerkes in St. Louis. The city's leading street railway man was James Campbell, who had political links to mugwump reformers in the Civic Federation as well as to ward bosses such as Ed Butler.

Street railways in St. Louis were run, not by a "Philadelphia baron," but by local good old boys who sat with the political elite of the city. This elite was a tight fraternity of conservative Democrats who had no intention of letting their Civic Federation take the Vrooman tack.[112]

The newspapers of St. Louis were willing to support the Civic Federation when it talked vaguely about honest government, but only the Post-Dispatch took an interest in the issues raised by the Meriwether report. Both the Globe-Democrat and the Republic virtually ignored the report, just as they ignored most of the issues of utility regulation. The day that the Post-Dispatch printed long excerpts from the preliminary version of the report damning the street railway companies, the Republic carried an editorial about the history of electric streetcars, declaring that "among the great and popular improvements of the day, none takes higher rank than that of electric traction."[113] While the Globe-Democrat was philosophically allied with the street railway companies, the Republic had a more direct connection. After 1893, the Republic was the organ of David Francis, a former governor of Missouri and political power in St. Louis. Francis was a leader of the conservative Democratic business elite that included Campbell and other public utility magnates. The president and general manager of the Republic, Charles W. Knapp, was part of this same party faction and was a close personal friend of Rolla Wells, president in 1896 of the local Democratic Sound Money Club and long connected with St. Louis street railways.[114]

The important issue for the St. Louis Civic Federation in 1896 turned out to be, not streetcars, but silver. The Democratic businessmen of St. Louis, including the street railway magnates and the mugwump reformers in the Civic Federation, were "sound money" Democrats, or "gold bugs" in the jargon of their adversaries. The state of Missouri, on the other hand, was the home of "Silver Dick" Bland and a hot bed of the "free silver" wing of the party. With the adoption of pro-silver platforms at Sedalia in April and at Chicago in July, the elite St. Louis Democrats were cut off from both the state and the national parties. Many of them joined the bolt to "sound money" Democrat John M. Palmer or to the Republican William McKinley.[115]

The currency war was fought with gusto in the newspapers. The Globe-Democrat was not just for "sound money" but for gold, pure and simple. The Post-Dispatch was red hot for silver. Editor Charles Jones was a strategist at the Chicago convention, an author of the pro-silver platform, and his newspaper became a leading advocate of free silver in the West. The Republic was for "sound money," but it declined to bolt the party. It opposed free coinage of silver at 16 to 1 before the Chicago convention; but it supported William Jennings Bryan and the Chicago platform after the convention.[116] The fighting between the papers was bitter. The Globe-Democrat ridiculed the "flatulent egotism" of Jones. The Post-Dispatch denounced the "abusive claptrap of Mr. Francis' newspaper" and "its frantic efforts to sustain and uphold corporations, monopoly, plutocracy and

gold-bugism."[117]

This political struggle, especially the factional split in the Democratic Party, had a direct impact on the St. Louis Civic Federation and the municipal reform movement in St. Louis. The currency issue split the reform movement in St. Louis because it split the local Democratic Party. The conservative Democrats bolted the party of Bryan, but they had every intention of maintaining their prominence in the local Democracy and in the Civic Federation. Meanwhile, the Post-Dispatch, the only newspaper to take any interest in the Vrooman faction of the Civic Federation, was a major organ for free silver and Bryanism and an arch-enemy of the St. Louis "Boltocrats."[118]

Chicago reformers could submerge their differences on national issues by joining together in the battle against the street railways. But in St. Louis the street railways were wrapped up in the factional split in the Democratic Party and the Civic Federation. In the fall of 1896, the conservative Democrats, with the support of the street railways, hoped to use the Civic Federation to regain control of the local Democratic Party. Meanwhile, the Vrooman insurgents hoped to gain control of the Civic Federation in order to battle the street railways. The inevitable collision came in the mayoral campaign of 1897.[119]

At one time or another in 1896, reformers and newspapers in both Chicago and St. Louis had high hopes for effective political reform in their cities. In both cities, movements sprang up which embraced

the new politics, which sought to combine political organization and mass communication. But by the end of the year it appeared that the political and newspaper climate for reform would be more balmy in Chicago. In November, 1896, Chicago's leading reform newspaperman, Victor Lawson, met Chicago's leading reform politician, George E. Cole, for lunch at the Union League Club. The two men happily discussed the successes of the year and agreed that reform sentiment in Chicago was stronger and more unified than ever before. Lawson pledged his full support for the Municipal Voters' League plan for the spring campaign of 1897, and he offered to cooperate with Cole in every way.[120] Meanwhile, in St. Louis, that city's leading reform newspaper, the Post-Dispatch, was bitterly denouncing the leader of the St. Louis Civic Federation, the Rev. W.W. Boyd. On the eve of the election, Boyd had condemned the Chicago platform as a "theory of repudiation" and had endorsed McKinley. Now, while Lawson and Cole flattered each other over lunch, the Post-Dispatch turned on its erstwhile friend in reform, publicly condemning him as an imperious aristocrat and tool of the Wall Street robbers.[121]

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NOTES ON CHAPTER V

[1]Stanley P. Caine, "The Origins of Progressivism," in The Progressive Era, ed. by Lewis L. Gould (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), pp. 21-22; Charles Hoffman, "The Depression of the Nineties," Journal of Economic History, 16 (June, 1956), 151-52; Samuel Resneck, "Unemployment, Unrest and Relief in the United States During the Depression of 1893-97," Journal of Political Economy, 31 (Aug., 1953), 328-29.

[2]Melvin G. Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," in The Progressive Era, p. 133. See also Ernest S. Griffith, A History of American City Government: The Conspicuous Failure, 1870-1900 (New York: Praeger, 1974), chapter 19.

[3]Donald D. Marks, "Polishing the Gem of the Prairie: The Evolution of Civic Reform Consciousness in Chicago, 1874-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), pp. 99-100. See also Maurice F. Neufield, "The Contribution of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 to the Idea of a Planned Society in the United States" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1935); and David F. Burg, Chicago's White City of 1893 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1976).

[4]Graham Taylor, Pioneering on Social Frontiers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), p. 29.

[5]Albion W. Small, "The Civic Federation: A Study in Social Dynamics," American Journal of Sociology, 1 (July, 1895), 89-90. A good, general study of the Civic Federation is Marks, "Polishing the Gem," chapters 4-5. See also Sidney I. Roberts, "Businessmen in Revolt: Chicago, 1874-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1960), chapter 4; and Douglas Sutherland, Fifty Years on the Civic Front: A History of the Civic Federation's Dynamic Activities (Chicago: Civic Federation, 1943).

[6]Marks, "Polishing the Gem," pp. 113-15, 122-24. On the magnitude of unemployment and poverty in Chicago, see Charity Organization of Chicago, Annual Report of the Directors (Chicago, 1895), pp. 2-3; and City of Chicago, Annual Report of the Department of Health, 1893 (Chicago: Cameron, Amberg & Co., 1894), pp. 100-07.

[7]Small, "The Civic Federation," p. 86; Ray Stannard Baker, "The Civic Federation of Chicago," The Outlook, 52 (July 27, 1895), 133.

[8]Small, "The Civic Federation," pp. 82-83, 86-87. For summaries of the Federation's diverse activities its first year, see The Civic Federation: What It Has Accomplished in Its First Year (Chicago: Civic Federation, 1895); and Civic Federation of Chicago, First Annual Report of the Central Council (Chicago, May, 1895). For regular front page stories on the gambling fight, see the Chicago Daily News and Chicago Tribune, Sept. - Oct., 1894.

[9]Baker, "The Civic Federation," p. 133.

[10]Franklin MacVeagh, "A Program for Municipal Reform," American Journal of Sociology, 1 (March, 1896), 562; Small, "The Civic Federation," p. 91, 93-103; Marks, "Polishing the Gem," p. 116. Marks' thesis is the most detailed description of the new politics approach of the Civic Federation. See his chapter 4.

[11]Daily News, Feb. 6, 1894, p. 4; Tribune, Feb. 7, 1894, p. 6; Feb. 19, 1894, p. 6.

[12]John Erickson, "Newspapers and Social Values: Chicago Journalism, 1890-1910" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Illinois, 1973), pp. 192-95, 347. See also Tribune, April 22, 1896, p. 6; Chicago Herald, Feb., 1894, passim; Chicago Post, Feb. 3, 1894, p. 1.

[13]Daily News, Jan. 8, 1894, p. 4; Jan. 16, 1894, p. 6; Jan. 17, 1894, p. 4; Jan. 24, 1894, p. 4.

[14]For example, on gambling see Daily News, Sept. and Oct., 1894; May 10, 1895, p. 1; May 11, 1895, p. 4. On racing, see April 12, 1894, p. 4; April 17, 1894, p. 4. On saloon closing, see Sept. 21, 1894, p. 4; May 23, 1895, p. 4; Aug. 1, 1896, p. 4. On civil service, see March 20, 1895, p. 4; March 22, 1895, p. 1; March 25 - 30, 1895. See also Roberts, "Businessmen in Revolt," p. 122.

[15]Daily News, Feb. 6, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 2, 1895, p. 4; Royal J. Schmidt, "The Chicago Daily News and Illinois Politics, 1876-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1957), p. 78. On Lawson's financial connection with the Civic Federation, see Lawson to Ralph Easley, Aug. 3, 1895; W. Werner to Miss Dewey, Oct. 14, 1895 and Oct. 17, 1895; Lawson to Robert J. Thompson, Nov. 16, 1895; Lawson to Lyman Gage, May 29, 1896; all in Victor Lawson Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

[16]Daily News, Feb. 6, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 7, 1894, p. 4.

[17]See Tables 3, 4 and 6.

[18]Daily News, Jan. 9, 1894, p. 1; Jan. 10, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 5, 1894, p. 4.

[19]See, for example, coverage of the Metropolitan (Watson) Gas ordinance, Daily News, Feb. 6 - 15, 1894; Cosmopolitan Electric and Ogden Gas franchises, Feb. 26 - March 12, 1895; Calumet and Blue Island railroad franchise, June 7 - 25, 1895; General Electric franchise, Jan. 10 - 11, 1896; and Union Loop Elevated franchise, June 30 - July 7, 1896.

[20]Ibid., Feb. 5, 1894, p. 4; Oct. 10, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 22, 1896, p. 4; Feb. 25, 1896, p. 4; Dec. 15, 1896, p. 4; Dec. 22, 1896, p. 4. Several Chicago newspapers, especially the Chronicle, fought for lower fares in this period. See Robert D. Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers: Chicago Local Transportation in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971), pp. 136-52.

[21]See, for example, the coverage of the plans of the Chicago City Railway to convert to the trolley. Daily News, March 6 - 12, 1894; Jan. 29, 1895, p. 4.

[22]Ibid., June 4, 1895, p. 4; July 9, 1895, p. 4; Aug. 1, 1896, p. 1; Aug. 27, 1896, p. 4. Most Chicago papers fought against the overhead trolley and probably stirred up public opinion enough to delay the installation of electric trolleys in Chicago for several years. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 103-09. Their fears of trolley dangers were irrational, according to Weber.

[23]See Table 4.

[24]Daily News, March 27, 1894, p. 4; March 29, 1894, p. 4; Nov. 26, 1895, p. 4; Jan. 16, 1896, p. 4; March 24, 1896, p. 4.

[25]Ibid., July 1, 1895, p. 4.

[26]Ibid., April 19, 1894, pp. 1 and 4; March 24, 1896, p. 4. Most of the other newspapers of Chicago agreed with the Daily News on the trolley issue, though Yerkes was probably correct that the underground system was impractical for Chicago. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 107-09.

[27]Daily News, May 4, 1894, p. 1; May 15, 1894, p. 1; Nov. 16, 1894, p. 1.

[28]See Table 7. See, for example, the Daily News' crusade against smoke pollution, Aug., 1894, passim; Sept. 19, 1894, pp. 1 and 4; Oct. 23, 1894, p. 4.

[29]Ibid., May 2, 1895, p. 4; July 10, 1895, p. 4; Nov. 1, 1895, p. 4.

[30]Ibid., Nov. 10, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 6, 1895, p. 4; June 20, 1895, p. 4; Dec. 9, 1895, p. 4.

[31]See, for example, Ibid., March 23, 1895, p. 4; March 29, 1895, p. 4.

[32]Ibid., April 27, 1894, p. 4; April 30, 1894, p. 4; May 2, 1895, p. 4; June 26, 1895, p. 4; March 13, 1896, p. 4; March 26, 1896, p. 4. See also Table 8.

[33]Daily News, April 27, 1894, p. 4; July 2, 1895, p. 4; March 26, 1896, p. 4.

[34]Ibid., March 8, 1895, p. 4; Jan. 17, 1894, p. 4; June 20, 1894, p. 4; June 26, 1894, p. 4.

[35]Tribune, April 22, 1896, p. 6; April 24, 1896, p. 6.

[36]For example, on unemployment relief see Ibid., Jan. 3, 1894, p. 2; Jan. 6, 1894, p. 12; Jan. 7, 1894, p. 28; Feb. 22, 1894, p. 6. On gambling see Sept. 20 - Oct. 1, 1894. On street cleaning see Aug. 22, 1894, p. 1; Aug. 24, 1894, p. 6; Sept. 6, 1894, pp. 6 and 12; May 27, 1895, p. 1. On civil service see Jan. 6, 1895, pp. 11 and 30; Jan. 7, 1895, p. 6; Jan. 11, 1895, pp. 1-2, 12; March 8 - 30, 1895.

[37]Ibid., Feb. 7, 1894, p. 6. See Table 3.

[38]Tribune, Nov. 20, 1894, p. 6; Jan. 21, 1894, p. 28.

[39]Ibid., Oct. 26, 1894, p. 6. See daily editorials, Feb. 18 - March 2, 1894.

[40]Ibid., Jan. 7, 1894, p. 28; Jan. 27, 1894, p. 1; Feb., 1894, several editorials per week.

[41]Ibid., Feb. 12, 1894, p. 6; Feb. 10, 1894, p. 28; Feb. 14, 1895, p. 6; March, 1895, several editorials per week.

[42]See, for example, the news and comment about the Metropolitan (Watson) Gas franchise, Ibid., Feb. 6 - 7, 1894; Universal Gas franchise, July 17 - 25, 1894; Ogden Gas and Cosmopolitan Electric franchises, Feb. 26 - March 6, 1895; Calumet and Blue Island Railroad franchise, June 8 - 12, 1895; Union Loop franchise, July 1 - 7, 1896.

[43]Ibid., Feb. 26, 1895, p. 1; Feb. 27, 1895, p. 6.

[44]Ibid., Dec. 13, 1896, p. 30; Dec. 26, 1896, p. 12; Dec. 11, 1896, p. 1; Jan. 30, 1895, p. 1; Feb. 19, 1895, p. 9; Dec. 27, 1896, p. 1.

[45]On trolley dangers see, for example, Ibid., March 7, 1894, p. 6; April 25, 1894, pp. 3 and 6; May 1, 1894, p. 1; Jan. 26, 1895, p. 9. On underground system see Jan. 14, 1894, p. 6; Jan. 23, 1894, p. 1; Sept. 3, 1894, p. 3; Jan. 23, 1895, p. 12. Weber says the Tribune was consistently inaccurate in stories about electricity. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," p. 106.

[46]Tribune, Nov. 28, 1895, p. 12. This casualty figure was doubtless an exaggeration. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," p. 106.

[47]Tribune, May 6, 1896, p. 6; May 7, 1896, p. 6; Feb. 8, 1896, p. 12; April 26, 1896, p. 6; Dec. 2, 1896, p. 6; Dec. 15 - 23, 1896. Other papers pushed for lower fares, too. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 136-52.

[48]Tribune, Feb. 5, 1894, p. 6; March 19, 1894, p. 6.

[49]Ibid., Jan. 4, 1895, p. 6; Jan. 7, 1895, p. 6; Nov. 13, 1895, p. 6.

[50]Ibid., Jan. 29, 1894, p. 6; Feb. 21, 1894, p. 6; Nov. 20, 1894, p. 6; Aug. 24, 1894, p. 6; March 5, 1895, p. 6; March 7, 1896, p. 12.

[51]On ward representation see Ibid., March 16, 1896, p. 6. On civil service see Jan. 6 - March 21, 1895; Jan. 2, 1896, p. 6.

[52]See text of speech by Joseph Medill, in Ibid., June 22, 1894, p. 1; Dec. 16, 1894, p. 12.

[53]On street paving see Ibid., Jan. 6, 1895, p. 30; Feb. 8, 1895, p. 6; Feb. 11, 1896, p. 6. On garbage and filth see May 16 - June 2, 1894; May 3, 1895, p. 1; Dec. 11, 1896, p. 6. On smoke abatement see March 27, 1894, p. 6; June 19, 1894, p. 6; Aug. 5, 1894, p. 12; Sept. 7, 1894, p. 3.

[54]Ibid., June 8, 1895, pp. 5 and 12; Jan. 3, 1896, p. 6; Jan. 5, 1896, p. 12; Feb. 28, 1896, p. 6.

[55]Ibid., Jan. 3, 1896, p. 6; Oct. 10, 1896, p. 12.

[56]Ibid., March 16, 1896, p. 6.

[57]Ibid., March 12, 1894, p. 6; March 2, 1895, pp. 1 and 12; March 3, 1895, pp. 1 and 28; May 4, 1895, p. 12.

[58]St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Oct. 11, 1895, p. 12; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Oct. 10, 1895, p. 1; The Civic Federation of St. Louis (St. Louis: Civic Federation, 1895), pp. 3-4. For brief, general histories of the St. Louis Civic Federation see William Hyde and H.L. Conard, eds., Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, Vol. 1 (New York: Southern History Co., 1899), pp. 389-92; and Civic League, Yearbook, 1911 (St. Louis, 1911), pp. 35-37.

[59]On the depression in St. Louis, see Jack D. Muraskin, "Missouri Politics During the Progressive Era, 1896-1916" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 1969), p. 65; and Harry D. Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns of Nonpartisan Political Behavior in the Industrial Metropolis: St. Louis, 1895-1916" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1973), pp. 34 and 42.

[60]Jack Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform in the 1890s: A Study in Failure," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 25 (Oct., 1968), 41-43; Hyde and Conard, Encyclopedia, Vol. I, pp. 208-09.

[61]Post-Dispatch, May 15, 1896, p. 4. See also Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 43.

[62]The Civic Federation of St. Louis, pp. 9-11; Post-Dispatch, Oct. 10, 1895, p. 1; Globe-Democrat, Oct. 11, 1895, p. 12.

[63]Post-Dispatch, April 5, 1896, p. 39; Globe-Democrat, May 4, 1896, p. 3.

[64]Post-Dispatch, Oct. 11, 1895, p. 4; St. Louis Republic, Oct. 11, 1895, p. 6.

[65]Post-Dispatch, April 6, 1896, p. 4; May 15, 1896, p. 4; Globe-Democrat, April 28, 1896, p. 6.

[66]Post-Dispatch, Feb. 14, 1895, p. 4. This issue of the paper has statements from both Pulitzer and Jones at the time Jones took over control. On Jones' editorship of the Post-Dispatch and his struggle with Pulitzer, see W.A. Swanberg, Pulitzer (New York: Scribner's, 1967), pp. 182-90, 196, 217-18.

[67]Post-Dispatch, April 3, 1894, p. 4; March 29, 1894, p. 4; April 22, 1894, p. 4; Aug. 11, 1895, p. 4; Jan. 2, 1896, p. 4.

[68]Ibid., June 19, 1894, p. 4; Jan. 2, 1894, p. 4; April 8, 1895, p. 4; Aug. 14, 1895, p. 4.

[69]See Tables 3-6.

[70]Post-Dispatch, Jan. 12, 1894, p. 4; Sept. 26, 1894, p. 4; Nov. 10, 1894, p. 4; Feb. 3, 1895, p. 17; March 30, 1895, p. 4; May 9, 1895, p. 4; Jan. 15, 1896, p. 4; Jan. 22, 1896, p. 4; Jan. 30, 1896, p. 4.

[71]Ibid., March 6, 1894, p. 4; Oct. 15, 1894, p. 4; Dec. 26, 1895, p. 7; Dec. 27, 1895, p. 4.

[72]Ibid., Jan. 16, 1895, p. 4; Feb. 27, 1895, p. 4; Nov. 11, 1896, p. 4.

[73]Ibid., March 16, 1895, p. 4; June 22, 1895, p. 4; Dec. 11, 1895, p. 4; Jan. 1, 1896, p. 4; Nov. 16, 1898, p. 1. See also "Notes on Municipal Government," The Annals, 13 (March, 1899), 276-77.

[74]Post-Dispatch, Jan. 12, 1896, pp. 4 and 10; Jan. 13, 1896, p. 4.

[75]Ibid., Jan. 15, 1895, p. 4. See also Jan., 1895, passim.

[76]Ibid., March 21, 1895, p. 4. See also March, 1895, passim.

[77]Ibid., Dec. 9, 1895, p. 4; Dec. 22, 1895, p. 4; Feb. 9, 1896, p. 4; Dec. 16, 1896, p. 4; Dec. 24, 1896, p. 4.

[78]Ibid., Aug. 12, 1894, p. 4; Oct. 24, 1894, p. 4; Jan. 2, 1895, p. 6; Jan. 12, 1896, p. 23.

[79]William H. Bryan, "The Street Railways of St. Louis," Engineering Magazine, 8 (1894), 451. See also Post-Dispatch, Nov. 28, 1894, p. 4; July 5, 1896, p. 4; July 9, 1896, p. 4.

[80]Republic, March 1, 1895, p. 6; March 17, 1895, p. 12; Dec. 6, 1896, p. 14; Post-Dispatch, April 7, 1895, p. 4; April 3, 1896, p. 4. See also Iseult Kuyk, "Behind the Scenes in St. Louis," in The Complete Works of Brann the Iconoclast, Vol. 10 (New York: Brann Publishers, 1919), p. 206; C. Joseph Pusateri, "A Businessman in Politics: David R. Francis" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1966), pp. 230-32. Iseult Kuyk was probably a pseudonym for St. Louis journalist William Marion Reedy.

[81]Post-Dispatch, Dec. 28, 1894, p. 4; May 5, 1896, p. 4. The work relief project was the building of a lake in Forest Park, and the Post-Dispatch took most of the credit for getting the work underway. The lake was later called the Post-Dispatch Lake. See stories and editorials almost daily, Jan. - March, 1894.

[82]Ibid., Jan. 1, 1895, p. 4; May 13, 1895, p. 4; Aug. 10, 1896, p. 4.

[83]On the Pullman strike, see Ibid., July 1 - 9, 1894. On Coxey's army, see March 16, 1894, p. 4; March 26, 1894, p. 4.

[84]Ibid., June 12, 1894, p. 4.

[85]Ibid., Aug. 22, 1895, p. 4; Sept. 6, 1895, p. 4; Sept. 17, 1895, p. 4. See Table 6.

[86]Ibid., July 15, 1894, p. 4; March 9, 1894, p. 4; April 3, 1894, p. 4.

[87]See Tables 1-2.

[88]Charles C. Clayton, Little Mack: Joseph B. McCullagh of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1969), pp. 182-83. McCullagh turned down the house offer.

[89]Globe-Democrat, Nov. 5, 1894, p. 10; July 8, 1895, p. 10; July 15, 1895, p. 10; Sept. 30, 1895, p. 10.

[90]Ibid., Dec. 31, 1894, p. 10; July 1, 1895, p. 10; July 8, 1895, p. 10; July 29, 1895, p. 10; Oct. 28, 1895, p. 10; Nov. 4, 1895, p. 10; Dec. 7, 1896, p. 10.

[91]Ibid., Sept. 9, 1895, p. 10; Sept. 30, 1895, p. 10; Dec. 2, 1895, p. 10; March 2, 1896, p. 7; May 18, 1896, p. 7.

[92]Ibid., Sept. 16, 1895, p. 10; March 9, 1896, p. 7; March 23, 1896, p. 10; March 3, 1896, p. 7; Feb. 17, 1896, p. 7; April 13, 1896, p. 10.

[93]Ibid., Dec. 16, 1895, p. 10; Sept. 23, 1895, p. 10; Dec. 24, 1894, p. 10; June 6, 1895, p. 10.

[94]Ibid., Sept. 2, 1894, p. 6; Nov. 11, 1894, p. 6.

[95]Ibid., March 12, 1894, p. 2; June 7, 1894, p. 6; July 3, 1894, p. 4; July 5, 1894, p. 4; July 10, 1894, p. 4; Jan. 7, 1894, p. 6; Aug. 5, 1894, p. 6.

[96]Ibid., March 12, 1895, p. 6; March 14, 1895, p. 6; March 31, 1895, p. 6; July 18, 1895, p. 6; April 15, 1895, p. 4.

[97]The best general account of the Municipal Voters' League is Sidney I. Roberts, "The Municipal Voters' League and Chicago's Boodlers," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, 53 (Summer, 1960), 117-48. See also Joel A. Tarr, "William Kent to Lincoln Steffens: Origins of Progressive Reform in Chicago," Mid-America, 47 (Jan., 1965), 48-57; Edwin Burritt Smith, "Council Reform

in Chicago: Work of the Municipal Voters' League," Municipal Affairs, 4 (June, 1900), 347-62; Michael P. McCarthy, "Businessmen and Professionals in Municipal Reform: The Chicago Experience, 1877-1920" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970), chapter 2; Joan S. Miller, "The Politics of Municipal Reform in Chicago during the Progressive Era: The Municipal Voters' League as a Test Case, 1896-1920" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Roosevelt University, 1966). On George E. Cole see Hoyt King, Citizen Cole of Chicago (Chicago: Horder's, Inc., 1931).

[98]This is the platform the candidates were asked to sign in 1896. See 1896 endorsement book, Municipal Voters' League Papers, Chicago Historical Society. The pre-1900 material in this collection is contained in four scrap books: two books of committee minutes and reports in chronological order, a book of endorsements from 1896, and a book of candidate reports as printed in the newspapers. Hereafter cited as MVL Papers.

[99]Quoted in King, Citizen Cole, p. 23. See also "Report of the Municipal Voters' League, 1896" and George Cole, circular letter, Dec. 29, 1896, MVL Papers.

[100]V.O. Key, "Memorandum on Graft in Chicago" (unpublished paper, n.d.), in Charles Merriam Papers, University of Chicago. See also candidate reports book, MVL Papers; George C. Sikes, "How the Chicago City Council Was Regenerated," The Chautauquan, 36 (Jan., 1903), 400; Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 168-72.

[101]Executive Committee, minutes of meeting, Feb. 2, 1896, MVL Papers. See also Roberts, "The Municipal Voters' League," pp. 147-48.

[102]This interest in the "facts" is the main theme of virtually all contemporary writing about the League. See for example Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," p. 351; Edwin Burritt Smith, "The Municipal Voters' League of Chicago," Atlantic Monthly, 85 (June, 1900), 836-37; "Municipal Reform in Chicago," The Nation, 70 (May 31, 1900), 412; "The Voters' League of Chicago," The Outlook, 60 (Sept. 10, 1898), 131; Sigmund Zeisler, "The Municipal Voters' League of Chicago," The World Review, 2 (Jan. 25, 1902), 576; Sikes, "How the Chicago City Council Was Regenerated." 399; Frank H. Scott, "The Municipal Situation in Chicago," in Proceedings of the Detroit Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1903), pp. 151-52; and Lincoln Steffens, "Chicago: Half Free and Fighting On," McClure's Magazine, 21 (Oct., 1903), 563-77. See also McCarthy, "Businessmen and Professionals," pp. 28-29.

[103]Roberts, "The Municipal Voters' League," p. 141; Zeisler, "The Municipal Voters' League," p. 575.

[104]Roberts, "The Municipal Voters' League," p. 143; Tarr, "William Kent to Lincoln Steffens," p. 57; Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," p. 350. See also Executive Committee, minutes of meetings, Feb. - March, 1896, MVL Papers.

[105]See, for example, Daily News, Feb. 24, 1896, p. 1; March 5, 1896, pp. 1 and 4; March 11, 1896, p. 4; March 13, 1896, p. 2; March 17, 1896, p. 4; April 4, 1896, p. 1; April 7, 1896, p. 4; Tribune, Jan. 12, 1896, pp. 1 and 6; Jan. 14, 1896, p. 6; Jan. 27, 1896, p. 6; March 18, 1896, p. 6; March 29, 1896, p. 40; April 5, 1896, p. 32; April 8, 1896, p. 6.

[106]Lawson to Edwin Burritt Smith, March 12, 1896; March 14, 1896; March 28, 1896; April 1, 1896; and Lawson to William Colvin, March 28, 1896; in Lawson Papers. See also Robert L. Tree, "Victor Fremont Lawson and His Newspapers, 1890-1900: A Study of the Chicago Daily News and the Chicago Record" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1959), chapter 3.

[107]"Report of the Municipal Voters' League, 1896," MVL Papers; Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," p. 356; Roberts, "The Municipal Voters' League," p. 143.

[108]King, Citizen Cole, pp. 50-52. See also Daily News, April 8, 1896, p. 4; April 13, 1896, p. 4; Tribune, April 8, 1896, pp. 1-2, and 6.

[109]"Report of the Municipal Voters' League, 1896"; George Cole, "President's Report, 1896"; Committee of One Hundred, minutes of meeting, May 15, 1896; all in MVL Papers. See also Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," pp. 350-51; Tarr, "William Kent to Lincoln Steffens," pp. 55-57; Sikes, "How the Chicago City Council Was Regenerated," p. 401.

[110]Post-Dispatch, Jan. 12, 1896, p. 10; Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," pp. 43-46; Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, Eighteenth Annual Report of the Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics (Jefferson City, 1896), pp. 1-16. The Post-Dispatch published the St. Louis portion of the report Jan. 12; the full report was formally submitted to the governor in November. See also Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," pp. 38-39.

[111]Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," pp. 37-38; Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 46; Alexander S. McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch': A Business Elite in the Life of a City, St. Louis, 1895-1915" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1976), pp. 174-76, 205-07.

[112]Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 46. On Campbell and other street railway men see McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" pp. 33-35, 89-90, 165-66, 220-21; and Kuyk, "Behind the Scenes," pp. 205-06.

[113]Post-Dispatch, Jan. 12, 1896, p. 10; Jan. 13, 1896, p. 4; Republic, Jan. 12, 1896, p. 12.

[114]Post-Dispatch, April 7, 1895, p. 4; April 3, 1896, p. 4; March 16, 1896, p. 4. See also Kuyk, "Behind the Scenes," p. 205; Pusateri, "Businessman in Politics," pp. 230-32; Rolla Wells, Episodes of My Life (St. Louis: privately published, 1933), p. 80; McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" pp. 37-38.

[115]The best general treatment of this era in Missouri politics is Muraskin, "Missouri Politics," chapters 1-3. See also William Marion Reedy, "What's the Matter with Missouri?" in The Complete Works of Brann the Iconoclast, Vol. 10, pp. 302-16; Wells, Episodes, pp. 77-92.

[116]Globe-Democrat, June 12, 1896, p. 6; Post-Dispatch, July 9, 1896, p. 4; July 11, 1896, p. 4; Republic, April 23, 1895, p. 6; Sept. 2, 1896, p. 6; Sept. 4, 1896, p. 6.

[117]Globe-Democrat, Oct. 17, 1895, p. 6; Post-Dispatch, March 20, 1896, p. 4; April 4, 1896, p. 1.

[118]Post-Dispatch, Aug. 25, 1896, p. 4; Sept. 2, 1896, p. 1; Sept. 3, 1896, p. 4.

[119]Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 46.

[120]Lawson to George E. Cole, Nov. 7, 1896; Nov. 16, 1896; Nov. 21, 1896; Jan. 29, 1897; in Lawson Papers.

[121]Post-Dispatch, Nov. 2, 1896, p. 4; Dec. 21, 1896, p. 4; Globe-Democrat, Nov. 2, 1896, p. 9.

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CHAPTER VI

REFORMERS AND NEWSPAPERS, 1897-1899

Reformers in Chicago and St. Louis faced similar crises in 1897-99. In both cities reform groups had emerged in 1896 that sought to make public utility regulation the chief issue of municipal politics. Beginning in early 1897, each of these groups had several chances to do that. In both cities reformers tried to turn the local elections of April, 1897, into referenda on the regulation of street railways. Reformers also had to meet direct challenges from street railway corporations, which in both cities sought key pieces of franchise legislation in 1897-98. The aims of reformers in Chicago and St. Louis were similar. They hoped to mobilize public opinion sufficiently to elect a mayor and members of the Council and Municipal Assembly who were "right on franchises" and to force these municipal officials, once elected, to get tough with street railway corporations.

Though the challenges were similar, the outcomes were not. In Chicago street railway regulation did become the leading local political issue in 1897-98. All the mayoral candidates in 1897 placed utility regulation prominently in their platforms, and the Municipal Voters' League succeeded in making regulation a leading issue in the aldermanic campaigns of 1897 and 1898. In 1898, when

the street railways pressed for extensions of their franchises, the mayor and a majority of the Council stood firm with the reformers, declining to deal with the companies even on terms relatively favorable to the city. Reform leaders around the country at the time viewed this Chicago confrontation as a great victory for municipal reform. In St. Louis the outcome was otherwise. One faction of the St. Louis Civic Federation struggled to make street railway regulation the major issue in the election of 1897, but failed. The Civic Federation split, and the reform movement disintegrated. In 1898, when a large street railway syndicate sought a giant franchise in St. Louis, on terms unfavorable to the city, the Municipal Assembly quickly passed it. Though the two cities faced the same kinds of utility problems in 1897-99, utility regulation never became a leading public issue in St. Louis.

Contemporary observers believed that public opinion made the difference. The issues in both cities were similar. The people were outraged in Chicago; indifferent in St. Louis. Reformers and street railway men in Chicago agreed on little, but they did agree that the newspapers there were responsible for creating a politically irresistible public opinion. The reformers praised the great educational effort of the press; the utility men damned the irresponsible "newspaper trust." In St. Louis none of the newspapers took much interest in the utility regulation movement in the 1897 election, but all the leading papers opposed editorially the big street railway "franchise grab" of 1898. Even the Globe-Democrat and the Republic

thought this deal unseemly. The people, however, were silent. The newspapers professed some degree of puzzlement at such apathy. Why were the people of Chicago more interested in street railway franchises than were the people of St. Louis? The question baffled the St. Louis newspapers at the time, perhaps because the answer to it lay so disturbingly close to home.

II

In Chicago, the Municipal Voters' League came into the local election campaign of 1897 on the fly. Over the summer and fall of 1896, League President George Cole and his staff had busied themselves investigating the history of franchise legislation in the Council and how each alderman had voted on every "questionable" franchise ordinance over the previous few years. A detailed report was prepared, published in the newspapers, and mailed in pamphlet form to every registered voter in Chicago. The campaign was underway, and once again public utility regulation was to be the touchstone issue. As in 1896, the League called for honesty and for support of the civil service laws. But these were secondary concerns. The League judged the fitness of a candidate by how he had stood or how he promised to stand on franchise questions. The League's general standard, according to Cole, was that "no man who supports private against public interests, whatever his motives, or who does not vote to require full compensation for public licenses and for all proper provisions to protect public interests should be

re-elected."[1]

1897 was also a mayoral election year in Chicago, and a lively four-way contest developed. The candidates were Carter Harrison II, the Democratic nominee; Nathaniel Sears, the Republican nominee; John Harlan, a Republican independent; and Washington Hesing, a Democratic independent. All four candidates ran on platforms demanding full compensation for public utility franchises.[2] Neither Harrison nor Sears made franchise regulation the single focus of his campaign. They mainly jousted over issues of "blue laws" and personal liberty and their own capacity, or lack of it, for the job of mayor. The aristocratic Sears was neither politician nor party man, but his backing lay with the Republican machine. Harrison was a thirty-six-year-old neophyte whose only political asset was his name. A weak orator with half-baked political views (as he himself later admitted), Harrison chose to build his campaign on platitudes and on the fact that he was the son of his father, Carter Harrison I, one of the most popular mayors in Chicago history. The firebrand of the campaign was Harlan, a reform alderman, a former Princeton football guard, and a pugnacious speaker, who shaped his whole campaign around the public utility issue, with special attention to street railway magnate Charles T. Yerkes. Throughout the early months of 1897, Harlan constantly attacked Yerkes as "a man that personifies in his one self more corruption, more poison to the municipality, than any other man or ten men in it."[3]

Harrison won the election easily, with 144,828 votes. Harlan

polled 67,072 votes, nearly ten thousand more than Sears, the regular Republican. Hesing, a "sound money" Democrat, was a distant last, with 15,116 votes.[4] Though Harrison's plurality was enormous, Chicago reformers interpreted Harlan's unexpectedly large independent vote as evidence of a growing public concern with street railway regulation. Harrison himself was impressed by Harlan's showing and by the obvious public interest in the utility issue. Though his own ideas on the utility question were vague when he entered the campaign, he learned fast and quickly made street railway matters the chief focus of his administration. Within weeks of the election, he turned John Harlan and George Cole into allies in a battle royal with Charles Yerkes and the state legislature over what came to be known to most Chicagoans as "the infamous Allen law."[5]

The Allen law was the final result of an intense lobbying effort by Yerkes and other Chicago street railway men in 1897 to secure from the state legislature extensions of franchises and an escape from local Chicago politics. Most of the important street railway franchises in Chicago were to expire in 1903, and the companies sought relief from the rising pressures of boodlers on the one hand and reformers on the other. On February 17, the so-called Humphrey bills were introduced into the legislature, providing for fifty-year extensions of existing street railway franchises and for regulation of street railways by a state commission. These bills also provided for compensation to the city, but at a rate reformers found ridiculously low. The State Senate passed the Humphrey bills, but the House

defeated them. A watered-down substitute, the Allen bill, was introduced May 26, permitting city councils to grant fifty-year extensions. The Allen bill superseded a long-standing state law that prohibited street railway franchises of more than twenty years. The Allen bill did not grant fifty-year franchises; it merely empowered city governments to do so. The bill also authorized the consolidation of non-competing lines and fixed the fare at five cents for the first twenty years. It did not require compensation to the city. Both houses of the legislature quickly passed the Allen bill, and Governor John Tanner signed it into law June 9, 1897.[6]

The Humphrey and Allen bills were political dynamite in Chicago. These bills, especially the Humphrey bills, directly assaulted most of the principles of utility regulation then held by reformers: home rule, short franchises or municipal ownership, full compensation for franchises, and low fares. Rumors of enormous bribes fueled the reformers' indignation. In mid-March the Civic Federation helped to organize a Committee of One Hundred to lead a united front of civic organizations against the Humphrey bills.[7] Immediately after the April election, the mayor and the Council joined the struggle. At its second meeting the new Council voted unanimously to have the mayor appoint a committee of aldermen to go to Springfield to fight the Humphrey bills. For very different reasons, reformers and boodlers joined together against this attack on home rule. Reformers wished to see the city maintain its authority in order to regulate Yerkes. Boodlers favored city control in order to continue

to partake of Yerkes' largess. Mayor Harrison appointed to the committee only reform aldermen, including his erstwhile opponent John Harlan, who quickly became his political ally, advisor, and friend.[8] Reformers had already succeeded in working the issue of utility regulation into the platforms of all four mayoral candidates and a large number of aldermanic nominees. The turmoil over the Humphrey and Allen bills fixed the issue at the top of the local political agenda.

Harrison and his united following of reformers and politicians spent several days a week in Springfield in April and May pressuring and cajoling legislators. But they also launched a "new politics" style campaign in Chicago to stir up public outrage against the bills. The Committee of One Hundred circulated petitions and pamphlets, papered the town with posters, and organized street-corner meetings in every ward of the city. An enormous mass meeting was held April 18, where speaker after speaker denounced Yerkes and all his works to the accompaniment of the thunderous applause of people from all classes and sections of Chicago.[9] Mayor Harrison also was doing what he could to stir up the people. He credited the Municipal Voters' League, now one year old, with having helped create an atmosphere of public interest in street railway regulation. The agitation over the Humphrey and Allen bills, he said, "aroused the citizens to a white heat of civic fervor."[10]

The mass meetings, the posters, and the pamphlets were part of the effort, but observers at the time on both sides of the question

gave most of the credit, or blame, to the newspapers for focusing the attention of all Chicago on the street railway bills. The daily newspapers of Chicago were unanimously and vociferously opposed to the Humphrey bills, and all but one or two were flatly opposed to the Allen bill as well. They all covered the activities in Chicago and Springfield in copious detail.[11]

The street railway men themselves were perhaps the most impressed by the power of the press. Before the Humphrey bills were defeated, the Chicago companies bought ads in papers all over the state (disguised as news stories with a "special telegram" dateline), charging that "the prejudice against these bills has been created entirely by the Chicago newspaper trust, an organization that has a greater power for evil than any other in the State. . . . About all the general public knows of the Humphrey bills has been gleaned from the abusive and partisan reports of the Chicago press."[12] When the Humphrey bills were rejected by the House, Yerkes was livid with rage. In a slashing public statement he denounced the "newspaper trust" for misleading the public and reducing the legislators to abject slaves. He charged that the public had never understood the bills because of the "brazen and glaring" lies of the press.[13] Later, when testifying on the Allen bill before a House committee, Yerkes was asked if he would be willing to have the measure voted on by the people of Chicago. "Yes," he replied, "if you take the newspapers away." Later still, in a final plea to the governor to sign the Allen bill, Yerkes again admitted that public opinion was

against him, but he blamed it all on the corrupt, lying Chicago newspapers.[14]

The newspapers charged bribery, and they were probably right. But also involved in the passage of the Allen law was log-rolling among rural legislators who cared little about streetcars and less about Chicago.[15] It was no final victory for Yerkes, however, for it merely sent him back to contend with the Chicago aldermen who wanted to blackmail him, the Chicago reformers who wanted to regulate him, and the Chicago newspapers which wanted to run him out of town. Under the Allen law, Yerkes sooner or later would have to go to the Council to seek extensions of his franchises. When would he make his move? No one knew -- but the newspapers were determined to be ready for him. They were determined to keep the political pot boiling, to keep the public's attention fixed upon the issue of street railway regulation.

By early 1897, even before the Humphrey bills exploded in the legislature, the Chicago Tribune had become the chief newspaper nemesis of Charles T. Yerkes. Even more than the Daily News or any other Chicago newspaper, the Tribune built its coverage of utility matters in the late 1890s around a molten core of hatred for this man. And it was an enormous coverage. Public utility issues dominated some forty percent of the Tribune's stories on local government and public affairs. In a change from the earlier 1890s, three times as many stories now dealt with utility regulation as with utility expansion or business activities. In this period, the Tribune on the

average carried more than ten local stories per week on utility regulation.[16] The paper's approach to utility issues and to other questions of municipal reform was not so much changed as intensified in the late 1890s. The Tribune portrayed the events of 1897-93 as a kind of Armageddon. But it was a predictable Armageddon. Readers knew in advance how the battle lines would be drawn.

After years of jousting with Yerkes over franchises, trolleys, crowded cars, fares, and fenders, the Tribune by the late 1890s seldom missed a chance to denounce him. Yerkes, who was himself never given to tact in matters of public relations, frequently replied in kind. In January, 1897, in his annual report to the stockholders of the West Chicago Street Railroad, Yerkes paid his usual respects to the Chicago newspapers. "The press had no praise for anyone or anything," he complained. "Politics was bad, street railways were bad, and the persons who run them were bad." If this press hostility puzzled Yerkes, the Tribune was happy to explain why the newspapers didn't like him:

> The press of Chicago has no favorable regard or respect for a fellow who treats Chicago as a milch cow, and who takes the butter and cream to New York tc be consumed there; who grabs franchises in Chicago and uses their excessive profits with which to erect a palace in New York crammed with pictures, statuary, bric-a-brac, and luxuries of the most costly kind, paid for by the men and women who are allowed to hang on the straps; who debauches Councils, plunders the city, and charges war-time rates of transportation; who has grabbed about all the bridges in the city and paid nothing for them; who has been given all the tunnels practically for nothing; and who has taken possession of the middle of the streets, driving the ordinary traffic to the side, thus helping to destroy the pavements, towards the repair of which he will not give a cent. The newspapers of Chicago do not like Mr. Yerkes because he is arrogant, reckless, and vindictive, and has no regard for the rights of the people.17

The Tribune kept up this kind of personal derision of "Yerkes of New York" until he finally quit Chicago in 1899.[18]

The Humphrey and Allen bills brought forth from the Tribune a torrent of news and comment. The paper almost never let a day pass from February until June without a story or editorial on the bills. At critical times, coverage ballooned enormously. The day after the mass protest meeting of April 18, the Tribune carried about eighteen columns, nearly three pages, of stories and editorials, and for days thereafter every issue carried several columns of material. Again in May when the Humphrey bills came up in the House and in June when the Allen bill was finally passed, the Tribune filled many columns daily with stories.[19] Even after the Allen bill was signed into law, it remained a live issue. For the next eighteen months, the Tribune never let its readers forget that Yerkes at anytime could spring a fifty-year extension ordinance in the City Council.[20]

The content of this flood of coverage was a combination of information and invective. Much of the coverage was news reporting on local protests and activities in the legislature, including long excerpts of speeches and testimony. The Tribune became a clearing-house for information on protests, with schedules and reports of meetings, summaries of editorial comment from other newspapers around the state, and interviews with protest leaders.[21] The paper also carried analyses of the bills and the street railway situation in general by its own staff and by utility experts such as Edward W. Bemis.[22] Editorials, as well as many of the "news" stories, were

shrill, repetitive denunciations of the "Yerkes bills" and of Yerkes' attempt to rob and oppress the city. The Tribune told the people of Chicago again and again that "their liberties are at stake. They are in danger of being dominated for half a century to come by a greedy corporation." For the Tribune the danger was simply stated: "The passage of the Allen bill would be tantamount to throwing open the doors of the City Treasury and asking Yerkes to step in and help himself."[23]

The Tribune was as hostile to the Allen bill as to the Humphrey bills, because the paper had no doubt that a corrupt City Council would easily pass Yerkes' fifty-year extensions.[24] More than ever, the Tribune believed that the commonweal was at the mercy of predators both inside and outside government. Greedy and arrogant corporations flouted the public interest in every way. The street railways were the chief villains, but other utilities and private corporations were nearly as bad. The paper, for example, attacked manufacturers for defying smoke abatement ordinances and placing their own private profits ahead of the collective health of a giant city.[25] But the predators were inside government, too. The Tribune believed that the City Council and city departments were largely packed with boodlers, bummers, and tax-eaters. As in the early 1890s, the paper continued to carry large numbers of stories and editorials about incompetence, extravagance, fraud, and general venality in local government.[26]

The entanglement of private greed with public office was a

Gordian knot that baffled the Tribune. In June, 1897, the paper admitted that it did not know how to break this corrupt alliance, and it asked readers to send in suggestions. One reader suggested the initiative and referendum to restore power to the people; another suggested moral education in the schools; still another urged increasing the population of public officials in the penitentiary.[27] While admitting puzzlement over the problem, the Tribune in this period did push for some structural reforms of government that it thought might do some good. The paper remained a fervent friend of the merit system of civil service, and it strongly supported bills in a special legislative session of 1898 to reform the primary election and revenue laws. The new primary law provided for city supervised elections and secret ballot safeguards. The new revenue law replaced the town assessors with a five-member county assessment board and a three-member board of review.[28]

Generally, however, the Tribune remained skeptical of structural reform and devoted relatively little attention to such matters.[29] The paper had little use for at-large City Council elections and no use for the referendum. Under the ward system, half or more of the voters were willing to elect bad men, the paper reasoned; neither at-large elections nor direct democracy would change that fact. The need was for better voters not better structures and laws.[30] The Tribune felt the same about the primary election reform law of 1898, though it gave the law its support. "What is needed is reform of the electorate," the paper said, "and laws accomplish

little in that direction. A change of heart is needed rather than a change in the primary election laws."[31]

Stated simply, the problem was this: "How is a majority of honest public-spirited citizens to be procured in a majority of the wards? That is the real problem and that is the only problem."[32] The Tribune believed that the people could be educated and aroused to act in the public interest. Though it remained a Republican Party organ, the Tribune supported and publicized the work of the Municipal Voters' League in every aldermanic election. Like the League, the Tribune tried to focus public attention on public utility questions and to turn city elections into referenda on utility regulation.[33] The Tribune believed in the power of information, the power of public opinion, and the power of the press. In 1897-99, the paper argued that the people were neither sufficiently educated nor adequately aroused to cut this Gordian knot of municipal corruption. But the Tribune believed there was no other way -- and perhaps some faint gleam of hope was visible on the horizon.[34]

This kind of thinking led the Tribune to a sort of democracy-deferred philosophy of utility regulation in the late 1890s. The paper fought valiantly for home rule in utility matters. It had no use for the idea of regulation by state commission or by a local commission appointed by the governor.[35] By the end of the decade, the Tribune even came to a philosophical approval of municipal ownership of public utilities. In 1897, the paper was still opposed to such a course. But by 1899 it had come to accept municipal ownership

(but not operation) as a sound public policy. The Tribune still believed city governments were too corrupt, too packed with political bummers and spoilsmen to be permitted to operate large new enterprises. Operation should be handled by contract with private firms. But the people should have the right to own the utilities that possessed their streets.[36] Though hardly a radical stance in 1899, for the conservative Tribune it was the culmination of an agonizing descent into economic heresy, the final result of a decade's association with Charles T. Yerkes.

The Chicago Daily News remained a faithful ally of the Municipal Voters' League in the late 1890s, and it supported the League's efforts to make utility regulation the key issue in the aldermanic elections of 1897 and 1898. The Tribune had passed the Daily News in the proportion of stories devoted to public utility regulation and perhaps in personal hostility to Charles T. Yerkes. But the Daily News still carried some ten stories per week on local utilities during this period, and a large share of these carried on publisher Victor Lawson's ten-year-old vendetta against Yerkes.[37] The Daily News still believed that the central problem of municipal government was the corrupting influence of utility corporations. In 1897, the Daily News had a simple label for the arrogant use of power by private capital: "Yerkesism."[38]

Frequently the Daily News attacked Yerkes with humor and light sarcasm, but beneath the surface lay a deep hostility, rooted perhaps as much in Lawson's disgust for Yerkes as a person as in the

paper's opposition to his business activities.[39] Lawson was a proper, pious, somewhat sanctimonious man who was appalled by Yerkes' free-wheeling style. Lawson never forgot that Yerkes had spent time in prison, and he was apparently well apprised of the baron's sexual dalliances. Lawson had Daily News managing editor Charles M. Faye gather personal dirt on Yerkes for possible use as a last resort in the franchise extension fight of 1898. Lawson refused to deal with Yerkes privately, warning him that any correspondence would be made public.[40] Yerkes eventually refused to deal directly with Lawson or the Daily News at all. In 1898, when a reporter asked him about a new streetcar fender ordinance, Yerkes replied: "I consider it very dangerous to give The Daily News an interview on anything. The Daily News never treats the street railways fairly, so I refuse to tell you what we propose to do in the fender case."[41]

Naturally enough, the Daily News was not pleased with the Humphrey and Allen bills of early 1897. While the paper allotted much less news space than the Tribune to these bills, its coverage was similar, especially after the mass meeting of April 18. The paper reported almost daily on protests in Chicago and on legislative activities in Springfield.[42] The main theme of Daily News editorials, and most of the news stories as well, was that the city was being given over to greedy, arrogant corporations -- especially Yerkes' street railways. "Organized capital is well enough so long as it does not trench upon the rights of the people," the paper declared. The final passage of the Allen law was perceived as a

great victory for Yerkes: "As it now stands, the common council of Chicago, the legislature of the state, and the governor are practically controlled by one man."[43]

Though stunned by the passage of the Allen law, the Daily News viewed the prior defeat of the Humphrey bills as an illustration of the reform power of the people and of the press. The paper believed that the leaders of the fight, especially the newspapers, were successful in stirring up public opinion simply by disseminating the facts. The people were educated in the subtleties of franchises, and then they acted in their own interests.[44] The Daily News had much more faith than the Tribune in direct democracy. In the late 1890s, the Daily News came to view the referendum as an excellent way to break the corrupt alliance between corporations and government. Unlike the Tribune, the Daily News seemed to believe that the people were increasingly well informed, especially on franchise questions, and increasingly competent to make sound political judgments.[45]

The Daily News was also optimistic about growing popular sentiment for municipal reform shown at the polls. In the aldermanic elections of 1897 and 1898, as in the 1896 election, Lawson provided personal and financial assistance as well as editorial support to the Municipal Voters' League. He worked on candidate reports and pledged at least $1,000 in 1897 and $5,000 in 1898.[46] Most of the Daily News efforts in 1897 were in support of the independent mayoral candidacy of John Harlan. The Daily News liked Harlan as much for his nonpartisanship as for his vehement opposition to Yerkes and the

Humphrey bills. The paper believed that the best chances for reform lay with nonpartisan electoral movements.[47] The Daily News overflowed with very favorable coverage of Harlan's campaign activities, while carrying very little about the other candidates. Every day the paper trumpeted Harlan in news stories with headlines such as "Harlan Gains Each Day," "Harlan Grows in Favor," "Wild Cheers for Harlan," "Harlan Hits Them Hard," and "Harlan With a Whoop."[48] Harlan lost the election, but the Daily News still carried more about him the next day than about the winner, Carter Harrison. Lawson viewed Harlan's strong showing as a real victory for nonpartisan municipal reform.[49]

Though the Daily News liked Harlan for his independence, it also liked his stand on the utility question. By the late 1890s, the Daily News was a solid advocate of municipal ownership of public utilities. The paper believed that rapacious corporations had brought the municipal ownership movement down upon themselves. But whatever the origin of the municipal ownership idea, the Daily News now thought it a positive step toward the modern government of cities. No longer did people fear the name "municipal socialism."[50] The Daily News, like the Tribune, still insisted that civil service reform had not proceeded far enough to allow municipal operation as well as ownership. The physical plants should be leased to private firms or individuals, but the paper felt municipal operation could come in time.[51] For the Daily News, a commitment to municipal ownership was a matter of practicality: "If there are 'millions in

it' for Mr. Yerkes and his traction partners the same millions are in it for the people. They own the streets; they ought to have the benefit of them in every way."[52]

The Daily News in the late 1890s still devoted considerable attention to reform issues other than utility regulation, particularly efforts to control gambling and to enforce the civil service laws. In the mayoral election of 1897, the paper was highly critical of Carter Harrison for his links to the Democratic Party machine and his commitment to "a wide-open town."[53] By 1899, however, the Daily News loved Harrison and ardently pushed for his re-election. He still allowed gambling most of the time; he still winked at all-night saloons; and he still allowed too much politics and patronage in the police department to suit Lawson and his editors. But the Daily News could let all that pass. Harrison was on the right side of the big issue, and that was good enough for the Daily News. He had become the city's champion in its battle with "its arch-enemy and would-be despoiler," Charles T. Yerkes.[54]

After the Allen law had been approved in June, 1897, Yerkes had no choice but to return to Chicago to secure the franchise extensions he desired. He believed that the people of Chicago had been turned against him by the newspapers, and rather than seek the extension ordinances immediately he left Chicago for a lengthy tour of Europe.[55] When he returned, he bought a daily newspaper, the Inter Ocean, and began to do battle with the "newspaper trust." The other papers were not much surprised by the advent of "Editor

Yerkes." The Daily News observed that "where any man of prominence gets into such favor with the public that he keeps harping on the general worthlessness and viciousness of newspapers he is the most promising customer in the world for a man with a newspaper to sell."[56]

Yerkes made George Wheeler Hinman, formerly of the New York Sun, managing editor of the Inter Ocean. For Yerkes' purposes, this was a wise choice. Hinman and the New York Sun were long-time enemies of the Associated Press, a tightly controlled cooperative news-gathering agency that was the product of Chicago journalism and specifically was the handiwork of Melville Stone and Victor Lawson of the Daily News. Hinman made it the policy of the Inter Ocean to "oppose the Chicago newspaper trust" on all fronts, and he was especially hostile to Lawson and the Daily News.[57] Almost daily from the time he arrived in town, Hinman attacked the Chicago publishers for trying to make vassals of the local political parties and government officials, as well as for monopolizing and manipulating the news through the Associated Press. The Inter Ocean was especially vitriolic in its denunciations of Lawson, who, "wrapped in the cloak of religion, exhaling the odor of sanctity," dominated the newspaper trust for his own personal financial gain.[58]

Lawson told his editors to ignore Hinman's personal tirades. Instead the Daily News simply dismissed the Inter Ocean as the dog of the corporate pirates of Chicago. Both the Daily News and the Tribune dubbed the paper "the Daily Yerkes." Both ridiculed Yerkes'

plunge into journalism as the reckless act of a desperate man. But both the Daily News and the Tribune knew that this was now the beginning of a vigorous effort by Yerkes to turn the tide of public opinion in Chicago and to secure the fifty-year franchise extensions. Apparently, the year 1898 would bring the showdown.[59]

III

St. Louis, like Chicago, had a municipal election on April 6, 1897. For awhile it seemed that street railway regulation might become the leading issue of the campaign. In November, 1896, State Commissioner of Labor Lee Meriwether had released the final report of a detailed investigation of street railway franchises in Missouri's two largest cities. The report seemed to confirm what some leaders of the St. Louis Civic Federation had been arguing since the Federation was reorganized seven months earlier -- that the street railways were tax dodgers, grown fat at the public trough. The report charged that the St. Louis companies paid less than one-thirtieth of what they should have paid for the public franchises they held.[60] Meriwether's report and his reform enthusiasm caught the fancy of Civic Federation president W.W. Boyd and secretary Walter Vrooman. Boyd urged Meriwether to run for mayor on the issue of street railway taxation. In several confidential letters in January, 1897, Boyd promised the ambitious young commissioner of labor the full support of the St. Louis Civic Federation.[61]

Though a member of Democratic governor William J. Stone's

administration, Meriwether was a political newcomer in St. Louis. His lively attacks on public utility corporations, however, quickly sparked interest and support throughout the city. At a mass meeting to kick off the Democratic spring campaign, several thousand rank and file Democrats cheered Meriwether wildly as he denounced the tax-dodging street railways and declared that compensation should be exacted from street railways and used to hire the unemployed for public works projects. The large gathering enthusiastically endorsed a resolution demanding tax equity, fair compensation for public franchises, three-cent car fares, and honesty and efficiency in municipal government. The loudest cheering came when the Rev. Frank G. Tyrrell, a founder of the Civic Federation, called for the endorsement of Lee Meriwether for mayor of St. Louis.[62]

The insurgency of Meriwether, especially his strident attacks on the street railway corporations, worried the established factions of the local Democratic Party. "Boss" Ed Butler, who controlled several Democratic ward organizations and whose main interests were political power and patronage, hoped to put former mayor Edward Noonan back into City Hall. The upper-class business elite in the party favored conservative businessman Edwin Harrison. Harrison was something of a mugwump, prone to vague talk about honesty and efficiency in government. While these two factions represented differing class and reform interests in the party, both were allied with the street railways of St. Louis. Butler and Noonan had frequently served as political agents in the Municipal Assembly for

street railway magnate James Campbell and other company managers. Harrison was the favored candidate of a group of downtown St. Louis businessmen, mostly "gold Democrats," who were close political and business friends of street railway men, especially Campbell and John Scullin. Harrison's campaign manager was Charles D. McClure, an important street railway executive.[63]

Meriwether was counting on support from organized labor and the Civic Federation to help him win the Democratic nomination in what promised to be a very close race. But just before the Democratic primary to select convention delegates, the Civic Federation's central council, which was still dominated by conservative Democratic businessmen, endorsed Edwin Harrison, ignoring Boyd's prior promise to stick with Meriwether "through thick and thin." Meriwether's supporters, especially Walter Vrooman and several ward councils of the Federation, were shocked and outraged at the Civic Federation's treachery, and many resigned. "Thick and Thin" Boyd, as the Meriwether people began to call him, was vilified all over St. Louis.[64] The year-old crack in the Civic Federation now split the organization wide open. Though large numbers of Federation members and constituent groups supported Meriwether's attack on the utilities and his call for public works, the conservative Democrats on the central council feared Meriwether's brand of tax radicalism. They were linked to street railway interests and to the sound money faction of the Democratic Party. They favored the candidate who represented their interests, Edwin Harrison.[65]

Despite the public confusion generated by the Civic Federation flip-flop, Meriwether nearly defeated Harrison in the primary, and he felt he could win the nomination in the city Democratic convention. The convention, however, degenerated into a brawl and finally into two separate conventions -- one nominating Harrison, the other nominating Meriwether.[66] The courts eventually declared Harrison the official Democratic candidate, but Meriwether was convinced that the nomination had been stolen from him, and he refused to quit. In a bizarre misalliance with the disaffected Butler-Noonan faction, he fought Harrison to the end. With both the Civic Federation and the Democratic Party in turmoil, the Republican candidate, long-time city politician Henry Ziegenhein, easily won the election.[67]

Neither Harrison nor Ziegenhein paid much attention to the street railway issue. The Harrison platform did not even mention public utilities. It was largely a list of Republican failings and a vague call for "good, honest, business-like, progressive administration of municipal government." The Republican platform mentioned adequate compensation for franchise grants, but Ziegenhein never made this an issue. Instead, he talked of clean streets, public works, and businesslike government.[68] Ziegenhein, like Harrison, was sympathetic to the street railway corporations. His opponents had long charged, apparently with some justification, that as city collector he had deliberately allowed street railways to pay less in taxes than they owed.[69] Only Lee Meriwether pushed the street railway issue.

The leading St. Louis newspapers gave no support to Meriwether or his program once the campaign was underway. Coverage was strictly partisan. Though sympathetic to Meriwether's views on utility regulation, the Post-Dispatch ridiculed Meriwether as a party bolter and tool of the sinister boss Ed Butler. The Globe-Democrat, as usual, had no use for anyone who was not a Republican, arguing that Ziegenhein must be elected in order "to perpetuate Republican rule in St. Louis." Before the Democratic convention, the Republic totally ignored Meriwether. In round-up stories about the mayoral campaign, the Republic simply did not mention him. Even a story with the headline "Four Democratic Candidates Met" referred only to the three other candidates, as if Meriwether did not exist. After the convention, the Republic had to acknowledge Meriwether's existence in order to denounce his candidacy as part of a plot to elect Ziegenhein.[70]

In a statement the day after the election, Meriwether blamed his defeat at least partly on the Democratic newspapers of St. Louis, which he said aided the candidate of "the tax-dodgers and franchise grabbers," Edwin Harrison. He complained that "Carter Harrison, elected by 75,000 in Chicago, advocated the same principles for which I battled; but the St. Louis papers which rejoice in the defeat of the tax-dodgers and franchise grabbers in Chicago, said not a word in behalf of the same fight in St. Louis."[71]

The mayoral campaign, followed by a controversy several weeks later over school board candidate endorsements, destroyed the

credibility of the Civic Federation as a nonpartisan organization. Throughout the campaign the Globe-Democrat attacked the Federation as a "Democratic side show" and the Rev. Boyd as a new Democratic Party boss. Both the Post-Dispatch and the Republic defended the Civic Federation so long as it supported their candidates.[72] When the Federation made a deal with the local Republican boss, Chauncey I. Filley, to support his school board ticket in late April, both Democratic papers joined the Republican Globe-Democrat in condemning the faltering reform group. More Federation members defected, including Boyd himself, who declared that the Federation had sold out to the politicians. The newspapers pronounced the Civic Federation dead, and the Globe-Democrat was happy to write its obituary: "It only remains to be said that the earth hath bubbles as the water hath, and the Civic Federation was one of them."[73] The Civic Federation was reorganized again in the fall of 1897, but as a patently upper-class, mugwump reform organization with little interest in public utilities or in direct political activity.[74]

With the collapse of the Civic Federation and the isolation of the Meriwether movement outside the political system of parties and partisan newspapers, hopes for a new politics of municipal reform faded in St. Louis in the spring of 1897. The issues that Meriwether had identified, on the other hand, did not fade. Within weeks of the election, street railway promoters launched the first of a series of efforts to obtain, on very favorable terms, a giant gridiron franchise to clear the way for the consolidation of all the streetcar

companies of St. Louis. These efforts posed some of the same kinds of problems that Chicagoans faced in their fight against franchise extensions -- problems of adequate compensation to the city, lower fares, and adequate public control over public service monopolies. The period 1897-99 turned out to be as important an era in the history of street railways in St. Louis as it was in Chicago. When the crises came, the newspapers of St. Louis, like their Chicago contemporaries, called upon the people to rise up to defeat the franchise grabbers. Unlike the people of Chicago, however, the people of St. Louis did not rise.

The Post-Dispatch was the chief newspaper proponent in St. Louis of Lee Meriwether's ideas on utility regulation and taxation. Of the three leading newspapers, it was the only one to pay attention in 1896 to Meriwether's study of street railway franchises and to the concurrent development of the Vrooman faction of the Civic Federation. At the opening of the municipal election campaign in February, 1897, the Post-Dispatch heartily endorsed Meriwether's efforts to commit the local Democratic Party to a platform favoring increased taxation of street railways and other franchise holders.[75] The paper, however, was more concerned about the success of the Democratic Party than about utility regulation, and it never became associated politically with the Meriwether movement. Instead, in the election of 1897, the paper endorsed a candidate for mayor who was the favorite of the street railways and whose platform said nothing about utility taxation or regulation. Philosophically, the

Post-Dispatch stood with Meriwether. Politically, it stood with what it perceived to be the mainstream of the regular Democratic Party.

In the late 1890s, the Post-Dispatch continued its long-standing opposition to special economic privilege. This was an era of concentration and consolidation in business, and the Post-Dispatch regularly criticized the trust builders as plutocrats, cormorants, and polyhogs. A "polyhog" in the lexicon of the Post-Dispatch was "a human combination of hoggishness intent upon satisfying his greed in every possible way regardless of the rights or interests of his fellow creatures. . . . One form of polyhog uses political power for business purposes. Another form uses business advantages for political purposes."[76] Even after Joseph Pulitzer regained control of the Post-Dispatch from pro-Bryan editor Charles H. Jones in June, 1897, the paper continued to praise Bryan's attacks on monopolies and to push for anti-trust legislation in the Missouri legislature.[77]

On the local level, the Post-Dispatch regularly opposed utility corporations that used political power to gain control of valuable public franchises without compensating the city or protecting the city's rights. This was the usual theme of the paper's coverage of franchise legislation in the Municipal Assembly. Though the Post-Dispatch devoted less attention to utility matters than did the Chicago papers in the late 1890s, it did carry several stories per week on the average, and many more of these dealt with regulation than with utility expansion or business matters. Like the Chicago papers, the Post-Dispatch regularly denounced the corporate

"franchise grabbers" and the "boodlers" in the Municipal Assembly.[78] The paper believed that street railways avoided paying taxes and other compensation because they "own and run the city government. . . . The street railway influence also largely determines who shall be the candidates for Mayor and other city officers, on both party tickets."[79]

To the Post-Dispatch, as to Lee Meriwether, the chief regulatory issue was taxation and revenue. The need was to make street railway companies pay for their special privileges. The city desperately needed revenue for public works; real estate taxes were already too high; yet the street railways paid nothing for the most valuable part of their property -- their franchises to use the public streets. This was the argument that ran through Post-Dispatch coverage during the late 1890s. The paper supported bills in the 1897 and 1899 legislatures to tax franchises, and it covered efforts by the local Single Tax League in 1898 to change the tax system.[80] The Post-Dispatch also continued to support the Julian law, which required that franchises be sold to the highest bidder, until the law was declared unconstitutional in November, 1898. In discussing the North and South street railway franchise in 1897, for example, the paper mainly worried about loss of revenue to the city. It paid little attention to the obvious purpose of the franchise, which was to force the consolidation of all St. Louis lines.[81]

Though revenue was the main thing, it was not the only thing the Post-Dispatch thought the street railways owed the city. In the late

1890s, the paper still accused the companies of murder every time a pedestrian or passenger was killed by a streetcar. The city had adopted a safety fender ordinance in 1895, which the Post-Dispatch took credit for, but the paper now charged that the fenders the companies used were cheap and ineffective. The paper also supported, though with little vigor, movements in the Missouri legislature and in other cities for lower streetcar fares and better transfer systems.[82]

The Post-Dispatch was a philosophical ally of the Meriwether movement, but it did not support the movement politically. Editor Charles H. Jones, the champion of Bryan and free silver in St. Louis, was determined that the national fiasco of 1896 would not be repeated in the municipal election of 1897. He wanted the party to remain true to the Chicago platform, and he was highly suspicious of the "gold bug" influence in the St. Louis Civic Federation.[83] But mostly he wanted Democrats to win the election. He convinced himself that the nomination of Edwin Harrison for mayor and of "Democratic businessmen of high standing" for the Council would assure the support of the Civic Federation, the independent voters, and the "better class of Republicans" who opposed Ziegenhein. In its endorsement of Harrison, the Post-Dispatch said nothing about the street railway issue which had seemed so important to the paper and to the Democrats only six weeks before. Throughout the campaign, the paper ignored Meriwether and his platform, except to denounce him as a party bolter and tool of the very forces he opposed.[84]

Only after the Democrats were soundly defeated did the Post-Dispatch criticize the party for ignoring the street railway issue. The paper said that Meriwether's strong showing in the primary should have convinced the party to adopt some of his platform planks. But the convention and campaign managers dodged the issue in order not to offend the silk-stocking "gold bugs" still trying to control the local party. The Post-Dispatch believed the Democrats lost because they failed to throw these traitorous "Boltocrats" out of the party. "There was no aggressiveness, no confident assertion of popular principles, without which Democracy means nothing," the paper concluded. "And the election returns show that nearly half the Democratic voters of the city followed Mr. Meriwether in his independent candidacy, which they regarded as a protest against policies which they did not understand and leadership which they distrusted."[85] The Post-Dispatch neglected to mention that these were policies and this was the leadership that it, too, had faithfully followed to the bitter end.

Even though it affirmed the importance of Meriwether's ideas after the election, the Post-Dispatch still steered clear of his movement, which Meriwether quickly began to build in preparation for the mayoral election of 1901. The paper was especially critical of Walter Vrooman, who had become Meriwether's right-hand man. It ridiculed Vrooman's attacks on the street railways as hysterical tirades that took all the seriousness out of the just demand for assessment reform and adequate compensation to the city.[86] The

Post-Dispatch virtually ignored the Meriwether-Vrooman movement in the months after the election.

The Post-Dispatch shared a general understanding of the street railway problem with Meriwether and Vrooman, but it was never personally abusive of street railway managers and never very radical in prescribing solutions to street railway problems. The "franchise grabs" that drew the most fire from the Post-Dispatch in this period were the North and South ordinance of 1897 and the Central Traction ordinance of 1898. Both of these were promoted by outsiders and opposed by the existing street railway companies of St. Louis.[87] The Post-Dispatch did not advocate sweeping changes in the regulatory system. It considered municipal ownership of city lighting a good idea, but never pushed the idea of municipal ownership of street railways. The paper felt that greedy corporations were forcing public opinion around the country toward municipal ownership, and by 1899 it felt that "municipal ownership may be accepted as the only remedy for an admittedly vicious condition." But the Post-Dispatch in the 1890s never fully committed itself to the idea of municipal ownership of public utilities.[88] The most common response of the paper to franchise grabs was to seek criminal prosecution of those involved. "The only effective way" to stop boodling, the paper declared, "is to punish the boodlers and to make franchise grabbing odious." As in the earlier '90s, much of the Post-Dispatch's crusading over franchise grabs took the form of legal charges and proceedings.[89]

The political turmoil of St. Louis in 1897 made it difficult to organize a popular movement unifying politicians, reformers, and newspapers around a single issue. When the North and South franchise was introduced, the Post-Dispatch hoped to see an outpouring of popular protest like that in Chicago during the fight over the Humphrey and Allen bills. Indeed, a protest meeting was held and was well attended, mainly by workingmen. But the Post-Dispatch dismissed it as a show concocted by Meriwether and Vrooman to promote their new league of Democratic clubs. The paper lamented the fact that the old guard of the St. Louis reform movement was absent. In fact, this was the theme of the whole story, which began: "There were few prominent citizens at the indignation meeting Thursday night at the Oriental Theater."[90]

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, which ignored Lee Meriwether's street railway report in 1896, began to appreciate this young man in early 1897 for his effective, if unwitting, contribution to the destruction of both the St. Louis Civic Federation and the Democratic Party. The Globe-Democrat believed in the election of Republicans. This was the heart of its political philosophy. As in the early years of the decade, the Globe-Democrat remained primarily a non-local newspaper. It devoted significantly less news coverage and editorial comment to local public affairs and municipal reform subjects than did the Post-Dispatch and the Chicago papers.[91] The Globe-Democrat usually had no interest in issues of municipal reform, such as utility regulation, except as they played into political

struggles. The paper considered the municipal election of 1897 an especially sweet victory. Not only did the regular Republicans win, but the Democrats and municipal reformers were hopelessly demoralized.

The Globe-Democrat was always hostile to the Civic Federation in 1897-99, reporting on its activities only to expose it as a front for the Democratic Party. While the Democratic papers -- the Post-Dispatch and the Republic -- played down the split in the Federation over the Edwin Harrison endorsement, the Globe-Democrat gave its readers all the seamy details of the secret session where Meriwether was betrayed and the subsequent defections of several ward councils.[92] In an exclusive beat, the Globe-Democrat published the private letters from the Rev. Boyd promising Meriwether the full support of the Federation. The paper condemned the Federation's apparent secret commitment to the Democratic Party, and throughout the campaign it denounced Boyd as a crafty, double-dealing Democrat in disguise.[93] Even after the Civic Federation's collapse and subsequent reorganization, the Globe-Democrat never believed that it was anything but a tail on the Democratic kite.[94]

The Globe-Democrat believed in municipal reform so long as it stayed inside the Republican Party. In fact, it sometimes declared that the mere election of Republicans was in itself the best possible municipal reform. The paper thought the 1897 smash-up of the Civic Federation should have proven to everyone that "reform is a

Republican specialty."[95] Rarely did the Globe-Democrat spell out what it meant by the term "reform," though whatever reform meant, the Democrats only talked about it while the Republicans did it. Usually in supporting candidates or praising elected officials, the paper talked about economical, businesslike government and about how Republican rule was good for business prosperity in St. Louis.[96] This was the essence of municipal reform in the opinion of the Globe-Democrat.

Though the Globe-Democrat happily reported on Meriwether's role as a party wrecker, it ignored his interests in street railways. The Globe-Democrat carried about the same number of stories on local utilities as the Post-Dispatch did during the late 1890s, but twice as many were about expansion or business as were about regulation.[97] Through the early months of 1897, the paper continued its regular feature on street railways, and this feature continued to be a public relations organ for the companies. Most of the material was business news, always from the viewpoint of the company managers. Even during the election campaign, nothing was included about franchise taxation as a political issue -- just a few facts and figures and the usual complaints by street railway managers of unfair treatment at the hands of tax radicals. The paper was ever sympathetic with the companies, noting in one story that "the routine of management, with its train of troubles, the grumbling of unreasonable passengers, and the attacks of sensational papers are old-standing tribulations." Even the Globe-Democrat's coverage of the Humphrey and Allen bills in

Illinois was from Yerkes' point of view.[98] This regular street railway feature was discontinued in May, 1897, but the paper's coverage of the street railway consolidation movement in St. Louis beginning in late 1898 was also handled strictly as business news, written from the company point of view.[99]

In this fulsome flow of street railway propaganda, there occurred a ripple in 1897-98. Suddenly, and unexpectedly, the Globe-Democrat became a critic of "franchise grabs." In the summer and fall of 1897, the Municipal Assembly began to consider street railway franchises at an unusually fast pace. One of these, the North and South franchise, was a giant gridiron scheme that would have paralleled many existing lines. Several of the others were extensions of lines on boulevards in the city's West End, the choicest residential district on the west side. The well-to-do residents of the West End protested, and the Globe-Democrat took up their cause. The paper argued that the tracks would hurt property values as well as ruin the boulevards for carriage travel.[100] In addition, the paper made the standard charges that sinister influences were at large in the Assembly and that inadequate compensation was provided for the city. The Globe-Democrat, which had slept through many years of franchise deals, now urged the people of St. Louis to wake up "to protect themselves from the franchise raiders."[101]

At the end of 1897, the newspapers of St. Louis, like their Chicago contemporaries, felt that a street railway crisis was near. The leading papers had come to believe by November that the Municipal

Assembly was on the verge of giving away, for private profit, public franchises worth millions. In one week in late October, eight street railway franchises were introduced into the Assembly. The newspapers called for city-wide mass meetings to protest these raids on the public treasury.[102]

No general mass meeting was held. Neighborhood groups sprang up to fight specific franchises on specific streets, mainly in the fashionable West End.[103] But no general, city-wide movement coalesced around the problem. Street railway regulation had not been made a general public issue in St. Louis. No city-wide organization emerged to coordinate a popular protest movement. The rejuvenated Civic Federation was little interested in the problem. At a reorganizational meeting in late October, the group put together a list of problems that seemed to require the attention of reformers, including civil service, charter revision, re-drawing of ward boundaries, smoke abatement, grand jury procedures, city lighting, law enforcement, streets, and City Hall methods. Street railways were not on the list. Two weeks later, while franchises were flying in the Municipal Assembly, the new Federation president Albert L. Berry, told the Post-Dispatch that the Civic Federation would act only if any bills passed. He said he felt there was no need to take up the question ahead of time, since he thought the Julian law adequately protected the city. "We will be heard from when the proper time arrives," he said.[104]

The street railway franchise situation in St. Louis at the end

of 1897 was unsettled and its future uncertain. In December, the Assembly turned down a Cabanne Place franchise, on one of the nicest residential streets in the West End. This franchise had been hotly contested by property owners along the route, and the Post-Dispatch declared that public opinion supported by the power of the press had gained the victory. But most of the other franchise ordinances were still incubating in Assembly committees or in the heads of street railway promoters. The Post-Dispatch feared that "the grabbers are merely awaiting a favorable opportunity to slip the grabs through when public attention is diverted from them. . . . The people must enforce their will and their rights and give such expression to public sentiment as will render franchise grabbing an impossibility. The mass meeting is the thing."[105] As in Chicago, it appeared that 1898 would bring a showdown in St. Louis. But in St. Louis by the end of 1897, despite the eleventh-hour pleas of the press, a mass meeting, a mass demonstration of public sentiment, had not yet come.

IV

Chicago and St. Louis newspapers tried to achieve the same goal in 1898. They tried to arouse public opinion to force the defeat of important street railway franchises. In many ways, the arguments and blandishments of the newspapers were the same in both cities. The papers used their best tools of persuasion. But in Chicago the people were persuaded; in St. Louis they were not. In Chicago utility regulation had already been made a prominent public issue.

The crisis of 1898 was the climax of years of agitation, of information dissemination, and of political cooperation among reformers, newspapers, and politicians. In St. Louis in 1898 utility regulation was still largely a non-issue, long submerged in partisan squabbles and diffused in conflicting flows of information from competing newspapers.

Chicago reformers in the early months of 1898 were determined that the Allen law should not be forgotten and that the municipal election in April should be a referendum on "Yerkesism." The Municipal Voters' League was even more single-minded than usual in its devotion to the street railway issue. In its annual report on aldermanic candidates and in its work in the wards throughout the campaign, the League tried to make Yerkes' impending franchise extensions the sole focus of public attention.[106] In this effort the League was joined by most of the other reform organizations of Chicago, as well as some of the leading politicians, including Mayor Carter Harrison. Harrison had become the reformers' champion during the Allen law fight the year before, and now he lent his political support to the efforts to elect anti-Yerkes aldermen. The campaign of 1898 was marked by the political anomaly of Carter Harrison, John Harlan, and Nathaniel Sears, opponents in the mayoral election the year before, all working hand in hand to defeat the "boodlers" and "franchise grabbers."[107]

Except for Yerkes' Inter Ocean, all the leading newspapers of Chicago jumped in to support the Municipal Voters' League. Victor

Lawson wrote to one of his editors that "it is all important that we should defeat the attempt of Mr. Yerkes to secure control of the council at this election, and I know of no better way of doing this than by holding up the hands of the Municipal Voters' League." To this end, Lawson and his newspapers assisted the reform forces with money, investigative work, and organizational help in the wards.[108] The Daily News became a League bulletin board, with lists of endorsements, announcements of meetings, calls for assistance, and frequent and glowing interviews with League president George E. Cole.[109] The Tribune also held up the hands of the Municipal Voters' League, with coverage of League activities and daily editorials on Yerkes, the Allen law, and the impending extension ordinances. "The first duty of Chicagoans," the Tribune declared, "is to elect enough decent Aldermen to make it impossible for the next Council to sell out the city under the Allen law."[110]

Meanwhile, Yerkes' own newspaper, the Inter Ocean, attacked the Municipal Voters' League as "an offense against the law, contrary to sound public policy, and a menace to good order and good government." The Inter Ocean recommended its own list of candidates, all friendly to the street railway interests. The other newspapers either ignored the "traction organ" or urged their readers to ignore it. Lawson wrote to editor Charles Dennis of the Record that "so far as I am personally concerned I am entirely indifferent to anything that Mr. Yerkes or his newspaper can say about me. The public generally knows that Mr. Yerkes has been in jail and that I have not

been. Why say more?" The Tribune dismissed the Inter Ocean's attacks on the Municipal Voters' League as the ravings of a beaten man:

> That organization [the League] is working in a good cause. Its methods are lawful. But Yerkes serves notice on it that it must quit. Its members are citizens of Chicago. Mr. Yerkes is not. Nevertheless he tells those citizens through his paper that they need not concern themselves about the choice of their Aldermen; he will attend to that. It is bad enough to have Aldermen picked out, as some are, by small-fry local bosses. It is infinitely more disgraceful to have them picked out by an alien boss.111

The outcome of the 1898 election, according to George Cole, marked "the downfall of Charles T. Yerkes as the dominant force in this City Council." Chicago voters followed League recommendations in twenty-three of thirty-four wards, with only three incumbents opposed by the League re-elected. Cole estimated, somewhat extravagantly, that the new council would contain from thirty-seven to forty-one reliable aldermen out of a total of sixty-eight.[112] The Daily News was jubilant in victory and copious in its praise of Cole and the League: "In answer to the supercilious query of 'certain corporate interests,' 'Who is this man Cole?' we beg leave to state that he is the president of the Municipal Voters' League!"[113]

During the election campaign and the months following, the Chicago newspapers worried that the Cuban insurrection and the Spanish-American War would distract public attention from thoughts of streetcars and franchise extensions. The papers, of course, were filled with war news from the time of the sinking of the Maine on February 15 until the peace protocol was signed in August. At the

time of the municipal election in early April, the papers begged their readers to forget Cuba for a day and to think of Yerkes and the Allen law. With a formal declaration of war April 25, all the papers gave over practically all their news space to the war. At the same time, however, they kept up a small, but steady flow of items speculating on when Yerkes would put the new Council to the test.[114]

Despite the smoke screen provided by the war, Yerkes and his aldermanic allies apparently were in no hurry to act. The summer passed with no signs of activity in the Council, but with steady activity on the propaganda front. In June, the Civic Federation began a study of street railway finances, and the Chicago Federation of Labor took up the question as well. In July, the Tribune reprinted portions of the Harlan report, a study by a committee of the City Council, chaired by John Harlan, highly critical of the street railways. In September, the street railway companies put out thousands of copies of a pamphlet expounding their arguments in favor of franchise extensions and denouncing false information in the Chicago newspapers. Shortly thereafter, the Municipal Voters' League brought out a pamphlet with all the counterarguments.[115] The newspapers reported and commented on all of these efforts to woo the people, always from an anti-Yerkes perspective.

The state election in November, 1898, also kept the street railway issue in the public spotlight. Reformers in both parties tried to make repeal of the Allen law the big issue in the state conventions in June and July, and in the legislative campaigns that

followed. The Democrats took a strong stand against the Allen law in their platform. The Republican Party, still controlled at the top by Yerkes' political allies, drafted an evasive platform, but most individual candidates tried to disassociate themselves from the law as best they could. The newspapers gave extensive coverage to the campaign to elect anti-Allen law legislators.[116] While national issues such as free silver and foreign expansion were important in the campaign, the results of the election clearly portended a short future life for the Allen law. In daily editorials after the November 8 election, the Tribune reported on its efforts to secure from each legislator a pledge to support repeal of the Allen law. By the end of November, it appeared that the legislature would likely repeal the Allen law as early as January.[117]

If Yerkes hoped to get his franchise extensions under the Allen law, he would have to make his move before the legislature met in January. All summer and fall he had been working behind the scenes with his allies in the Council and in the local parties, bringing to bear as much political and financial pressure on the aldermen as possible. But the opposition forces were ready. "Let them come on with the franchise-extension ordinances," Mayor Harrison announced. "I am not afraid of them." Reformers, too, could speak of little else. George Cole agreed to join hands with Harrison in a fight to the finish.[118] With the foreign war over, the newspapers could expand their coverage of the franchise war at home, and they were happy to do so. They hoped to maintain their war-inflated

circulations, and a war on Charles T. Yerkes could not fail to reward their efforts. Both the Tribune and the Daily News frequently used analogies to the Spanish-American War in their coverage of the traction battle.[119]

The long expected event finally happened December 5, 1898. Alderman William H. Lyman introduced an ordinance to extend existing street railway franchises fifty years. The Lyman ordinance provided for a five cent fare for the first twenty years and for compensation to the city on a sliding scale ranging from one-half percent to three percent of gross receipts, depending upon a company's average revenue per mile of track. Reformers considered the franchise period much too long and the compensation much too meager. The ordinance was referred to a joint committee of the three committees on streets and alleys, which were dominated by Yerkes supporters.[120] The climax was at hand.

Mayor Harrison said, "It is now up to the people." But the people were to be given more than a little guidance in arriving at an appropriate level of indignation. Under the leadership of Harrison and Cole, the city was united against the extension ordinance. Cole helped to organize the Independent Anti-Boodle League, which brought together labor, social, political, and economic groups and clubs from all sections and strata of the city. The Anti-Boodle League conducted meetings, coordinated speakers and rallies, and flooded the city with handbills and ribbons urging citizens to "Stand by Chicago and Mayor Harrison Against Yerkes and Boodle."[121]

Meanwhile, Harrison helped arrange mass meetings in practically every ward to protest the granting of any franchise extensions under the Allen law. The week after the December 5 Council meeting was one of intense publicity and agitation, culminating in a general mass meeting December 11, which drew crowds from all over the city. There Harrison and his former opponents George Cole and John Harlan and his current political opponent John Peter Altgeld joined forces to slay the dragon Yerkes and his fifty-year franchises.[122]

Harrison and Cole and their allies believed that public opinion was the way to victory and that the press was the key. The aldermen had to be made to see that if they voted for the Lyman ordinance they would be through in Chicago, despite Yerkes' promises of political and financial rewards. Shortly after the ordinance was introduced, Harrison held a private meeting with the leading newspaper publishers of the city, and, as he later put it, "they agreed to go to the limit in putting a curb on the Yerkes insolence."[123] The Chicago publishers the summer before had already demonstrated their ability to work as a unit for business purposes. On July 2, in the midst of the war, when news was a commodity of enormous value, all the newspapers in town ceased publication rather than submit to the demands of striking stereotypers. For four days, the city-wide lockout held firm, and the union was broken. Several weeks later, the papers unanimously and simultaneously raised their prices from one cent to two cents.[124] Now the publishers pledged themselves to support Harrison and each other in a fight to the finish.

The publishers took their pledges seriously and filled their newspapers with the same kind of anti-Yerkes publicity. The Tribune's coverage was huge. During the two weeks between the introduction of the extension ordinance and its final defeat, December 19, the Tribune daily filled much of pages one and two with stories and commentary. The day after the December 11 mass meeting, the paper devoted seventeen columns of copy to the issue. In this two-week period, the Tribune carried thirty editorials denouncing Yerkes and the Allen law and rehashing again and again all the sundry defects in the extension ordinances. The Daily News coverage was somewhat less, but nonetheless impressive. No day passed without at least one lengthy story and editorial. Multi-column stories were common, a rare thing for the tersely edited Daily News. All the papers were filled with lists of upcoming Council committee meetings and protest rallies as well as detailed coverage of the day's events in what the Tribune regularly called "The Franchise War."

The papers were adamantly opposed to any extensions under the Allen law. All talk of compensation, municipal ownership, lower fares, and the like could wait until this fight was won. Editorial comment became increasingly bitter, strident, and emotional. The Tribune, with almost sinister glee, favored doing nothing at all until 1903, when most street railway franchises would expire:

> By that time the traction companies, so arrogant and defiant now, will be on their knees begging for extensions on whatever terms the city may see fit to dictate. They will be at the mercy of the city and they will unite in confessing their evil behavior and in begging to be forgiven.125

The efforts of the newspapers and the united reform coalition paid off. There was a storm of public protest. People attended rallies all over the city. Wavering aldermen were threatened with lynching, and their children were harassed at school. Society women threatened to ostracize businessmen who bribed aldermen. The Chicago real estate board, previously in favor of the extensions, now denounced Yerkes and the Allen law. Usually sober men, including the mayor, warned of possible mob violence if the Lyman ordinance passed. Citizens all over town wore tiny nooses in their buttonholes as silent warnings to boodlers. Spectators jammed the galleries at the Council's December 12 meeting to shout down the Lyman ordinance and jeer its apollogists. By December 16, Mayor Harrison was suggesting that no more mass meetings be held for fear that further agitation would lead to mass lawlessness.[126]

Yerkes was convinced that it was Mayor Harrison and the newspapers that were poisoning public opinion against him. After December 5, the Inter Ocean stepped up its battle against the "newspaper trust." Day after day, it carried the same boldface editorial denouncing the "trust newspapers'" attempts to blackmail the traction companies and intimidate the City Council. The paper damned Harrison as an anarchist who had joined the newspapers in inciting the people to riot:

> The criminal and vicious classes of Chicago, the anarchists, revolutionists, and incendiaries, are invited by the trust newspapers to assist in the destruction and confiscation of the vested rights of corporations and the private rights of law-abiding citizens. The appeal is made in no uncertain language. It is made boldly and defiantly. The mob is

> invited to assemble. The incendiary is prompted to bring his torch.[127]

No one was lynched and nothing was burned in Chicago by the men the Inter Ocean called the "anarchists of '98," but on December 19 the extension ordinance, in an amended form, was defeated in the Council. With more than a touch of irony, the reform coalition managed to pass by a vote of 32-31 a motion to refer all street railway matters to the committee on City Hall. This committee, which had no duties and never met, had been packed with reformers as sort of a joke by the "gang" majority the previous spring. Thus, nearly two years after the fight began with the introduction of the Humphrey bills in the Illinois legislature, the Yerkes franchise extension issue was, if not quite dead, buried.[128]

The outcome of the final vote in the Council had much to do with Mayor Harrison's personal political influence over a handful of former boodlers, notably "Bathhouse" John Coughlin and "Hinky Dink" Kenna, who voted with the reform aldermen.[129] But observers gave most of the credit for holding the slim majority of aldermen in line, in the face of enormous political pressures and financial inducements, to the extraordinary outpouring of public sentiment. George Cole commented that "this victory has proved that an aroused and sustained public sentiment is irresistible." Even Alderman Johnny Powers, the leader of the pro-Yerkes forces in the Democratic Party, admitted that the people seemed resolutely opposed to everything in the way of street railway legislation, and that the whole question would probably have to be dropped until 1903. The boodler-turned-reformer,

"Bathhouse" John Coughlin, merely said, "I have recently joined the church." Behind this outpouring of public sentiment, in the opinion of those who fought on both sides in the Franchise War, stood the daily newspapers of Chicago.[130]

In St. Louis, the climax came early in 1898. The Municipal Assembly had killed a street railway franchise on Cabanne Place in December, 1897, but the big one was still pending. The Assembly seemed determined to pass some version of the so-called North and South street railway bill, which had first appeared in the summer of 1897. One version had failed to pass the Assembly in 1897; another was passed but then vetoed by Mayor Ziegenhein in February, 1898, and it failed pass over his veto. On March 15, another franchise ordinance similar to the North and South bill was introduced under the name Central Traction. The Central Traction franchise was to be the most important piece of street railway legislation to come up in St. Louis in the 1890s.

Central Traction was a giant among franchises, designed to gather up in one final sweep virtually all the remaining streets in St. Louis where street railways might be practical. It involved not just a single line or section of the city, but a gridiron of more than 100 miles of lines covering much of the city and paralleling nearly every street railway in town. Like the Chicago extension ordinance, Central Traction was a fifty-year grant. It provided compensation to the city ranging from $10,000 per year at the beginning of the franchise term to $30,000 at the end, for a total of $1 million over

the fifty year period. The purpose of such a giant franchise obviously was not actually to duplicate the entire existing traction system of St. Louis, but to force the consolidation of the six major street railway companies then operating. To this end, the Central Traction franchise was enormously valuable, because the owner of it could force each separate company to sell out on reasonable terms under the threat of ruinous competition from a unified system. In 1899, this is exactly what happened.[131]

The leading newspapers of St. Louis denounced the Central Traction franchise. The Post-Dispatch was the most vociferous, damning it as a giant swindle of the city, scarcely equalled in the history of St. Louis rascality. The paper considered it an obvious "job," with the compensation promised the city a small fraction of the true value of the franchise. In several editorials the Post-Dispatch called upon city officials to sell franchises on the principle of the Julian law. The Assembly ignored the Julian law, however, and the paper concluded that "the Council, as well as the House of Delegates, is evidently the bond servant of corporate greed."[132] Both the Globe-Democrat and the Republic also condemned the Central Traction franchise, though in somewhat more temperate terms. The Globe-Democrat branded it a "speculative raid on the public rights" that, by spreading the payment to the city over fifty years, failed to provide adequate compensation to the present generation. The Republic also opposed the Central Traction franchise and carried several editorials attacking "franchise grabbing" in general. Like the

Post-Dispatch, the Republic argued that such a huge grant was unnecessary, but even if it had been necessary it should have been sold to the highest bidder under the Julian law.[133]

Though they opposed the Central Traction franchise, the newspapers were not united in their approaches. Both the Post-Dispatch and the Republic frequently talked of the principle of the Julian law; the Globe-Democrat never mentioned it. Like the Chicago papers, the Post-Dispatch attacked the whole idea of a fifty-year franchise as too long to guard the city's interests; the other papers paid little attention to this aspect of it. The Post-Dispatch was the most specific in its attacks on the Assembly and on the provisions of the Central Traction franchise. The Republic, on the other hand, condemned franchise grabbing in general, but scarcely ever mentioned Central Traction by name. After the franchise passed over the mayor's veto in April, the Post-Dispatch conducted a spirited campaign to expose the large-scale bribery involved. The other two papers virtually ignored the charges of boodle and bribery, carrying only a few very general references to the grand jury investigation that the Post-Dispatch had instigated. One of the other general-circulation dailies in St. Louis, the Star, did not oppose the Central Traction franchise at all.[134]

The amount of coverage devoted to the Central Traction issue also varied among the St. Louis papers. The franchise came at a time of very heavy news, right before the declaration of war on Spain. The papers devoted virtually all their news space to war-related matters.

Even the Post-Dispatch, which followed the Central Traction franchise most closely, did not put the story on page one until after the bill had become law and the paper's own bribery investigations were underway, a month after the story first broke.[135] Toward the end of April, the Post-Dispatch carried an editorial on the issue virtually every day, but it carried few stories except on those days the Assembly took some action. The only sustained news coverage came after the franchise had passed, when the paper began a crusade to secure indictments against Assembly boodlers.[136] The Globe-Democrat and the Republic had less coverage of Central Traction, never playing the story as front-page news and carrying only a handful of editorials in late April and early May. Though the St. Louis papers frequently echoed the editorial sentiments of their Chicago brethern, they never approached the depth and detail of the Chicago papers' news coverage of the Humphrey-Allen bills or the Yerkes' extension ordinance fight.

If the public was indignant over the Central Traction franchise, no one noticed. There were no mass meetings, no rallies, no pamphlets and ribbons, no tiny nooses in men's buttonholes. The reformers and reform organizations of the city were silent. In an editorial, the Republic asked where these clubs were now that their city needed them. "Every single one has been as supine as if it could be in the sleep of death itself," the paper complained. They "sleep indolently while the franchise grabbers plunder the city at will."[137] Some groups, such as the Single Tax League and the

Taxpayers' League, did set up committees to investigate how the Julian law might apply in this case, and the Civic Federation president announced his support for the Post-Dispatch's efforts to secure grand jury indictments against boodlers.[138] But there was no general public outcry and no general public organization to encourage it.

How much the impending war distracted public attention is uncertain. Clearly the war spirit was high in St. Louis. The newspapers were much more excited about Cuban atrocities than St. Louis streetcars, and surely the people were, too. Some former leaders of reform in the city, including Walter Vrooman, were now organizing regiments of volunteers and drilling troops.[139] But the pattern of public protest was not that much different from what it had been in the fall of 1897. In May, 1898, when another franchise was suggested for a fashionable West End boulevard, the local residents quickly organized to fight it, despite the fact that a war was on.[140] Central Traction, on the other hand, was more like the franchise extension effort in Chicago. It posed a more general threat to the city's revenue potential and to the city's ability to regulate street railway activities over the next half century. Opposition to Central Traction depended upon a general, city-wide, popular reform interest that did not exist in St. Louis in 1898.

The Post-Dispatch was thoroughly discouraged by the Central Traction episode. All its charges of boodle and corruption were confirmed four years later in the sensational bribery trials conducted by prosecutor Joseph W. Folk, which so impressed Lincoln Steffens in

The Shame of the Cities. But in 1898 no one paid much attention, including the other St. Louis newspapers. Later in the year, when the Assembly gave away yet another giant street railway franchise, the Post-Dispatch despaired: "There is no hope for the city under the present administration. Within a year two vast franchise steals have been consummated. The administration is honey-combed with corruption. Citizens may expect a series of raids. The city is given up to loot."[141]

Meanwhile, in Chicago the people were fighting successfully a similar franchise deal in their city, and the lesson was not lost on the Post-Dispatch. There, the paper said, an honest, resolute mayor backed by an aroused public opinion defeated the franchise grabbers, while in St. Louis "public property has been turned over to corporations until there is little left that the city can call its own. And the process has gone on before the eyes of the people who saw their wealth disappear without any but the feeblest protests." The key to victory in Chicago, the Post-Dispatch told its sleepy readers, was the "campaign of education" by the newspapers and public-spirited citizens.[142]

By "campaign of education" the Post-Dispatch meant the flood of publicity in December, 1898. But, in fact, this December campaign in Chicago was merely the last semester of a public education that had begun many years before.

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NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]Chicago Daily News, Jan. 2, 1897, p. 6; Chicago Tribune, Jan. 3, 1897, p. 30; George E. Cole, "Opening of the Aldermanic Campaign," circular letter, Dec. 29, 1896, Municipal Voters' League Papers, Chicago Historical Society. See also Hoyt King, Citizen Cole of Chicago (Chicago: Horder's, Inc., 1931), p. 60; Edwin Burritt Smith, "The Municipal Voters' League of Chicago," Atlantic Monthly, 85 (June, 1900), 836.

[2]Robert D. Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers: Chicago Local Transportation in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971), pp. 334-36. Actually, there was another candidate for mayor of Chicago in 1897. It was humorist Finley Peter Dunne's fictional character, Mr. Dooley, the wise and earthy Irish saloonkeeper. In his mock campaign, Mr. Dooley pledged to give Chicago's great benefactor, Charles T. Yerkes, anything he wanted -- at reduced rates. Dunne's "Mr. Dooley" columns appeared in the Evening Post at his time. See Charles Fanning, Finley Peter Dunne and Mr. Dooley: The Chicago Years (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1978), pp. 115-17.

[3]Tribune, April 4, 1897, p. 3; Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 334-36. Interesting accounts of this mayoral campaign and election are Carter Harrison, Stormy Years: The Autobiography of Carter H. Harrison, Five Times Mayor of Chicago (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1935), pp. 92-120; and Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan, Lords of the Levee: The Story of Bathhouse John and Hinky Dink (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943), pp. 158-70.

[4]Daily News, April 6, 1897, p. 1; Tribune, April 7, 1897, p. 1.

[5]Daily News, April 6, 1897, pp. 1 and 4; Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 101, 127, 136-44; Lincoln Steffens, The Shame of the Cities (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957), pp. 176-77; Homer C. Harlan, "The Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle, 1897-1898" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1948), p. 58; Victor Lawson to John Harlan, April 13, 1897, Victor Lawson Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

[6]There is an extensive literature on the Humphrey and Allen bills. The best historical accounts are Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 322-34; Harlan, "Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle," pp.

53-71; and Sidney I. Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron: Charles T. Yerkes," Business History Review, 35 (Autumn, 1961), 354-63.

Many of the contemporary articles cited in other notes to this chapter and the previous chapter contain accounts of the Humphrey and Allen bills. For a list of contemporary pamphlets and reports on this issue, see Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 419-21.

[7]Tribune, March 20, 1897, p. 9; March 21, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; Daily News, March 22, 1897, p. 4; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 356-57.

[8]Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 126, 136-38; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," p. 358.

[9]Tribune, April 19, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; April 20, 1897, p. 6; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 356-58. See also Chicago Committee of One Hundred, The Street Railway Bills (Chicago, 1897).

[10]Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 138, 140-41.

[11]Tribune, May 13, 1897, p. 6; Daily News, May 13, 1897, p. 4. See also Edwin Burritt Smith, "Chicago," in Proceedings of the Indianapolis Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1898), p. 270; Harrison, Stormy Years, p. 151; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," p. 357.

[12]Reprinted in Tribune, May 1, 1897, p. 4. See also Tribune, May 2, 1897, p. 32.

[13]Ibid., May 13, 1897, p. 3; May 14, 1897, p. 12. Yerkes' belief that the press torpedoed the Humphrey bills was shared by other street railway men. See, for example, the statements of Julius S. Grinnell and M.K. Bowen of the South Side company in Tribune, May 13, 1897, p. 2; Chicago Record, May 13, 1897, p. 2.

[14]Tribune, May 22, 1897, p. 6; June 10, 1897, p. 18; Daily News, May 21, 1897, pp. 1 and 2.

[15]Tribune, June 5, 1897, p. 12; Harlan, "Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle," p. 70; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," p. 365.

[16]See Tables 3 - 6.

[17]Tribune, Jan. 14, 1897, p. 6. On Yerkes' general disregard for his public image, see Roberts, "Portrait of Robber Baron," pp. 351-54; Harlan, "Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle," p. 26.

[18]For some especially vituperative examples, see Tribune, Jan. 11, 1897, p. 6; May 14, 1897, p. 12; May 20, 1897, p. 6; May 21, 1897, p. 6; June 10, 1897, p. 18; Jan. 13, 1898, p. 6; Dec. 12, 1898, p. 6; Dec. 14, 1898, p. 12.

[19]Ibid., April 19-26, 1897; May 11-14, 1897; June 2-12, 1897.

[20]Ibid., July 1, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 10, 1897, p. 1; Jan. 19, 1898, p. 6; May 4, 1898, p. 6; July 13, 1898, p. 12; Nov. 9, 1898, p. 6; Nov. 14, 1898, p. 3; Dec. 5, 1898, p. 1.

[21]This kind of coverage appeared almost daily, March-May, 1897.

[22]See, for example, Tribune, May 9, 1897, p. 32; May 26, 1897, p. 6.

[23]Ibid., April 18, 1897, p. 32; May 27, 1897, p. 6. These quotes are typical of editorials most everyday during this period. See, for example, Ibid., March 10, 1897, p. 6; April 9, 1897, p. 6; May 4, 1897, p. 6; May 12, 1897, p. 6; May 13, 1897, p. 6; May 23, 1897, p. 32; June 10, 1897, p. 18; June 12, 1897, p. 12.

[24]Ibid., May 27, 1897, p. 6; June 5, 1897, p. 12; June 6, 1897, pp. 1 and 28.

[25]Ibid., Jan. 15, 1897, p. 1; Jan. 17, 1897, p. 30; Feb. 8, 1897, p. 6; Dec. 2, 1898, p. 3.

[26]The main boodle charges involved franchise legislation. The Tribune also attacked Mayor Harrison for violating the civil service law and filling jobs with political bummers. See, for example, March 22, 1897, p. 6; May 5, 1897, p. 6; May 25, 1897, p. 1; Jan. 15, 1898, p. 12; Feb. 19, 1898, p. 12; Oct. 13, 1898, p. 6.

The Tribune usually viewed any plan for increasing city revenues as a plot of the "tax-eaters." See, for example, Jan. 11, 1897, p. 6; Feb. 22, 1897, p. 6; March 20, 1897, p. 12; July 3, 1897, p. 12; Oct. 17, 1897, p. 32; Jan. 14, 1898, p. 6; Sept. 18, 1898, p. 34; Oct. 2, 1898, p. 32.

[27]Ibid., June 27, 1897, p. 30; July 1, 1897, p. 6; July 4, 1897, p. 30; July 11, 1897, p. 30.

[28]On the civil service, see Ibid., March 3, 1897, p. 6; May 25, 1897, p. 1; Jan. 16, 1898, p. 30; Feb. 11, 1898, p. 16; March 6, 1898, p. 28; Aug. 13, 1898, p. 7. On the primary law, see Ibid., Jan. 10, 1897, p. 28; Feb. 1, 1897, p. 6; Dec. 11, 1897, p. 12; Jan. 9, 1898, p. 30; Feb. 11, 1898, p. 6; March 17, 1898, p. 6. On the revenue law, see Ibid., Jan. 5, 1898, p. 1; Jan. 12, 1898, p. 6; Jan. 22, 1898, p. 12; Feb. 2, 1898, p. 6; Feb. 25, 1898, p. 6; April 17, 1898, p. 34.

[29]See Table 8.

[30]Tribune, July 1, 1897, p. 6; July 20, 1897, p. 6; Oct. 8, 1897, p. 6; Oct. 10, 1897, p. 28, Oct. 14, 1897, p. 6; Aug. 1, 1898, p. 6; Oct. 30, 1898, p. 32.

[31]Ibid., Oct. 10, 1897, p. 28; Oct. 27, 1897, p. 6; Jan. 9, 1898, p. 30; July 16, 1899, p. 34.

[32]Ibid., Oct. 14, 1897, p. 6; July 20, 1897, p. 6.

[33]Ibid., Jan. 3, 1897, p. 30; Feb. 19, 1897, p. 6; April 1, 1897, p. 6; Jan. 8, 1898, p. 12; Feb. 20, 1898, p. 30; March 7, 1898, p. 6; March 15, 1898, p. 6; March 16, 1898, p. 6; March 29, 1898, p. 12.

[34]Ibid., Oct. 8, 1897, p. 6; July 6, 1897, p. 12; May 13, 1897, p. 6; Feb. 9, 1899, p. 12.

[35]Ibid., Jan. 7, 1899, p. 12; Feb. 4, 1899, p. 12.

[36]Ibid., Jan. 20, 1897, p. 6; Oct. 13, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 13, 1897, p. 6; Jan. 6, 1899, p. 6; Feb. 3, 1899, p. 6; April 3, 1899, p. 4; May 3, 1899, p. 6; Aug. 24, 1899, p. 6; Aug. 26, 1899, p. 6.

[37]See Tables 3 - 4, and 6.

[38]Daily News, May 13, 1897, p. 4.

[39]The Daily News often spoofed Yerkes in editorial "brights." See, for example, May 1, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 11, 1899, p. 4.

[40]Victor Lawson to Charles H. Dennis, Jan. 12, 1898, Charles H. Dennis Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. Dennis was managing editor of Lawson's morning paper, the Record. Lawson to Charles M. Faye, Jan. 4, 1898; Lawson to Charles T. Yerkes, Jan. 16, 1897; Lawson Papers. On Yerkes' sexual escapades, see Stephen Longstreet, Chicago: 1860-1919 (New York: David McKay, 1973), p. 81. Longstreet's account is based on conversations with Chicago journalist and novelist Theodore Dreiser shortly before Dreiser's death in 1945.

[41]Daily News, Aug. 31, 1898, p. 1. See also Charles H. Dennis, Victor Lawson: His Time and His Work (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), pp. 282-89.

[42]See, for example, Daily News, March 10, 1897, p. 1; March 16, 1897, p. 2; April 14, 1897, p. 1; April 16, 1897, p. 1; April 20, 1897, p. 2; April 29, 1897, p. 1; May 7, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; May 11, 1897, p. 1; May 12, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; May 21, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; May 28, 1897, p. 1; June 4, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; June 9, 1897, p. 1.

[43]Ibid., May 13, 1897, p. 4; June 10, 1897, p. 4. See also Ibid., Feb. 19, 1897, p. 4; March 12, 1897, p. 4; May 1, 1897, p. 4; May 11, 1897, p. 4; May 21, 1897, p. 4; May 22, 1897, p. 4; May 29, 1897, p. 4; June 5, 1897, p. 4.

[44]Ibid., May 12, 1897, p. 2; May 13, 1897, p. 4.

[45]Ibid., April 26, 1897, p. 4; June 2, 1897, p. 4; June 7, 1897, p. 4; July 21, 1897, p. 4; April 15, 1898, p. 4.

[46]Lawson to George E. Cole, Jan. 29, 1897; Feb. 4, 1897; April 17, 1897; Lawson Papers. Lawson to Dennis, cablegram, Feb. 24, 1898, Dennis Papers. See also Daily News, Jan. 2, 1897, p. 6; March 9, 1897, p. 4; April 3, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 7, 1898, pp. 1 and 3; Feb. 25, 1898, p. 1; Feb. 28, 1898, p. 4; March 10, 1898, p. 4; April 1, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; April 6, 1898, p. 4.

[47]See almost daily editorials in the Daily News extolling the virtues of nonpartisanship, March 6-23, 1897.

[48]Ibid., March 16, 1897, p. 3; March 18, 1897, p. 2; March 31, 1897, p. 3; April 5, 1897, pp. 1 and 3.

[49]Lawson to John Harlan, April 13, 1897, Lawson Papers; Daily News, April 6, 1897, pp. 1 and 4.

[50]Daily News, June 30, 1897, p. 4; July 13, 1897, p. 4; Oct. 20, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 13, 1897, p. 4; Dec. 14, 1898, p. 4; Dec. 20, 1898, p. 4; Dec. 22, 1898, p. 4; Feb. 1, 1899, p. 4.

[51]Ibid., Oct. 4, 1897, p. 4; April 13, 1899, p. 4; Lawson to Charles M. Faye, Feb. 2, 1899, Lawson Papers.

[52]Ibid., Dec. 12, 1898, p. 4.

[53]Ibid., March 16, 1897, p. 1; April 10, 1897, p. 2; April 17, 1897, p. 1; May 4, 1897, p. 4; June 14, 1897, p. 4.

[54]Ibid., April 1, 1899, p. 1; April 3, 1899, p. 4; April 5, 1899, p. 4. Editor Charles M. Faye considered Carter Harrison II the best mayor Chicago had had in many years, but Lawson was never reconciled to Harrison's "personal liberty" policies on gambling and saloons. See Lawson to Faye, March 10, 1898; Faye to Lawson, March 29, 1898; Lawson Papers.

[55]Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," p. 363.

[56]Daily News, Oct. 22, 1897, p. 4.

[57]Chicago Inter Ocean, Nov. 21, 1897. See also Dennis, Victor Lawson, p. 285.

[58]See daily editorials, Inter Ocean, Nov. 21 - Dec. 10, 1897. See also Dennis, Victor Lawson, pp. 285-89; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 363-64.

[59]Lawson to Dennis, Nov. 18, 1897; Jan. 12, 1898; Dennis Papers. Lawson to Faye, Jan. 14, 1898; Feb. 12, 1898; Lawson Papers. Daily News, Nov. 15, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 20, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 22, 1897, p. 4; Tribune, Nov. 18, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 19, 1897, p. 6.

[60]Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, Eighteenth Annual Report of the Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics (Jefferson City, 1896), p. 1.

[61]Boyd's letters to Meriwether were published by the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, March 25, 1897, p. 12. See also Lee Meriwether, My Yesterdays: An Autobiography (Webster Groves, Mo.: International Mark Twain Society, 1942), chapter 10.

[62]St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Feb. 7, 1897, p. 9. See also Jack Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform in the 1890s: A Study in Failure," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 25 (Oct., 1968), 45-46.

[63]Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," pp. 46-47; Iseult Kuyk, "Behind the Scenes in St. Louis," in Complete Works of Brann the Iconoclast, Vol. 10 (New York: Brann Publishers, 1919), p. 205; Harry D. Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns of Nonpartisan Political Behavior in the Industrial Metropolis: St. Louis, 1895-1916" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1973), p. 40; Steffens, Shame of the Cities, pp. 74-75; Max Putzel, The Man in the Mirror: William Marion Reedy and His Magazine (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 94. Reedy was a brilliant St. Louis journalist and literary critic closely connected with the silk-stocking gold Democrats. Reedy was probably the author of the "Iseult Kuyk" article.

[64]St. Louis Globe-Democrat, March 17, 1897, p. 11; March 22, 1897, pp. 7 and 14; March 25, 1897, p. 12; March 28, 1897, p. 16; March 30, 1897, p. 12.

[65]Globe-Democrat, March 21. 1897, p. 14; March 22, 1897, p. 7; Post-Dispatch, March 22, 1897, p. 4; Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 46; Meriwether, My Yesterdays, p. 144.

[66]Globe-Democrat, March 21, 1897, pp. 12-14; Post-Dispatch, March 21, 1897, pp. 9-10.

[67]Post-Dispatch, March 21, 1897, p. 4; April 7, 1897, pp. 3 and 4; Globe-Democrat, March 25, 1897, p. 12; March 30, 1897, p. 12.

[68]Globe-Democrat, March 21, 1897, p. 14; March 27, 1897, p. 12; April 6, 1897, p. 4; Post-Dispatch, March 21, 1897, p. 10; April 4, 1897, p. 6.

[69]Post-Dispatch, March 31, 1897, pp. 4 and 5; April 1, 1897, p. 4; St. Louis Republic, March 30, 1897, p. 8; Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, Eighteenth Annual Report, pp. 9-10.

[70]Post-Dispatch, March 19, 1897, p. 4; March 26, 1897, p. 4; March 30, 1897, p. 4; Globe-Democrat, March 19, 1897, pp. 6 and 7; March 21, 1897, p. 6; Republic, March 10, 1897, p. 3; March 22, 1897, p. 6; March 26, 1897, p. 4; March 27, 1897, p. 4; April 1, 1897, p. 6.

[71]Globe-Democrat, April 8, 1897, p. 12.

[72]Ibid., March 26, 1897, p. 6; April 2, 1897, p. 6; April 3, 1897, p. 6; Post-Dispatch, March 31, 1897, p. 3; April 1, 1897, p. 8; Republic, April 2, 1897, p. 6; April 5, 1897, p. 6.

[73]Post-Dispatch, April 28, 1897, pp. 3 and 4; May 9, 1897, p. 4; Republic, April 28, 1897, pp. 4 and 6; April 29, 1897, p. 6; Globe-Democrat, April 29, 1897, p. 6.

[74]Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform," p. 48.

[75]Post-Dispatch, Feb. 7, 1897, p. 9; Feb. 8, 1897, p. 4.

[76]Ibid., Jan. 31, 1897, p. 4; July 14, 1897, p. 4; Dec. 2, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 5, 1898, p. 4; Jan. 12, 1898, p. 4; Oct. 8, 1898, p. 4.

[77]Ibid., March 26, 1899, p. 6; April 20, 1899, p. 10; April 30, 1899, p. 18; May 7, 1899, p. 6; Sept. 17, 1899, p. 1; Sept. 18, 1899, p. 4.

[78]See Tables 3 - 6. See also the following examples of the Post-Dispatch's coverage of franchise legislation in this period: North and South street railway franchise, July 22-28 and Nov. 4-16, 1897; Cabanne Place franchise, Dec. 11-29, 1897; Central Traction franchise, March 16 - April 15, 1898; Lindell franchise, Oct. 1-31, 1898.

[79]Ibid., Jan. 14, 1897, p. 4.

[80]Ibid., Jan. 6, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 14, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 22, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 30, 1897, p. 4; Feb. 17, 1897, p. 4; March 9, 1898, p. 8; March 13, 1898, p. 4; March 28, 1898, p. 4; Aug. 9, 1898, p. 4;

Oct. 13, 1898, p. 6; and almost daily stories and editorials, May 4 - June 3, 1899.

[81] Ibid., July 24, 1897, pp. 1 and 4; July 25, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 5, 1897, p. 1; Jan. 12, 1898, p. 4; Nov. 17, 1898, p. 4.

[82] On streetcar fenders, see Ibid., June 1, 1897, p. 4; Sept. 7, 1897, p. 4; Sept. 11, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 26, 1898, p. 4; Feb. 12, 1898, p. 4; July 12, 1898, p. 8; Oct. 11, 1898, p. 6; Feb. 3, 1899, p. 6; March 28, 1899, p. 4; May 22, 1899, p. 4; Dec. 3, 1899, p. 16. On lower fares, see Ibid., Feb. 10, 1897, p. 2; Feb. 12, 1897, p. 1; March 5, 1897, p. 4; May 9, 1897, sec. 2, p. 4; May 12, 1899, p. 6.

[83] Ibid., Jan. 15, 1897, p. 5; Jan. 17, 1897, p. 4; Feb. 7, 1897, p. 9.

[84] Ibid., March 19, 1897, p. 4; March 21, 1897, pp. 4 and 9; March 30, 1897, p. 4.

[85] Ibid., April 7, 1897, p. 4; April 8, 1897, pp. 1 and 4.

[86] Ibid., April 19, 1897, p. 4.

[87] Ibid., July 28, 1897, p. 4. See also James L. Murphy, "Consolidation of the Street Railways in the City of St. Louis, Missouri" (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Louis University, 1964), pp. 90-91.

[88] Post-Dispatch, April 11, 1897, pp. 4 and 6; Sept. 17, 1897, p. 4; Sept. 30, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 13, 1897, p. 4; Jan. 8, 1898, p. 4; Aug. 2, 1898, p. 4; Aug. 8, 1898, p. 4; Sept. 3, 1898, p. 4; Nov. 21, 1898, p. 4; May 14, 1899, p. 6; Oct. 2, 1899, p. 4.

[89] Ibid., July 22, 1897, p. 4; Sept. 22, 1897, p. 4; and almost daily boodle stories, April 18 - May 19, 1898.

[90] Ibid., July 22, 1897, pp. 1 and 2; July 23, 1897, p. 3.

[91] See Tables 1 - 2.

[92] Globe-Democrat, March 21, 1897, p. 14; March 22, 1897, p. 7; March 23, 1897, p. 14; March 28, 1897, p. 16; March 29, 1897, p. 3; March 30, 1897, p. 12. Compare this coverage with Post-Dispatch, March 31, 1897, p. 3; April 1, 1897, p. 8; Republic, March 21, 1897, p. 6; March 26, 1897, p. 6; March 29, 1897, p. 7.

[93] Globe-Democrat, March 25, 1897, p. 12; March 26, 1897, p. 6; March 30, 1897, p. 6; April 2, 1897, p. 6; April 3, 1897, p. 13.

[94]Ibid., Oct. 28, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 4, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 13, 1897, p. 6; March 4, 1899, p. 9; March 9, 1899, p. 11; March 18, 1899, p. 7; March 30, 1899, p. 11.

[95]Ibid., March 6, 1897, p. 6; March 22, 1897, p. 4; April 3, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 18, 1897, p. 6.

[96]Ibid., March 18, 1897, p. 6; July 20, 1898, p. 6; Oct. 14, 1898, p. 6; April 4, 1899, p. 6.

[97]See Tables 3, 4, and 6.

[98]Globe-Democrat, Jan. 18, 1897, p. 10; Feb. 1, 1897, p. 10; Feb. 7, 1897, p. 38; Feb. 22, 1897, p. 10; March 8, 1897, p. 10; March 15, 1897, p. 2; April 13, 1897, p. 12.

[99]See, for example, the Globe-Democrat's frequent business stories on street railway consolidation in December, 1898.

[100]Ibid., Oct. 28, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 1, 1897, p. 10; Nov. 3, 1897, p. 7; Nov. 4, 1897, p. 7; Nov. 7, 1897, pp. 6 and 12.

[101]Ibid., Nov. 1, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 2, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 5, 1897, pp. 6 and 7; Nov. 10, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 14, 1897, p. 6.

[102]Post-Dispatch, Nov. 4, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 5, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 6, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 9, 1897, p. 4; Nov. 16, 1897, p. 4; Dec. 14, 1897, p. 4; Republic, Nov. 3, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 12, 1897, p. 8; Globe-Democrat, Nov. 2, 1897, p. 6; Nov. 5, 1897, p. 6.

[103]Post-Dispatch, Nov. 7, 1897, p. 8; Nov. 16, 1897, p. 4; Dec. 11, 1897, p. 3; Republic, Nov. 9, 1897, p. 2; Dec. 11, 1897, p. 5; Globe-Democrat, Nov. 1, 1897, p. 10; Nov. 3, 1897, p. 7; Nov. 4, 1897, p. 7; Nov. 7, 1897, p. 12.

[104]Globe-Democrat, Oct. 27, 1897, p. 11; Post-Dispatch, Nov. 9, 1897, p. 10; Nov. 10, 1897, p. 4.

[105]Post-Dispatch, Nov. 16, 1897, p. 4; Dec. 29, 1897, p. 4.

[106]Daily News, Jan. 7, 1898, pp. 1 and 3; Feb. 25, 1898, p. 1; March 12, 1898, p. 1; March 14, 1898, p. 1; March 19, 1898, p. 1; April 1, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Tribune, Jan. 7, 1898, p. 10; Jan. 8, 1898, p. 12; March 15, 1898, p. 6; April 4, 1898, p. 7. See also King, Citizen Cole, pp. 72-73.

[107]Daily News, Feb. 9, 1898, p. 1; March 4, 1898, p. 4; Tribune, March 7, 1898, pp. 6 and 7; Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 150-52.

[108]Lawson to Dennis, Sept. 24, 1897; Feb. 24, 1898; Feb. 26, 1898; Dennis Papers. Lawson to Faye, Jan. 14, 1898; March 10, 1898; Lawson Papers.

[109]Daily News, Feb. 5, 1898, p. 4; Feb. 25, 1898, p. 1; Feb. 26, 1898, p. 4; Feb. 28, 1898, p. 4; March 8, 1898, p. 4; March 10, 1898, p. 4; March 14, 1898, p. 1; March 19, 1898, p. 1; March 21, 1898, p. 1.

[110]Tribune, Feb. 20, 1898, p. 30; March 15, 1898, p. 6; March 18, 1898, p. 6; March 22, 1898, p. 6; March 29, 1898, p. 12; April 3, 1898, p. 32; April 4, 1898, p. 7.

[111]Chicago Inter Ocean, quoted in Tribune, March 31, 1898, p. 12; Lawson to Dennis, Jan. 12, 1898, Dennis Papers; Tribune, Jan. 11, 1898, p. 6; March 16, 1898, p. 6; March 31, 1898, p. 12.

[112]Tribune, April 6, 1898, pp. 1 and 6; Daily News, April 5, 1898, p. 1; April 6, 1898, p. 4; Edwin Burritt Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," Municipal Affairs, 4 (June, 1900), 357.

[113]Daily News, April 6, 1898, p. 4; April 15, 1898, p. 4.

[114]Ibid., April 2, 1898, p. 4; Tribune, April 4, 1898, p. 6. On the Chicago newspapers and the Spanish-American War, see Richard A. Matre, "The Chicago Press and Imperialism: 1889-1902" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1961); and Benedict K. Zorbrist, "How Victor Lawson's Newspapers Covered the Cuban War of 1898," Journalism Quarterly, 38 (Summer, 1961), 323-31.

[115]Tribune, June 10, 1898, p. 7; June 11, 1898, p. 6; June 21, 1898, p. 6; July 22, 1898, p. 10; July 23, 1898, p. 6; Sept. 21, 1898, p. 7; Sept. 22, 1898, p. 6; Oct. 1, 1898, p. 6; City of Chicago, Report of the Special Committee of the City Council of Chicago on the Street Railway Franchises . . . to January 1, 1898 [Harlan Report] (Chicago, 1898); Milo R. Maltbie, ed., Street Railways of Chicago: Report to the Civic Federation of Chicago (New York: Reform Club Committee on City Affairs, 1901). The Civic Federation report was also published in Municipal Affairs, 5 (June, 1901), 439-594. For a list of other pamphlets and reports, see Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 419-20.

[116]On the state political conventions of 1898 see Tribune, June 15, 1898, pp. 1 and 6; July 13, 1898, p. 1; July 14, 1898, p. 6; Daily News, June 15, 1898, p. 4; July 12, 1898, p. 1; July 14, 1898, p. 4. The newspapers gave extensive coverage to the anti-Allen law aspect of the campaign. See, for example, Tribune, April 14, 1898, p. 13; Nov. 7, 1898, p. 6; Nov. 8, 1898, p. 6; Daily News, April 20,

1898, p. 3; Oct. 26, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Nov. 4, 1898, p. 2; Nov. 7, 1898, p. 4.

[117]Tribune, Nov. 11, 1898, pp. 1 and 3; and daily for days following. See also Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," p. 360.

[118]Daily News, Sept. 6, 1898, p. 1; Sept. 12, 1898, p. 3; Nov. 4, 1898, p. 1; Nov. 5, 1898, p. 2.

[119]Faye to Lawson, Sept. 21, 1898; Lawson to Faye, Oct. 17, 1898; Lawson Papers; Tribune, Nov. 22, 1898, p. 1; Dec. 8, 1898, p. 1; Dec. 9, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Daily News, Feb. 26, 1898, p. 4; June 3, 1898, p. 4; Sept. 13, 1898, p. 4.

[120]Tribune, Dec. 6, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Daily News, Dec. 6, 1898, pp. 1 and 2. There are several detailed accounts of the final battle in Chicago over the fifty-year franchise extensions. See Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 430-45; Harlan, "Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle," pp. 94-104; Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 365-71; Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 168-75; Wendt and Kogan, Lords of the Levee, pp. 187-99. For the street railways' point of view, see "Franchise Fight in Chicago," Street Railway Review, 8 (Dec. 15, 1898), 908-09.

[121]Daily News, Dec. 6, 1898, pp. 1-2, and 4; Dec. 9, 1898, p. 1; Tribune, Dec. 10, 1898, p. 3; Dec. 11, 1898, p. 2.

[122]See page one stories daily in Daily News and Tribune, Dec. 7-12, 1898. See also Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 168-69.

[123]Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 153-54; Daily News, Dec. 9, 1898, p. 4.

[124]Daily News, July 6, 1898, p. 1; Tribune, July 29, 1898, p. 6. On business cooperation of the Chicago Press, see Donald J. Abramoske, "The Chicago Daily News: A Business History, 1875-1901" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1963), pp. 110-11.

[125]Tribune, Dec. 10, 1898, p. 6; Dec. 13, 1898, p. 6; Dec. 18, 1898, p. 32. See also Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 367-68.

[126]Daily News, Dec. 7, 1898, p. 2; Dec. 8, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Dec. 10, 1898, pp. 1 and 2; Dec. 12, 1898, p. 4; Dec. 16, 1898, p. 1; Tribune, Dec. 8, 1898, p. 2; Dec. 14, 1898, p. 3; Dec. 15, 1898, p. 2. On the magnitude of the public protest, see Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 366-68; Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," pp. 341-43; Harlan, "Chicago Street Railway Franchise Struggle," pp. 95-100.

[127] Inter Ocean, Dec. 8-13, 1898; Daily News, Dec. 15, 1898, p. 4. See also Roberts, "Portrait of a Robber Baron," pp. 367-68; "Franchise Fight in Chicago," pp. 908-09.

[128] Daily News, Dec. 20, 1898, p. 1; Tribune, Dec. 20, 1898, pp. 1 and 2.

[129] Harrison, Stormy Years, pp. 156-59; Wendt and Kogan, Lords of the Levee, pp. 191-92.

[130] Daily News, Dec. 20, 1898, pp. 1 and 4; Tribune, Dec. 20, 1898, pp. 1-2, and 6.

[131] Post-Dispatch, March 16, 1898, p. 3; April 13, 1898, p. 6; April 20, 1898, p. 3; Globe-Democrat, March 16, 1898, p. 11; March 17, 1898, p. 6.

It was the Central Traction franchise deal, and the bribery cases that grew out of it, that made the career of prosecutor Joseph W. Folk after the turn of the century and inspired Lincoln Steffens famous article, "Tweed Days in St. Louis." See Steffens, "Tweed Days in St. Louis," in Shame of the Cities; Louis Geiger, Joseph W. Folk of Missouri (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1955); John D. Lawson, American State Trials, Vol. 9 (St. Louis: F. H. Thomas Law Book Co., 1918); Lee Meriwether, "The Reign of Boodle and the Rape of the Ballot in St. Louis," Arena, 27 (Jan., 1905), 43-50; "Bribery in St. Louis," The Outlook, 70 (Feb. 8, 1902), 353-54.

[132] Post-Dispatch, March 17, 1898, p. 4; March 19, 1898, p. 4; March 21, 1898, p. 4; March 23, 1898, p. 4; March 24, 1898, p. 4.

[133] Globe-Democrat, March 17, 1898, p. 6; March 18, 1898, p. 6; March 24, 1898, p. 6; April 5, 1898, p. 6; Republic, March 24, 1898, p. 6; March 26, 1898, p. 6; March 27, 1898, p. 10; March 29, 1898, p. 4; March 30, 1898, p. 8.

[134] See Post-Dispatch, Globe-Democrat, Republic, and Star, March 16 - May 18, 1898, passim. See also Murphy, "Consolidation of Street Railways," pp. 43-48.

[135] The Post-Dispatch's first page one story appeared April 18, 1898.

[136] The Post-Dispatch's boodle crusade ran on and off between April 18 and about May 20, 1898. Good examples of all St. Louis newspaper comments on the grand jury investigation appeared in the Post-Dispatch, April 26, 1898, p. 4. The grand jury declined to indict anyone in the case. See Post-Dispatch, May 18, 1898, p. 2.

[137]Republic, March 24, 1898, p. 8.

[138]Post-Dispatch, Feb. 14, 1898, p. 2; April 19, 1898, p. 8.

[139]Globe-Democrat, Feb. 28, 1898, p. 12.

[140]Post-Dispatch, May 13, 1898, p. 10; Oct. 18, 1898, p. 8; Oct. 19, 1898, p. 6; Oct. 21, 1898, p. 5; Globe-Democrat, July 6, 1898, p. 11; Oct. 19, 1898, p. 5.

[141]Post-Dispatch, Oct. 29, 1898, pp. 4 and 8; Oct. 31, 1898, p. 4. This was a franchise grant to the Lindell line. The Post-Dispatch gave extensive coverage to this issue, Oct. 1-31, 1898.

[142]Ibid., Dec. 21, 1898, p. 6; Dec. 22, 1898, p. 6.

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CHAPTER VII

MUNICIPAL PROGRESSIVISM, 1900

By the end of the nineteenth century, at the dawn of the so-called Progressive Era, municipal reform and reform politics had already matured in Chicago and St. Louis and in so doing had taken very different paths, despite similar problems of urban growth and government. Reformers who had tried to forge a new kind of municipal politics had been largely successful in Chicago, while similar efforts in St. Louis had ended in failure. The events of the 1890s greatly influenced the direction reform politics tended in these two cities in the early years of the twentieth century.

The success of the new politics of municipal reform in Chicago by 1900 was striking but not unique. Reformers in several other large Midwestern cities in the 1890s also developed political organizations and movements that relied on the new politics approach. As in Chicago, they were able to mobilize public opinion for political purposes by focusing public attention on a few great local issues of urban life, mainly public utility regulation. Also as in Chicago, success seemed to be related to the creative interplay between traditional political organization and the modern agencies of mass communication.

II

In Chicago, after the crisis of 1898, the issue of public utility regulation dominated local politics, and the rising public sentiment in favor of municipal ownership seemed irresistible. Three events in 1899 -- the municipal election, the repeal of the Allen law by the state legislature, and the decision of Charles T. Yerkes to sell his Chicago street railway holdings -- all bore witness to the burning public importance of the utility question. Observers ranging from Yerkes at one extreme to the Chicago Daily News at the other all seemed to agree that the masses of people had been aroused and mobilized, and that public opinion now held the balance of power in Chicago. "A few years ago," the Daily News said, "[the people] used to sit dumb as oysters while their legislative bodies voted away their rights; now they discuss franchises as freely as they once did the weather."[1]

The candidates in the Chicago mayoral election of 1899 -- Democrat incumbent Carter Harrison II, Republican Zina Carter, and independent Democrat John Peter Altgeld -- all made street railways the leading issue of their campaigns. While they bickered over details, as politicians will, they all stood against the Allen law and in favor of short franchises, adequate compensation, and municipal ownership of all utilities as soon as practical.[2] Even conservative businessman Zina Carter, who was backed by the same Republican machine that had supported Yerkes' franchise extension bills in the legislature two years before, felt he had to join the chorus clamoring for municipal ownership, or he would have had no chance in Chicago.[3] In

the end, it was Carter Harrison, the hero of the anti-Yerkes wars of 1897-98, who easily won the election. The Daily News and local reformers interpreted the conduct of the campaign and the outcome of the election as signaling the final defeat of Charles T. Yerkes and the street railways in Chicago politics.[4]

The utility issue also dominated the Chicago City Council election in 1899, with the Municipal Voters' League again using votes on franchises as virtually the sole standard for judging candidates for re-election. The touchstone issue in the League's annual report was the City Council vote on the Yerkes franchise extension ordinance in December, 1898.[5] In the 1899 election, the voters followed the League's recommendations in twenty-five of thirty-four wards, thus sending to the Council, in the opinion of League reformers, one of the best groups of aldermen ever to serve the city of Chicago.[6]

Meanwhile, in the 1899 Illinois state legislature the Allen law was assailed from all sides. Democrats and Republicans in both houses scrambled to try to seize credit for the Allen law's repeal. The final vote to repeal was unanimous in the Senate; unanimous, save one, in the House. The sole dissenter in the entire legislature was Rep. Charles Allen, the author of the bill.[7] Chicago reformers and newspapers were ecstatic. George Cole of the Municipal Voters' League attributed the legislature's change of heart directly to public opinion, and the Daily News agreed: "It is now known of all men that a thoroughly aroused, a stubbornly sustained public opinion constitutes a force that even the hardiest and most lavish lobbyist

must reckon with." On the other side of the fight, the disgruntled Rep. Allen used the occasion to denounce Mayor Harrison and the corrupt Chicago "newspaper trust," which he said had cruelly misled the masses.[8]

Charles Yerkes was a beaten man in Chicago in 1899, and he knew it. Between May and December, he sold out his controlling interest in all his Chicago traction companies. An insider to the deal told the Daily News: "In confidence, I wish to say that there is not a better street-railway manager in the world than Yerkes, speaking from a financial standpoint. But he has the fatal gift of making important enemies. He has antagonized this community uncompromisingly. Financiers have realized this and have impressed the fact upon the magnate." After leaving Chicago, Yerkes moved to New York and later became an important figure in the building of the London subway. He died in 1905.[9]

With the repeal of the Allen law, the exile of Yerkes, and the rising tide of municipal ownership sentiment, reformers believed that the new politics had triumphed in Chicago. The Municipal Voters' League held the balance of political power in Chicago at the turn of the century, and the League was celebrated by reformers and journalists all around the country.[10]

Partly because of its success in electing aldermen, the League kept its faith in popular democracy, at a time when much middle-class reform thought elsewhere was moving toward strong executive or commission government. One branch of the urban reform movement in

the early Progressive Era was guided by the National Municipal League's model municipal program of 1899. This program sought to centralize authority through such structural reforms as the strong mayor plan, short ballot, civil service, and a small city council elected at large rather than by geographical wards.[11] The leaders of Chicago's Municipal Voters' League and the League's newspaper allies, on the other hand, continued to support the ward system of council representation and continued to believe that the solutions to municipal problems must be political, not structural; that the answer was simply to elect good men.[12]

The main tool of the new politics in Chicago at the turn of the century remained mass communication. The leaders of the Municipal Voters' League continued to depend upon publicity to expand the scope of political conflict and to force key issues onto the public agenda. The Chicago reformers believed that their publicity system served several communication functions. It provided a fast flow of necessary information for organizing coalitions in times of political crisis. More important, it provided the background facts and perspectives to educate citizens in the intracacies of concrete urban problems, to provide urban dwellers with a common frame of reference and collective political agenda. The Municipal Voters' League's second president, William Kent, told journalist Lincoln Steffens in 1903: "I attribute the great good done in Chicago largely to publicity; by publicity I mean not only exposure but exhortation and explanation iterated and reiterated. . . . The long years of education

have made our voters what they are."[13]

The agency of this education was the Chicago press. The papers continued to work closely with the new reformers and continued to offer detailed coverage of local municipal issues. Every president of the Municipal Voters' League, from George Cole in 1896 to Walter Fisher in 1906, gave the newspapers most of the credit for the League's success. And other observers of the Chicago political scene echoed their views.[14]

The focus of most of the League's flood of publicity in 1899 and even after the turn of the century remained public utilities, especially street railways. Public sentiment and enthusiasm in favor of municipal ownership of utilities continued to rise after 1899, probably peaking in the years 1902 to 1905. In 1902, Chicago voters overwhelmingly approved, by a margin of 142,826 to 27,998 votes, an advisory referendum calling for municipal ownership. Another referendum passed in 1905 by 85,000 votes. In the latter year, Judge Edward Dunne, with no organizational support except the Municipal Voters' League and other civic groups, was elected mayor on a single-issue platform calling for the immediate public ownership of all the city's transit facilities.[15]

For various reasons, the municipal ownership movement faded in Chicago after 1905, as it did in other cities. Problems of financing made municipal ownership impractical in many cities. City governments simply could not afford to buy out a utility company's physical plant without resorting to increased fares or higher taxes

to cover the cost. Both of these courses were politically untouchable, since the driving force behind the municipal ownership movement was a general citizen desire for lower fares and taxes. In some states, constitutional or other legal restrictions made public ownership all but impossible. Perhaps most important, as utilities expanded beyond city limits and as new economic theories of utility regulation emerged, many reformers and politicians and the utility companies themselves came to favor state commission regulation over regulation through municipal ownership or municipal franchise.[16]

As utility regulation after 1907 became increasingly the province of distant state commissions, the kind of direct, popular involvement of local citizens in utility franchise questions favored by the Municipal Voters' League at the turn of the century also diminished. Times changed, issues changed, and the political role of the Municipal Voters' League changed as well. But the contribution of the League to the new politics was permanent. For at least ten years after 1896 the League had pioneered a kind of issue-oriented mass politics that was to become in one form or another a common feature of urban government in twentieth-century America.

In St. Louis at the end of the nineteenth century the public utility issue lay outside the regular political system. Utility problems themselves intensified in the years between 1899 and 1901, with street railway consolidation, deteriorating service, and a violent streetcar drivers' strike in 1900, in addition to problems with a street lighting contract and other utility franchises. Lee

Meriwether also continued his efforts to arouse public opinion and to organize a broadly based, independent political movement around the utility question. But the issue was smothered after 1899, as it had been in 1897-98, by conservative political party organizations and partisan newspapers, which had close links to local utility interests. The radical taxation and public ownership program of Meriwether, side-tracked once in the mayoral election of 1897, remained popular and relevant to the St. Louis situation. But it remained side-tracked, never becoming the chief item on the regular political agenda.

In 1899, while reformers in Chicago were gloating over their defeat of Yerkes and their continued electoral successes, the municipal reform movement in St. Louis was at low ebb. In the spring and summer of 1899, all the street railways of St. Louis were consolidated into one big trust under privileges granted by the Central Traction franchise of 1898. Of all the St. Louis newspapers, only the Post-Dispatch opposed consolidation or raised questions about the city's rights or needs. The Globe-Democrat treated the story in its usual fashion, strictly as business and financial news.[17] In the municipal election of 1899, which occurred in the midst of the consolidation activities, the regular party organizations controlled the nominations in both parties, and candidates virtually ignored the street railway issue in the campaign. The Post-Dispatch damned both tickets as corrupt and boss-ridden but said little about specific issues. The Globe-Democrat, not unexpectedly, endorsed the

whole Republican ticket as the key to continued business prosperity in St. Louis.[18]

The issue that began to dominate local politics and public thought on municipal reform in 1899 was the upcoming St. Louis World's Fair, which eventually was held in 1904. The original idea for a small commemoration of the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase ballooned in 1899 into plans for a full-scale world's fair.[19] The Fair was essentially a business promotion scheme planned and controlled by the top business elite of St. Louis. These men were determined that their city should make a good impression on the millions of tourists and dignitaries who would visit the Fair from all over the world. A businesslike city government, capable of efficiently cleaning and repairing the streets and beautifying the city -- this was what these men wanted and what they proposed to get. As press and public interest in the Fair grew, municipal reform politics in St. Louis became increasingly associated with and dominated by this upper-class business elite.[20]

The business leaders who were organizing the Fair were closely linked to local public utility corporations, and they had no desire to let utility regulation become an important public issue. Yet the issue would not go away. Street railway service and working conditions deteriorated on the newly consolidated lines, and a strike by car drivers in 1900 polarized the city and exploded into the most violent labor struggle in St. Louis since 1877.[21] The street railway turmoil greatly aided Lee Meriwether in his efforts to establish an

independent Public Ownership Party in St. Louis. Meriwether was now campaigning for the 1901 mayoral election outside the Democratic Party and without the support of the traditional civic clubs. He hoped to unite labor and economic radicals with the masses of middle class voters on the issues of street railway regulation and tax equalization.[22]

The business leaders in the local Democratic Party, who had forced the nomination of Edwin Harrison in 1897, feared Meriwether's insurgency and determined that he must be stopped in 1901. These businessmen made a deal with Democratic ward bosses to bankroll the campaign in exchange for the right to choose key candidates, including the mayoral nominee. The candidate they picked for mayor was Rolla Wells, a leading "gold bug" Democrat and a businessman of the highest rank. As the candidate most associated with the World's Fair, and backed by a united Democratic Party, Wells won the 1901 election, after a bitter and controversial campaign struggle with Meriwether and George W. Parker, the Republican nominee.[23]

The election of Rolla Wells was the high point of downtown business influence in St. Louis government. Wells was the street railways' candidate. The chief strategist and fund raiser behind his campaign was James Campbell, the leading street railway magnate in town. Other prominent supporters of Wells were either utility managers or leading stockholders. Wells was himself a former street railway executive; his father was the founder of the city's first horsecar line.[24] As a sop to the anti-street railway sentiment then

growing in St. Louis, Wells's platform included a public ownership plank. But he quickly lost interest in public ownership after the election. Wells's main interest, and the interest of his business backers, was the "New St. Louis" -- a program of public improvements and civic beautification projects to prepare the city for the impending World's Fair.[25]

The election of Rolla Wells in 1901, the founding of the upper-class Civic Improvement League in 1902, and the avid and wide-spread public interest in preparations for the World's Fair all worked together to entrench business efficiency, structural reform, and "city beautiful" improvements as the politically dominant type of municipal reform in St. Louis in the Progressive Era. The Civic Improvement League became the most important city-wide reform organization since the Civic Federation of 1896-97. But it was a self-consciously elitist business group that had no interest in public utility questions and no popular following outside the business community.[26] The popularity of the World's Fair was a great boon to the business reform movement and to Mayor Wells. Though Wells barely defeated Meriwether in the disputed election of 1901 (Meriwether claimed he won the election), he easily beat Meriwether to secure re-election in 1905.[27]

The public ownership movement in St. Louis reached its peak of popularity in the elections of 1897 and 1901, but it did not become central to the St. Louis political system in this era. Nor did it become a central concern of the newspapers of St. Louis. In the

years after the turn of the century, the Post-Dispatch and the Republic, both now in the "gold bug" wing of the Democratic Party, were pleased with and supportive of the businessmen's reform movement; the Globe-Democrat was skeptical only because the movement was dominated by Democrats.[28]

Ironically, St. Louis became famous in 1902 as something of an example of municipal reform because of the Central Traction franchise, though the franchise itself and the street railway problem it represented never became an issue. The issue was bribery. In the early months of 1902, Circuit Attorney Joseph W. Folk began to dig out evidence of enormous bribes connected with the passage of the Central Traction franchise in 1898. A score of former Assemblymen, politicians, and businessmen were indicted, and several were convicted in sensational trials. In the wake of these trials, St. Louis city government, particularly its involvement with public utilities in the 1890s, came to represent to reformers around the country the very apotheosis of municipal corruption, greed, misgovernment, and public indifference. Lincoln Steffens was so impressed by the corrupt politics of St. Louis and the reform crusades of Joseph Folk that he devoted two articles to St. Louis in The Shame of the Cities, and Folk was the hero of both.[29] Folk became so popular in Missouri for his battles with that state's Babylon that he was elected governor.

Joseph Folk, however, was basically a conservative moral crusader who became more popular with the rural voters of Missouri

than he ever was in the city of St. Louis. As governor, he devoted most of his attention to enforcing anti-gambling, Sunday saloon closing, and temperance laws. Part of his success also was based on his role in a Democratic Party factional struggle. He was a member of the business-oriented, sound-money faction of the local party, and his victims as circuit attorney were Republicans and lower-class Democratic ward bosses and silver men such as Ed Butler. St. Louis' leading reform newspaper, the Post-Dispatch, loved Folk and devoted much coverage to his activities. Folk's commitment to reform through prosecution of corrupt officials coincided with the Post-Dispatch's long-standing notions about how reform should be won. More important, Folk and the Post-Dispatch stood with the same faction of the local Democratic Party.[30]

The fact that Joseph Folk, rather than Lee Meriwether, is remembered by historians as St. Louis's favorite progressive son is a testiment to the difficulty that insurgent municipal reformers had in making public utility regulation the leading issue of public concern. The issue was relevant and incipiently popular. The utility problems were there. But the issue always lay just outside the system of political organization and partisan journalism.

III

The 1890s produced in many cities a new breed of reformer who used both political organization and mass communication to interest a broad cross-section of the urban population in certain specific

problems of the collective life of the city. In Chicago, these reformers worked mainly through the Municipal Voters' League and the regular political system. In St. Louis, they were largely isolated outside the regular political system and the traditional municipal reform community. In other large cities they worked in different ways and through different structures, depending on the peculiar circumstances of the local political system. Despite different approaches and different outcomes, however, the new politics of municipal reform exhibited a similar political style in a variety of cities. It was essentially an issue-oriented, mass politics that depended upon public opinion and mass communication. Chicago's story was only one version of a drama that played in Detroit, Kansas City, Milwaukee and other rapidly growing cities of the Midwest.

Detroit provides one of the most interesting, important, even prototypical examples of the emerging new urban politics in the 1890s. Under Mayor Hazen Pingree, who held office from 1890 to 1897, Detroit became a kind of laboratory where policies and programs were worked out that became by the turn of the century the heart of social progressivism. Pingree is perhaps best remembered as a genuine social reformer, who was more dedicated to equality for the poor and working classes than to simple honesty and business efficiency in municipal government.[31] But he is perhaps even more interesting, and significant, as a political strategist and tactician, as a founding father of the new politics of municipal reform.

When Hazen Pingree first ran for mayor on the Republican ticket

in 1889, Detroit was a typical fragmented metropolis in the latter stages of a turbulent conversion from a commercial center to a variegated manufacturing city with a large foreign-born population. Both major political parties, like the city itself, were fractured by class, ethnic, and geographical conflict.[32] The genius of Pingree was to use the local Republican Party as a base for building a broad coalition that united diverse interests around issues that affected all or nearly all urban residents. Pingree's approach was non-ideological and essentially nonpartisan, but it was thoroughly political. He sought to make specific local problems into political issues.[33] Year by year, he became increasingly interested in tax equalization, parks and public baths, unemployment relief, and other progressive reforms. But always for Pingree, as for the Municipal Voters' League of Chicago, the chief, over-riding issue of local government was public utility regulation.

The success of Pingree's public career and the political style and organization he developed was to a large extent the product of the mayor's decade-long battle with the Detroit street railway monopoly. When Pingree took office in 1890, Detroit had one of the most dilapidated street railway systems of any large city, but the company refused to make improvements unless the city granted it franchise extensions. This was the beginning of a series of protracted and sometimes violent battles with the company that consumed most of Pingree's time and energy, fired public opinion, and figured prominently into every local election in Detroit in the

1890s. By 1894, Pingree was nationally recognized as a spokesman for municipal ownership and the three-cent fare. This was the issue that united the Pingree coalition. Had it not been for the traction question, the Detroit Evening News declared in 1891, Pingree would have been "as dead a political duck as could have been found in the city." Throughout the 1890s, the street railway problem was always the key issue on election day.[34]

Pingree used the street railway issue in much the same way as the Chicago reformers used the issue in their city. It was an issue that could attract the attention and interest of a diverse population. Except for the highest-level businessmen, everyone in the city had a stake in cheaper fares, better service, and equalized taxation for public service corporations. Pingree created an old-fashioned political machine in Detroit, but his political style always remained issue-oriented rather than purely organizational or bureaucratic. Like the Municipal Voters' League of Chicago, Pingree frequently used the street railway issue as the single standard for judging the fitness of aldermanic candidates. In 1896, he announced, "I am going to see that sixteen aldermen, favorable to three-cent fares on all roads, are elected this fall. Three-cent fares will be the campaign cry in the local election."[35] As in Chicago, the issue was always portrayed as a life-and-death struggle of the whole people against the arrogant, rapacious corporate despoilers of the city.

Though Pingree was a master political organizer, he was even more skilled as a generator of political publicity. His aim was to

build an informed, aggressive public opinion in favor of municipal ownership and the three-cent fare. To this end, he was in constant communication with the masses. He used meetings and speeches, pamphlets and notices, and symbolic personal actions, such as allowing himself to be ejected from streetcars for refusing to pay the five-cent fare. He was a tireless campaigner and speaker who believed he needed the informed support of the common people as well as their votes. By 1894, he was probably the best-known mayor in America, and the people of Detroit were reputed to be more knowledgeable about utility matters than the people of any other city.[36]

The Detroit newspapers were part of Pingree's public opinion machine, though none of them were supporters of his total program. Of the two major papers, the Evening News, an E.W. Scripps paper, was the most frequently supportive. The Free Press, on the other hand, was a conservative Democratic Party organ that fought the Republican Pingree at every turn throughout the 1890s. The papers opposed Pingree's tax radicalism and ridiculed his scheme in 1894 to have the unemployed grow vegetables on vacant city lots.[37] But like him or not, the papers covered his frenetic activities in great detail, and they generally supported him in his struggles with the street railway company. In fact, in 1899 when Pingree, then governor, worked out a deal with the Detroit street railway for quasi-municipal ownership, the newspapers had become so hostile to the company that they believed Pingree must have been tricked, and they helped to defeat the compromise. The Detroit newspapers did

not always agree with Pingree on solutions to utility problems, but they did agree that these were the chief problems of municipal politics. The newspapers had their impact through the reporting of news and information. They reported on utility problems in great detail over the decade, and these problems became the leading issues on the local political agenda.[38]

Pingree's approach to city politics was similar to the Chicago Municipal Voters' League approach in some ways, but his style was more personal and charismatic and his social concerns more wide-ranging and radical. Pingree's administration became the model for several famous reform mayors in the Progressive Era, including Tom Johnson of Cleveland and Samuel "Golden Rule" Jones and Brand Whitlock of Toledo. Like Pingree, these men, and a few other less well-known mayors of this period, were issue-oriented reformers and politicians combined, who learned to use political organization and political communication to build a mass politics for municipal reform. Though they tended to have broader interests than the Chicago reformers, they, too, relied largely on the utility issue to build their political coalitions. Tom Johnson, for example, was elected mayor of Cleveland in 1901 on a straight Pingree platform -- municipal ownership and the three-cent streetcar fare.[39]

The situation in Kansas City in the 1890s contrasted sharply with Detroit. In Detroit, Mayor Pingree was a reform politician frequently without newspaper support; in Kansas City, William Rockhill Nelson was a powerful reform newspaper editor without a reform

politician. Yet the symbiosis of political organization and mass communication occurred in Kansas City, as it did in Detroit and Chicago, to produce yet another variant of the new politics of municipal reform.

No large American city in the 1890s had a newspaper quite like the Kansas City Star. Under William Rockhill Nelson, the Star dominated Kansas City journalism and wielded a powerful influence in Kansas City society and politics. Nelson was an aggressive, arrogant, monumental man who had a vision of turning a sprawling, over-grown cow town into a clean, healthful, efficient, modern, beautiful middle-class city. No large daily newspaper in the country was so thoroughly devoted to municipal reform, and no editor so thoroughly dominated his city's municipal reform movement. The Commercial Club of Kansas City, a businessmen's group, was an important organizational center for reform thought and activity. But it was Nelson and the Star that set the pace.[40]

Nelson was a Cleveland Democrat who favored a variety of mugwump reforms. He fought against gamblers and saloons, boodlers, election cheaters, and political bosses. He fought for paved streets, parks and boulevards, improved sanitation, residential construction codes, and the commission form of government. The Star's technique was to hammer away at an issue, with massive news and editorial coverage, until something was done. Sometimes Nelson even did the job himself. He built model houses to demonstrate new home construction techniques; he set up nurseries to experiment with trees and shrubs for

use on city streets. Mainly he believed in facts and in the news. The reporter, not the editorial writer, was the star of his paper. He believed the people would make the right decision once he had told them what to do and why.[41]

Though the Star's conservative mugwump program was widely popular among Kansas City's largely native-born, middle-class population, the big political issue for the Star and for Kansas City reformers was the same issue that sparked the new politics in other cities in the 1890s -- public utility regulation. Nelson waged a long crusade in favor of municipal ownership of the city's waterworks, a battle that was won in 1897. Throughout the 1890s, the Star's chief local interest was improved street railway service and lower fares. As in Chicago and Detroit, the issue never lapsed for long, and never on election day. The Star continually tutored its readers in the intricacies of franchises, street railway technology, and utility economics. During Nelson's thirty-five-year editorship, the paper carried some 360 pages of material on the traction question alone. As in other cities, it was the street railway issue that tied the reform coalition together.[42]

During much of Nelson's tenure on the Star in the 1890s and the early years of the twentieth century, the most powerful political figure in Kansas City was James Pendergast. Pendergast was a second-generation Irish-American politician, up from the working class, who established a fairly typical political machine in Kansas City. Pendergast was never the undisputed boss of the whole city, but after

1895 he was the boss of the north side and a key figure in city and state politics. Like most urban bosses, Pendergast's power rested on organization, patronage, and faithful attention to the survival needs of his lower-class constituents.[43] But even Pendergast could not avoid being caught up in the reform politics created by Nelson, the Star, and the new urban reformers of Kansas City. The boss and the newspaper editor fought over many issues, such as gambling, civil service, and some charter revisions. But frequently they were allied. Pendergast, for example, supported municipal ownership of the waterworks and gas system, and he was a firm supporter of the parks and boulevard projects so dear to the Star. The paper often denounced "Alderman Jim," but it also liked to praise him when possible and to cooperate with him when cooperation was practical.[44] Thus, Kansas City came to be known nationally as a hot bed of successful reform activities at the same time that James Pendergast and his younger brother Tom solidified the power of their political machine.

The Pendergast brothers represented a modern kind of boss politics, a bossism that came to terms with reformers and with the new politics of municipal reform. They learned to deal with reform issues and newspapers and public opinion, while at the same time preserving the interpersonal character of the urban political machine. Another boss of broadly similar type in the 1890s was George B. Cox of Cincinnati. After the turn of the century, this kind of bossism became the standard form of boss politics in the American city,

pioneered by such New York politicians as Charles F. Murphy, Robert Wagner, Sr., and Al Smith.[45] Unlike Hazen Pingree, who was essentially a reformer turned political boss, the Pendergast brothers were bosses who learned to live with reform. The results in Kansas City were different than in Detroit, but not wholly different. In both Detroit and Kansas City, as in Chicago, political systems emerged in the 1890s that relied on the interplay of political organization and mass communication to bring together broad coalitions of citizens interested in specific problems of urban life.

The municipal reform movement in Milwaukee in the late 1890s was more like Chicago's than either Detroit's or Kansas City's. The heart of the movement lay with an organization, the Milwaukee Municipal League, rather than with a charismatic political leader or a fighting newspaper editor. Like the Municipal Voters' League of Chicago, the Milwaukee Municipal League learned to deal with both politicians and newspapers and to help forge a broadly based coalition for reform in the city and in the state of Wisconsin.

Milwaukee in the 1890s was still in the process of changing from a declining commercial city to a rapidly growing industrial metropolis. Industries such as meat packing, brewing, and heavy metal manufacturing attracted large-scale foreign immigration, first mainly Germans and then Poles after 1880. The city's topography, the spatial dispersion of its factories, and the geographic and ethnic divisions of its population made Milwaukee a typically fragmented metropolis, politically and culturally, by 1890.[46]

Perhaps the most important political development in the late 1880s in Milwaukee was the rise of labor politics. Working first through the Knights of Labor and later through the Populist Party (and through the Socialist Party after 1900), labor politicians often wielded the swing vote in Milwaukee's unsettled political system.[47]

Middle-class municipal reform sentiment in Milwaukee in the early 1890s was firmly in the mugwump tradition. Reformers advocated business government by businessmen, nonpartisan elections, and an end to political patronage, and they denounced the saloon and the merchants of vice. Because of their commitment to individualism and laissez-faire and their opposition to class and interest group politics, the mugwumps of the 1880s were never able to cooperate with labor or to gain any sort of mass following. Because of their war on the saloon, they were often more widely hated by the urban working class than were the regular Republican politicians.[48] The Milwaukee Municipal League, organized in 1893, grew out of this tradition, and in its first few years was concerned mainly with civil service reform and corrupt electoral practices legislation.[49]

Typical of this sort of Gilded Age mugwump was Horace Rublee, editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, the most widely read and probably the most influential newspaper in the state. A former chairman of the Republican state central committee, Rublee was not a mugwump in the sense of a party bolter. But he was a mugwump in the sense of an ideological commitment to mugwump ideals, including nonpartisanship at the local level.[50] In the 1880s, Rublee was also a

philosopher of laissez-faire and was the state's leading disciple of Herbert Spencer and social Darwinism. He was against most any kind of legislation to change men's behavior or to interfere with the economic system. He believed in individualism, education, and moral suasion, and he promoted these ideals in his newspaper.[51]

The Panic of 1893 brought people and groups together across class lines, and for the first time mugwumpery gained popular support. Traditional mugwump issues such as lower taxes and economy in government appealed to a greater range of people in this time of economic depression, and the Milwaukee Municipal League attracted a broad membership, including representatives of both business and labor. The League became a political force in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.[52] In Milwaukee, as in other cities, the crucial issue of the late 1890s, the issue that gave substance to the new politics of municipal reform, was street railway regulation. In the years 1894-97, the Milwaukee street railway company committed a series of acts -- raising fares, dodging corporate taxes, fighting recognition of a drivers' union, and demanding a favorable franchise extension -- that infuriated the people of Milwaukee. By 1897, Populists, labor unionists, former mugwump reformers, and thousands of average citizens had joined together to fight the streetcar company. The Municipal League had moved from a concern with nonpartisanship and lower taxes to a commitment to tax equity, municipal ownership of utilities, more democratic political processes, and an all-out war against corporation arrogance. Historian David Thelen has discerned

in the Milwaukee street railway fight, and the new politics it created, the origin of LaFollette progressivism in Wisconsin.[53]

The tactics of the Municipal League and its allies during the Milwaukee street railway war were similar to the tactics of the Chicago Municipal Voters' League and its allies. Unable to gain power in the closed system of organizational politics, reformers sought to expand political conflict to include more interests. They hoped to generate an outraged public opinion that would overwhelm the behind-the-scenes political power that the street railway company exercised in the regular Republican Party organization. All the trappings of the new politics in Chicago were also part of the Milwaukee movement -- mass meetings, petition drives, pamphlet and handbill campaigns, and newspaper publicity.[54] The Municipal League freely admitted its dependence upon newspaper support, and the newspapers, for the most part, were enthusiastic participants in the new reform politics. Horace Rublee of the Sentinel, the old social Darwinist, was a charter member of the Municipal League and now led the attack against the street railway company. He even came to advocate municipal ownership, and most editors around the state followed his lead.[55] There was even a suggestion at the time of the franchise fight that the street railway boss, like his Chicago counterpart, Charles Yerkes, tried to buy the Sentinel in order to put a stop to its blistering editorials.[56]

Though Rublee and other newspaper editors were politically transformed by the events of the 1890s, along with the reformers of the

Municipal League, the newspapers of Milwaukee helped to lay the foundation for this transformation long before the crisis of 1893-97. Despite Rublee's ideological conservatism and laissez-faire economic views in the 1880s, the Sentinel had long been vitally interested in public utilities and had advocated a long list of public improvements for the city. Unlike many tax-cutting mugwumps, the Sentinel, the Journal, and other Milwaukee papers almost always had supported the extension of city services and had professed a broad interest in the city as an organic whole. And they had long tried to focus public attention on some of the leading problems of urban life.[57] The Sentinel argued that the people of the city had

> formed a chartered corporation for a definite purpose, to make community existence tolerable, perhaps beautiful, by the making and care of streets, by the building and support of schools, by the providing of pure water and the keeping of the air we breathe from contamination, by the prevention of the spread of contagious diseases, and so on.[58]

The events of the 1890s changed the politics of reformers and newspapers in Milwaukee. Yet this long-standing interest in the overall collective life of the city helped newspapers in Milwaukee and Wisconsin, as in Chicago, to make the change quickly and frequently with great enthusiasm.

Detroit and Kansas City represented two extreme types of reform politics in the 1890s -- one based upon an extraordinary politician, the other on an extraordinary newspaper. Milwaukee was perhaps a more typical example of how the new politics usually developed. Milwaukee had neither a brilliant reform leader nor a crusading newspaper editor. It was the pressure of extraordinary events in the

1890s, of crises in urban life, that changed ordinary mugwump reformers, ordinary conservative newspapers, and ordinary citizens into supporters and practitioners of the new politics of municipal reform.

# # #

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII

[1]Chicago Daily News, Feb. 13, 1899, p. 4. See also William Ritchie, "The Street Railway Situation in Chicago," in Proceedings of the Rochester Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1901), pp. 164-78.

[2]Chicago Tribune, March 12, 1899, p. 32; March 29, 1899, p. 12; April 3, 1899, p. 4; April 11, 1899, p. 8; Daily News, March 16, 1899, p. 1; March 18, 1899, p. 4.

[3]Daily News, March 13, 1899, p. 3; March 30, 1899, p. 4; April 3, 1899, p. 4; Tribune, April 3, 1899, p. 4.

[4]Daily News, March 18, 1899, p. 4; April 5, 1899, pp. 1-2, and 4; Tribune, April 5, 1899, p. 6. See also "The Re-Election of Mayor Harrison," Review of Reviews, 19 (May, 1899), 516-17.

[5]Daily News, Feb. 14, 1899, p. 1; Feb. 15, 1899, p. 4.

[6]Ibid., April 5, 1899, p. 2; Edwin Burritt Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," Municipal Affairs, 4 (June, 1900), 357.

[7]Tribune, Feb. 22, 1899, p. 6; Feb. 23, 1899, p. 6; March 3, 1899, p. 6.

[8]Daily News, Feb. 22, 1899, p. 4; March 2, 1899, p. 2; "Allen on the Repeal of the Allen Law," Street Railway Review, 9 (April 15, 1899), 250. See also Robert D. Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers: Chicago Local Transportation in the Nineteenth Century" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971), pp. 346-47.

[9]Daily News, May 5, 1899, p. 1; Dec. 1, 1899, p. 13; Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," p. 348.

[10]See, for example, Lincoln Steffens, "Chicago: Half Free and Fighting On," in The Shame of the Cities (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957); Edwin Burritt Smith, "The Municipal Voters' League of Chicago," Atlantic Monthly, 85 (June, 1900), 834-39; "Municipal Reform in Chicago," The Nation, 70 (May 31, 1900), 411-12; Frederic C. Howe, "The Municipal Character and Achievements of Chicago," World's Work, 5 (March, 1903), 3240-46; George C. Sikes, "How the Chicago City Council Was Regenerated," The Chautauquan, 36 (Jan., 1903), 397-401; "The Voters' League of Chicago," The Outlook, 60 (Sept. 30, 1898), 130-31; "Chicago and St. Louis," Independent, 54 (April 10, 1902), 883-84.

[11] L.S. Rowe, "A Summary of the Program," in Municipal Program of the National Municipal League (New York: Macmillan, 1900), pp. 157-73; Melvin G. Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," in The Progressive Era, ed. by Lewis Gould (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), pp. 138-39. See also Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 55 (Oct., 1964), 157-69.

[12] Smith, "Council Reform in Chicago," p. 347; Sikes, "How the Chicago City Council Was Regenerated," p. 401. See also Michael P. McCarthy, "Businessmen and Professionals in Municipal Reform: The Chicago Experience" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970), pp. 34-35; and McCarthy, "The New Metropolis: Chicago, the Annexation Movement and Progressive Reform," in The Age of Urban Reform: New Perspectives on the Progressive Era, ed. by Michael H. Ebner and Eugene M. Tobin (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977), pp. 48-51.

[13] William Kent, quoted in Joel A. Tarr, "William Kent to Lincoln Steffens: Origins of Progressive Reform in Chicago," Mid-America, 47 (Jan., 1965), 55-57. This is the theme of much of the contemporary writing on the Municipal Voters' League. See note #10.

[14] George E. Cole, "President's Report, 1896," in Municipal Voters' League Papers, Chicago Historical Society; Walter Fisher, quoted in Elizabeth Kent, William Kent: Independent (typescript, July, 1950), p. 133, copy in the library of the University of Chicago. See also Sigmund Zeisler, "The Municipal Voters' League of Chicago," The World Review, 2 (Jan. 25, 1902), 577; Frank H. Scott, "The Municipal Situation in Chicago," in Proceedings of the Detroit Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1903), p. 152.

[15] Paul M. Green, "The Chicago Democratic Party, 1840-1920: From Factionalism to Political Organization" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1975), pp. 112-17; Weber, "Rationalizers and Reformers," p. 349.

[16] On the conflict between the home rule movement and the state commission movement in utility regulation in the Progressive Era, and the eventual victory of the latter, see David Nord, "The Experts Versus the Experts: Conflicting Philosophies of Municipal Utility Regulation in the Progressive Era," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 58 (Spring, 1975), 219-36. For a detailed bibliography of contemporary thought on the rise and fall of the public ownership movement, see Don Lorenzo Stevens, A Bibliography of Municipal Regulation and Municipal Ownership (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918).

[17]See, for example, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Jan. 25, 1899, p. 1; Feb. 18, 1899, p. 1; March 13, 1899, p. 4; March 29, 1899, p. 4; almost daily editorials in May, 1899; June 20, 1899, p. 6; July 20, 1899, p. 6; July 26, 1899, p. 1; July 29, 1899, p. 4; St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Jan. 26, 1899, p. 14; March 11, 1899, p. 16; April 1, 1899, p. 16; April 13, 1899, p. 14; June 10, 1899, p. 9; July 3, 1899, p. 7; July 26, 1899, p. 10; Sept. 20, 1899, p. 14.

The street railway consolidation activities and newspaper comment on them are described in detail in James L. Murphy, "Consolidation of the Street Railways in the City of St. Louis, Missouri" (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Louis University, 1964), chapter 4. See also Arthur Vieth, "Financial History of the Street Railways in St. Louis" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Washington University, 1943); "Street Railway Progress in St. Louis," Street Railway Journal, 18 (July 6, 1901), 1-13.

[18]Post-Dispatch, March 20, 1899, p. 4; April 5, 1899, p. 4; Globe-Democrat, March 4, 1899, p. 8; April 4, 1899, p. 6; April 5, 1899, p. 6.

[19]Harry D. Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns of Nonpartisan Political Behavior in the Industrial Metropolis: St. Louis, 1895-1916 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1973), p. 44. See also Mark Bennitt and Frank Stockridge, eds., History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (St. Louis: Universal Exposition Publishing Co., 1905); David R. Francis, The Universal Exposition of 1904, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Louisiana Purchase Exposition Co., 1913).

[20]Jack D. Muraskin, "Missouri Politics During the Progressive Era, 1896-1916" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 1969), pp. 75-77; Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," pp. 44-45.

[21]Charles Nagel, "The Municipal Situation in St. Louis," in Proceedings of the Rochester Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1901), pp. 109-10; William Marion Reedy, The Story of the Strike (St. Louis: The Mirror, 1900), pp. 4-6. The poor streetcar service in St. Louis is detailed (and no doubt exaggerated) by Charles L. Delbridge, Move Forward Please (St. Louis: Collins, 1901). See also "The St. Louis Strike," Colliers, 25 (June 30, 1900), 18; "Report of the St. Louis Grand Jury on Accidents from Street Cars," Street Railway Journal, 18 (July, 1901), 56-57; and Street Car Strike Papers, Missouri Historical Society. This small collection contains orders and memos related to the sheriff's posse, which was organized to keep order and/or break the strike.

[22]See Meriwether election materials in the Luther E. Smith Scrapbook, in Missouri Historical Society.

[23]James L. Blair, "Novel Municipal Conditions in St. Louis," Harper's Weekly, 45 (July 13, 1901), 695; Rolla Wells, Episodes of My Life (St. Louis: privately published, 1933), pp. 93-102; Charles Nagel, "The Municipal Situation in St. Louis," p. 109.

[24]Max Putzel, The Man in the Mirror: William Marion Reedy and His Magazine (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 100-02; Alexander S. McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch': A Business Elite in the Life of a City, St. Louis, 1895-1915" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1976), pp. 220-21; Muraskin, "Missouri Politics," pp. 79-80.

[25]Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," pp. 47-50; Wells, Episodes of My Life, pp. 103-05, 143-48, 209-25. See also Franklin Mathews, "St. Louis: Most American of American Cities," Harper's Weekly, 45 (Sept. 14, 1901), 917-30; Louis E. Van Norman, "For a More Beautiful St. Louis," The Chautauquan, 37 (Aug., 1903), 443-48.

[26]Civic Improvement League, Annual Reports, beginning March 4, 1903, in Missouri Historical Society. See also Jack Muraskin, "Municipal Reform in Two Missouri Cities," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society, 26 (April, 1969), 222-23.

[27]Holmes, "Socio-Economic Patterns," pp. 51-52.

[28]Muraskin, "Municipal Reform," pp. 223-24; McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" pp. 237-38.

[29]Lincoln Steffens, "Tweed Days in St. Louis" and "The Shamelessness of St. Louis," in The Shame of the Cities. See also Louis Geiger, Joseph W. Folk of Missouri (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1955); Lee Meriwether, "The Reign of Boodle and the Rape of the Ballot in St. Louis," Arena, 27 (Jan., 1905), 43-50; "Bribery in St. Louis," The Outlook, 70 (Feb. 8, 1902), 353-54; James L. Blair, "The St. Louis Disclosures," in Proceedings of the Detroit Conference for Good City Government, pp. 87-108.

[30]Muraskin, "Missouri Politics," pp. 12-13, 139-46; McConachie, "The 'Big Cinch,'" p. 232.

[31]Pingree as a "social reformer" rather than the more typical "structural reformer" is the main theme of Reform in Detroit, the best study of Pingree and his city in the 1890s. This distinction is interesting but somewhat forced and superficial. See Melvin G. Holli, Reform in Detroit: Hazen S. Pingree and Urban Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), chapter 8; and Melvin G. Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," pp. 133-51.

[32]Holli, Reform in Detroit, pp. 4-9.

[33]Ibid., pp. 170-71. Good statements of Pingree's views on municipal government are Hazen Pingree, Facts and Opinions, or Dangers that Beset Us (Detroit, 1895); and Hazen Pingree, "Detroit: A Municipal Study," The Outlook, 55 (Feb. 6, 1897), 437-42.

[34]Holli, Reform in Detroit, pp. 37-39, 52-55, 123-24; Detroit Evening News, quoted in Ibid., p. 134. The street railway issue is covered in detail in Ibid., chapters 3, 5 and 6. See also George B. Catlin, Story of Detroit (Detroit, 1926), p. 631; Edward W. Bemis, "Detroit's Efforts to Own her Street Railways," Municipal Affairs, 3 (Sept., 1899), 473-90.

[35]Holli, Reform in Detroit, pp. 111, 154-56.

[36]Ibid., pp. 50-55, 112-15, 141-42, 162.

[37]Ibid., pp. 71, 107-08, 119, 139, 142, 149. See also Sidney Kobre, The Yellow Press and Gilded Age Journalism (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1964), pp. 195-200; William W. Lutz, The News of Detroit: How a Newspaper and a City Grew Together (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973).

[38]Holli, Reform in Detroit, pp. 107-08, 120.

[39]Holli, "Urban Reform," pp. 139-41; Frederic C. Howe, The Confessions of a Reformer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 100. For a general, straight-forward account of the work of the progressive mayors, see Ernest S. Griffith, A History of American City Government: The Progressive Years and their Aftermath, 1900-1920 (New York: Praeger, 1974).

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[41]Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism (3rd. ed.; New York: Macmillan Co., 1962), pp. 468-73.

[42]Johnson, William Rockhill Nelson, p. 145; Muraskin, "Municipal Reform," pp. 216-18; Brown and Dorsett, K.C., p. 119. See also McCorkle, "Nelson's Star," chapter 11.

[43]Brown and Dorsett, K.C., pp. 108-14. See also Lyle W. Dorsett, The Pendergast Machine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

[44]Brown and Dorsett, K.C., pp. 116-21.

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[49]Thelen, New Citizenship, chapter 8. See also William H. Tolman, Municipal Reform Movements in the United States (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1895), pp. 112-13; statement of John A. Butler, in Proceedings of the Cleveland Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1895), pp. 194-98. Butler was president of the Milwaukee Municipal League.

[50]David P. Thelen, "The Social and Political Origins of Wisconsin Progressivism, 1885-1900" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1967), p. 77.

[51]Thelen, New Citizenship, p. 45.

[52]Ibid., chapter 8.

[53]Ibid., pp. 130-31, 287-89, and chapter 12; McShane, Technology and Reform, chapters 7-8. See also John A. Butler, "A General View of the New Municipal Program," in Proceedings of the Columbus Conference for Good City Government (Philadelphia: National Municipal League, 1899), pp. 87-95; John A. Butler, "Street Railway Problem in Milwaukee," Municipal Affairs, 4 (March, 1900), 212-18; Forrest McDonald, "Street Cars and Politics in Milwaukee, 1896-1901," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 39 (Spring, 1956), 166-70, 206-12, and (Summer, 1956), 253-57, 271-73.

[54]Thelen, New Citizenship, pp. 168-72, 279-89; Butler, "Street Railway Problem," pp. 215-18.

[55]Thelen, New Citizenship, pp. 283-84; McShane, Technology and Reform, p. 116.

[56]Thelen, New Citizenship, p. 283n. Republican stalwart Charles Pfister did buy the Sentinel in 1901 in order to stop its anti-corporation drift. See Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 19, 1901, p. 4.

[57]Still, Milwaukee, p. 394; McShane, Technology and Reform, pp. 67-68; Will C. Conrad, et al., The Milwaukee Journal: The First Eighty Years (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), chapter 3.

[58]Sentinel, Feb. 21, 1892, quoted in Still, Milwaukee, p. 393. See also Sentinel, Jan. 1, 1890, p. 4.

# # #

CONCLUSION

In the 1890s, a new urban politics emerged in America that depended upon the interplay of political organization and mass communication. The new reformers tried to change the urban political system in two ways. First, they sought to make local politics more issue oriented. Though they frequently talked of taking politics out of government, their aim was actually to take state and national partisan issues out of local politics and to replace them with issues of specific local concern, which the reformers thought important. The issue that came to seem most important to most people, that sparked the new politics in most cities, was public utility regulation. Second, the new reformers sought to expand citizen participation in the local political system. They hoped that a broad, aggressive public opinion would overwhelm the closed, organizational politics of the traditional political system. Unable to gain power within the system of organizational politics, they chose to expand the scope of conflict to involve more groups, more interests, and more people.

To build a mass politics, the new reformers turned to mass issues. The mugwump tradition of municipal reform had generally been concerned with issues that did not generate broad popular support. Some mugwump reforms, such as temperance and vice crusades,

boulevard projects, tax cutting schemes, and charter revisions, worked against the interests of the lower classes and immigrant groups. The new urban reformers, on the other hand, were more concerned with issues that affected the city as a whole, that touched the lives of most urban dwellers, rich and poor. Problems of environmental health and safety, air and water pollution, streets and public utilities became the issues that united the diverse peoples of the fragmented metropolis. By far the most compelling issue in most cities was public utility regulation, especially street railways. In city after city in the 1890s, "the street railway franchise fight" was the fire in which the new politics was forged.

The new mass politics relied on mass communication as well as mass issues. Reformers sought to redirect the attention and interest of citizens from personal, group, and neighborhood concerns to issues of general, city-wide significance. Their tool was publicity. They trusted in the power of information, believing that voters would act in the interest of the city if they knew the facts. The public utility issue in particular was complex and abstract. Much of the work of the new reform organizations was education -- teaching the voters the intricacies of franchise grants, intangible property taxes, natural monopoly economics, and the like. In Chicago, reformers believed that the average citizen by 1898 was something of an expert on the political economy of public utility regulation. To achieve this result, reformers in Chicago and elsewhere used all the modern techniques of political publicity, including mass

meetings, rallies, and street-corner discussions; pamphlets, reports, flyers, posters, and buttons; petition campaigns; and, most important, long years of steady, repetitive drill on the key issues. On this last point particularly, nearly everyone agreed that the most important ally of the new reformers was the press.

The new, growing, mass circulation newspapers of the 1890s were well suited to the needs and goals of the new urban reformers. Almost by their very nature, newspapers were oriented to facts and information and tangible issues. The giant new urban newspapers had attracted audiences that cut across the class and neighborhood lines that divided the great cities of the 1890s. Newspapers were capable of carrying a large and continuous flow of information to the citizens of the city. In Chicago, and other cities too, reform politicians used newspapers for two purposes. First, they used newspapers to help "socialize" an issue (to use E.E. Schattschneider's term), to help make it part of the reader's political frame of reference, through a steady flow of stories and comments over a period of years. Second, during a crucial election campaign or at some other critical turning-point, reformers used newspapers as bulletin boards to communicate information all over the city about rallies, meetings, events, and daily developments in the current campaign. The newspapers helped to tie together through mass communication people who were usually separated by class, ethnic, and geographic divisions.

Newspapers, however, were more than mere tools of the reformers.

Frequently they were progenitors of the new reform politics. Though many newspapers came out of the mugwump tradition, most had always been more interested in the rough and tumble of city politics than their more genteel mugwump allies. Newspapers were generally proponents of mass politics long before reformers were. Newspapers frequently gave luke-warm support to structural reforms in city government, but almost always they strongly supported home rule and local democratic government. Newspapers also on many occasions stood in advance of reformers in their interest in specific issues that affected the city as a whole. City-wide institutions themselves, newspapers generally had a broad vision of the total city, and they early helped to turn problems involving streets and sewers, smoke and water pollution, and public utilities into leading issues on the local political agenda. Newspapers were boosters of local business, which often placed them in conflict with large regional or national corporations, especially railroads and public utility trusts. The political and economic philosophies of the mass circulation metropolitan newspapers frequently anticipated the programs and approaches of the new urban reformers in the late 1890s.

Certainly this was the case in Chicago. When the Municipal Voters' League was organized in 1896, it adopted a program that closely reflected the long-standing interests of the Daily News and the Tribune. From the early 1890s, both newspapers had been concerned more with utility regulation than with any other local issue and had been committed to electoral politics as the way to municipal

reform. The newspapers had burned the name of Charles T. Yerkes into the minds of Chicagoans long before any reform groups appeared to take up the cause. The eventual success of the new politics in Chicago clearly depended upon the organizational work and publicity campaigns conducted by the Municipal Voters' League after 1896. But just as clearly, the press of Chicago had laid the foundation for the aggressive public opinion that emerged. All the issues that exploded in the late 1890s, including the personalized fight against Yerkes and the effort to politicize the utility question, were prominent features of the newspapers' reform agenda as early as 1890.

In St. Louis, on the other hand, the newspapers seem to have played a key part in wrecking an incipient new politics movement. There, as in Chicago, reformers sought to politicize the issue of public utility regulation, to break into the political system by focusing public attention on the question of street railway franchise taxation. They needed newspaper support and publicity to build an informed city-wide coalition around this complex issue. They didn't get it. Only the Post-Dispatch of the three leading papers supported the fight against the utilities, and its support flagged at a crucial turning-point in 1897. The other major papers, the Globe-Democrat and the Republic, were virtual house organs of the street railway companies. Throughout the 1890s, while the Chicago papers were united in steadily building the utility issue in the public consciousness, the St. Louis papers were in complete

disagreement, drawing for their readers strikingly different pictures of the utility situation and engaging in bitter partisan feuds that had little to do with urban life in St. Louis. When St. Louis faced a street railway franchise crisis in 1898, similar to the one in Chicago, the people were indifferent. The utility issue was simply not on the public agenda.

It is perhaps ironic that the first great battles fought by the modern agencies of urban mass communication were against the agencies of urban mass transportation. Probably no two institutions were more important in drawing together the fragmented nineteenth-century city than the newspaper and the streetcar. No two institutions touched more intimately the daily lives of so many urban residents. But while the street railway was a socializing instrument, it came to be perceived in city after city as an anti-social institution. The socialization of the street railway became a symbolic struggle for the humanization of the metropolis. The street railway united the city physically. But this was just the beginning of the urban transformation of the 1890s. The goal of the new politics was to unite the city in spirit. Those who pursued this elusive goal were moved as much by faith as by a sober assessment of political reality. But this kind of faith was abundant in the metropolis of the 1890s, and no group or institution held the faith more firmly than the metropolitan newspaper.

# # #

APPENDIX I

A NOTE ON THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Most forms of social measurement involve a trade-off between reliability and validity, and this trade-off is nowhere more apparent than in the systematic analysis of communication content. Validity (measuring what one wants to measure) is frequently sacrificed in favor of reliability (measuring what can be measured easily or precisely). The reduction of newspaper content to a numerical code, for example, can have great advantages for making comparisons. But often the attributes of content that can be coded most reliably (e.g., frequency of appearance, length of story, page of story, occurrence of specified symbols, etc.) are imperfect indicators of what the researcher really wants to infer from the content (e.g., the importance of something to the editor, importance to the audience, subtle changes in philosophy or bias, etc.). Some valiant attempts to code the nuances of content have become so complex and convoluted that they have lost touch with the reality the researcher had hoped to recover.[1]

In the course of organizing and carrying out the content analysis used in this thesis, I came to suspect that the best way to balance the reliability-validity trade-off, at least in historical newspaper research, may be to keep everything as straight-forward and simple

as possible. To this end, I made story subject (or theme) the coding criterion. The idea was to achieve "face validity."[2] The coding categories are not inferential indicators of something else; they are simply descriptions of the manifest content of the newspaper. The categories were designed and refined to reflect a classification scheme that would have made sense in the 1890s to newspaper editors, reformers, and readers. Such an effort not only helped to make the descriptions of content more valid historically, it also allowed for greater inter-coder reliability, because the categories were based, not on an imposed, artificial classification scheme, but on a real intellectual order and structure inherent in the content.

Most important in the quest for simplicity, I tried to use the quantitative content analysis only to answer obviously quantitative questions -- to describe in general terms amounts of coverage and to make comparisons of amounts of coverage among the different papers and over time. To answer more subtle and complex questions, such as questions about a newspaper's philosophy or its political or intellectual approach to a particular issue or crisis, I relied on a day-by-day reading of the paper, rather than on a sampling approach. In short, I read (or at least skimmed) every issue of the Chicago Daily News and Tribune and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and Globe-Democrat for the period 1890 to 1899. I chose these four papers because they were usually the circulation leaders (or close to the top) in their cities and were considered among the most influential.[3] At the same time, I performed a more thorough, quantitative analysis

of a random sample of issues of the four papers. The daily reading provided the superstructure and most of the material for the narrative and descriptive accounts of individual situations that make up the bulk of the thesis. I used the content analysis only to support what was essentially a narrative-descriptive explanatory approach. The systematic content analysis allowed me, not to construct statistical tests of formal hypotheses, but merely to use such terms as "more" or "less," "increasing" or "decreasing" with some precision.

The unit of analysis for the content analysis was the "story" or "editorial." A story was defined as each separate item of non-advertising reading matter at least one-tenth of a column long (including the headline). Excluded were market reports, sports scores, lists, and other tabular material. Editorials were coded in a completely separate procedure. Each of the four newspapers had clearly demarcated editorial pages, and each usually carried several local titled editorials and a dozen or more short editorials, editorial paragraphs, and reprints from exchange papers. All titled editorials were counted. On the very rare occasions when an issue had only two or fewer titled editorials, all untitled editorials over one-tenth column long were also counted. Reprints and short paragraphs were never counted.

The sample was a cluster sample, consisting of all the "stories" and "editorials" in twenty-four issues of each of the four newspapers for each of three time periods, 1890-91, 1894-95, and 1898-99. The

sample was drawn randomly (one issue each month) to form four constructed six-day weeks in each time period.[4] The total number of issues sampled was 288, the total number of stories sampled was 32,196, and the total number of editorials was 1,191. Table A gives a breakdown of these figures. All the papers tended to grow in numbers of stories and editorials over the decade, except the Tribune between 1894-95 and 1898-99. The Tribune was not really a smaller paper in 1898-99. It was simply edited differently, with a somewhat smaller news hole and significantly longer stories.

TABLE A

Numbers of Stories and Editorials in the Sample

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
Total Stories				
1890-91	2,605	2,016	1,452	3,732
1894-95	3,107	2,107	1,836	4,606
1898-99	3,698	2,347	2,038	2,652
Total Editorials				
1890-91	50	48	60	149
1894-95	55	104	111	166
1898-99	73	129	101	145

Stories and editorials were coded according to subject, page number, and size in one-tenth column increments. In addition, the total size of each sample issue was measured, both by columns and by numbers of stories and editorials. After some preliminary analysis,

I decided to deal in this thesis only with local stories and editorials and only with simple frequency of occurrence. The other measures of story "play" were usually random or even systematically misleading. Simple frequency of occurrence seemed to be the most useful, straight-forward, and clearly meaningful thing to report.

In a formal content analysis, subject categories must not only make sense for the purposes of the study, but they must also be precise and unambiguous enough for reliable coding. Each story or editorial should clearly fit into one and only one category.[5] To achieve these somewhat conflicting goals, I tried to devise categories that reflected the kinds of reform classification schemes that people actually held in the 1890s. The final list of categories was worked out as carefully as possible through a series of pre-tests. The aim was to count all stories that dealt with local government, politics, public and quasi-public business, and political reform activities. To qualify, a story had only to concern the conduct of local government or public business in one way or another. Thus, stories about local governmental bodies, utilities, political parties, and political and reform organizations were included. Stories about group and organizational activities not primarily concerned with politics or public affairs (e.g., church meetings, literary society gatherings, etc.) were excluded. Also excluded were fires and routine crime and court stories. Appropriations for or reorganization of the fire or police departments, however, were included. The categories were grouped in four tiers: mugwump and

structural reforms; expansion of city services; regulation and social reforms; and other municipal and political stories. See Table B.

TABLE B

Content Categories

Mugwump and Structural Reforms

1. Charter Reform -- includes all stories about changing the city charter, unless they would fit another category; also includes stories on municipal home rule.

2. Civil Service Reform -- includes stories about the merit system of civil service, as well as attacks on the spoils system and political patronage.

3. Election Reform -- includes secret ballot, primary reforms, women's suffrage, direct democracy, and any other reforms of voting procedures.

4. Vice Crusades -- includes personal liberty issues, such as prohibition, saloon closings, gambling, Sunday baseball, and the like.

5. Boodle and Bossism -- includes all stories about boodle, boss rule, corrupt practices, election fraud, dishonesty in government, extravagance in government, etc. This is a catch-all category for general mugwump attacks on dishonesty and inefficiency in government and for general calls for honesty, business government, tax and budget cutting, and the election of "good men."

Expansion of City Services

6. Parks -- includes items about the construction, expansion, or need for parks, boulevards, and "city beautiful" type reforms.

7. Growth of Utilities -- includes coverage of expansion and extension of water, sewer, gas, electric, and transit lines; also includes business news of growth or mergers of utility companies, and news of new franchise grants

and extensions where expansion rather than control or regulation is stressed; if control or regulation is stressed, Category 12 is the more appropriate.

8. Streets -- includes street and bridge building, paving, cleaning, and sprinkling.

9. Other Utility News -- includes news and features that don't seem to fit elsewhere, such as business and financial items, etc.

10. Other Government Building -- includes stories that don't fit elsewhere about public building and construction.

Regulation and Social Reform

11. Tax Reform -- includes items about tax equalization, elimination of tax loopholes, tax dodging, etc.; stories about simply cutting taxes go into Category 5.

12. Franchise Regulation -- includes stories about public utility franchises and franchise negotiations that stress regulation and control.

13. Utility Service Complaints -- includes stories about service problems and complaints, delays and breakdowns, and strikes involving public utilities.

14. Utility Accidents -- includes accidents, dangers, and damage suits involving public utilities.

15. Lower Rates -- includes stories about lower utility rates.

16. Municipal Ownership -- includes stories about municipal ownership of public utilities.

17. Labor Relief and Reform -- includes items about municipal and local voluntary efforts in the area of unemployed relief as well as stories about municipal action on the eight-hour day, child labor, and other labor reforms.

18. Other Regulation -- includes stories about local regulation of food, housing, smoke and water pollution, public health efforts, etc.; also includes stories about problems in these areas.

Other Municipal and Political News

19. Politics and Elections -- includes all news of political parties, partisan associations, election campaigns, election results, and the like.

20. Other Government and Public Affairs -- includes all items that meet the requirements of a local government-public affairs story, but which don't fit elsewhere; this is the most general miscellaneous category; it was the depository mainly for stories about the routine activities of governmental bodies.

These categories include all the political and reform issues I was interested in for the purposes of the study (and some that I found I was not interested in). They also cover most of the issues newspapers thought important. After much juggling and re-juggling, the categories turned out to be a fairly reliable coding scheme, largely because they fit what the papers were actually trying to do. Usually stories were fairly well focused on a single theme; when not, they were coded by the main theme, as suggested by the headline, when possible. Inter-coder agreement averaged around 90 percent among trained coders who were somewhat familiar with the history of the 1890s.[6] Reliability was enhanced by several catch-all categories. Categories 5, 10, 18, and 20 were designed and defined to include items that generally fit in their particular tier but could not clearly be placed in one of the other categories. Furthermore, many coding errors were cancelled out when categories were pooled to form the tables in Appendix II. Category 20 was the chief miscellaneous slot. This category was included mainly to get the overall count of local government-public affairs items for use in

figuring the proportions reported in Appendix II. The raw data from the study are listed in Tables C and D.

Quite a few of the categories turned out to be of little theoretical interest for this study. The content data that were useful to support arguments made in the text of the thesis are reported in the tables in Appendix II. These tables are referred to from time to time in the footnotes to Chapters IV - VI. Most of these tables report the data in two forms -- as simple frequencies expressed as average number of stories per week (the mean of the four constructed weeks); and as proportions of total local government-public affairs stories in the sample. I also computed proportions of total stories in the sample, but these were little different, and not of greater theoretical interest. In the interest of simplicity they are not reported in the tables. All of the tables in Appendix II involve statistically significant differences (.05 alpha level) computed either by Pearson's chi-square analysis or by simple difference of proportion tests.

TABLE C

Raw Frequencies of Coded Stories

Category[a]	Globe-Demo			Post-Dis			Daily News			Tribune		
	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99
1.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
2.	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	2	6	0	7	6
3.	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	2	0
4.	0	2	2	4	6	4	8	11	21	7	16	12
5.	2	5	3	13	9	13	4	18	14	9	33	9
6.	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	3	1	2	1
7.	7	12	12	10	6	2	8	7	14	24	26	6
8.	7	8	7	9	2	1	1	1	10	5	1	1
9.	0	6	2	2	1	1	2	13	1	3	18	8
10.	0	3	3	1	1	5	1	0	3	2	3	3
11.	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	0	7	2	2	2
12.	0	2	3	3	4	6	2	15	14	8	18	46
13.	1	0	0	1	0	3	2	4	2	4	4	3
14.	1	3	5	2	10	10	4	3	8	3	7	3
15.	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
16.	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
17.	0	1	0	3	9	0	1	3	0	1	4	0
18.	1	2	1	2	4	1	7	19	9	9	12	7
19.	6	3	17	25	9	17	11	16	11	28	40	24
20.	25	49	29	54	33	19	7	13	29	47	23	22
total	52	98	88	135	101	87	63	126	153	155	221	154

[a]Categories are defined in Table B.

TABLE D

Raw Frequencies of Coded Editorials

Category[a]	Globe-Demo			Post-Dis			Daily News			Tribune		
	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99	90-91	94-95	98-99
1.	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.	0	0	1	2	1	4	1	1	0	1	3	2
3.	2	1	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	1	3	2
4.	1	1	1	2	3	0	4	3	2	4	4	2
5.	0	1	2	12	12	5	3	8	1	2	14	2
6.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
7.	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	3	2	1
8.	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	4	1	0	2
9.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	0
10.	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
11.	0	0	0	0	7	3	1	2	3	0	5	2
12.	0	0	1	1	3	5	1	7	6	3	5	8
13.	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
14.	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
15.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
16.	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
17.	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	0
18.	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	6	4	3	3	0
19.	0	0	1	4	0	0	3	8	2	2	4	2
20.	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	4	2	3	1	2
Total	4	4	7	24	46	28	22	43	32	29	46	32

[a]Categories are defined in Table B.

# # #

NOTES TO APPENDIX I

[1]David Hackett Fischer, Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp. 90-94; Ole R. Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), pp. 135-49. The content analysis reported here was largely based on the suggestions in Holsti's book and in Richard W. Budd, Robert K. Thorp, and Lewis Donohew, Content Analysis of Communications (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

[2]Holsti, Content Analysis, p. 143; Budd, et al., Content Analysis, p. 69.

[3]See Chapter 3.

[4]A "constructed week" is usually a sample of seven issues with each day of the week represented. The particular dates are randomly drawn. In this study the constructed weeks were six days, Monday through Saturday. I left out Sunday largely to facilitate comparisons between papers, because the Daily News had no Sunday edition. Also Sunday editions, with lots of bulk but little local government news, were generally quite different from the typical day. See Budd, et al., Content Analysis, pp. 25-28; and Robert Jones and Roy Carter, "Some Procedures for Estimating 'News Hole' in Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 23 (Fall, 1959), 399-403.

[5]Budd, Content Analysis, p. 39. See also Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1952); and Chilton R. Bush, "A System of Categories for General News Content," Journalism Quarterly, 37 (Spring, 1960), 206-10. Berelson's book is a classic in the field.

[6]Holsti, Content Analysis, pp. 140-41.

# # #

APPENDIX II

TABLES ON NEWSPAPER CONTENT

Note: The figures in the following tables are derived from the content analysis described in Appendix I.

TABLE 1

Local Government and Public Affairs Stories as Percentage of Total Number of Stories in the Sample[a]

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
1890-91	2.0% (2,605)	6.7% (2,016)	4.3% (1,452)	4.2% (3,732)
1894-95	3.2% (3,107)	4.8% (2,107)	6.9% (1,836)	4.8% (4,606)
1898-99	2.4% (3,698)	3.7% (2,347)	7.5% (2,038)	5.8% (2,652)

[a]Total numbers of all stories in sample shown in parentheses.

TABLE 2

Geographical Level of Editorial Subjects, Shown as Percentage of Total Number of Editorials in the Sample

Paper/Years	Local City	Other City	Home State	Other State	National	Foreign	Totals	
Globe-Demo								
1890-91	4%	0%	0%	22%	58%	16%	100%	(50)
1894-95	4	2	4	9	76	5	100	(55)
1898-99	10	0	10	4	66	11	100	(73)
Post-Dis								
1890-91	31%	9%	9%	13%	33%	5%	100%	(48)
1894-95	35	3	14	4	43	1	100	(104)
1898-99	37	3	4	4	41	11	100	(129)
Daily News								
1890-91	53%	7%	8%	2%	27%	3%	100%	(60)
1894-95	61	1	4	9	20	5	100	(111)
1898-99	47	1	5	3	42	3	100	(101)
Tribune								
1890-91	23%	1%	5%	9%	52%	9%	100%	(149)
1894-95	22	5	10	8	48	7	100	(166)
1898-99	25	3	3	3	63	4	100	(145)

TABLE 3

News Stories Devoted to Local Public Utility Matters[a], Shown as Average Number of Stories per Week and as Percentage of Total Local Government and Public Affairs Stories

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
Ave. Number Stories/Week				
1890-91	3	5	5	11
1894-95	6	6	11	19
1898-99	6	6	10	17
% of Total Local Gov't. Stories[b]				
1890-91	19% (52)	14% (135)	32% (63)	28% (155)
1894-95	23% (98)	22% (101)	34% (126)	34% (221)
1898-99	26% (88)	25% (87)	25% (153)	44% (154)

[a]Composite of content categories 7, 9, 12-16. See Appendix I, Tables B and C.

[b]Total numbers of local government and public affairs stories in sample shown in parentheses.

TABLE 4

News Stories Devoted to Local Streets and Public Utility Expansion or Regulation, Shown as Average Number of Stories per Week and as Percentage of all Local Government and Public Affairs Stories

Years	Globe-Demo		Post-Dis		Daily News		Tribune	
	Exp.[a]	Reg.[b]	Exp.	Reg.	Exp.	Reg.	Exp.	Reg.
Ave. Number Stories/Week								
1890-91	4	1	5	2	3	3	8	4
1894-95	7	1	2	4	5	6	11	8
1898-99	5	2	1	5	6	6	4	13
% of all Local Gov't. Stories[c]								
1890-91	27%	6% (52)	16%	5% (135)	17%	16% (63)	21%	10% (155)
1894-95	27%	5% (98)	9%	15% (101)	17%	17% (126)	20%	14% (221)
1898-99	24%	10% (88)	5%	22% (87)	16%	16% (153)	10%	34% (154)

[a] Exp. = Utility Expansion or Business Stories. Composite of categories 7, 8, and 9. See Appendix I, Tables B and C.

[b] Reg. = Utility Regulation or Service Problems Stories. Composite of categories 12-16. See Appendix I, Tables B and C.

[c] Total numbers of local government and public affairs stories in each sample year shown in parentheses.

TABLE 5

Editorials Devoted to Local Streets and Public Utility Expansion or Regulation, Shown as Percentage of all Editorials in Sample[a]

Years	Globe-Demo		Post-Dis		Daily News		Tribune	
	Exp.[b]	Reg.[c]	Exp.	Reg.	Exp.	Reg.	Exp.	Reg.
1890-91	2%	0% (50)	0%	2% (48)	8%	5% (60)	5%	2% (149)
1894-95	0%	2% (55)	0%	10% (104)	1%	6% (111)	2%	3% (166)
1898-99	1%	1% (73)	2%	5% (129)	9%	9% (101)	2%	8% (145)

[a] Total numbers of all editorials on all subjects for each sample year shown in parentheses.

[b] Exp. = Utility Expansion or Business Matters. Composite of categories 7, 8, and 9. See Appendix I, Tables B and D.

[c] Reg. = Utility Regulation or Service Problems Items. Composite of categories 12-16. See Appendix I, Tables B and D.

TABLE 6

Local News Stories Devoted to Utility Franchise Regulation and Control (Category 12), Shown as Average Number of Stories per Week and as Percentage of all Local Government and Public Affairs Stories

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
Ave. Number Stories/Week				
1890-91	0.	.75	.5	2.0
1894-95	.5	1.0	3.75	4.5
1898-99	.75	1.5	3.5	11.5
% of all Local Gov't. Stories[a]				
1890-91	0% (52)	2% (135)	3% (63)	5% (155)
1894-95	2% (98)	4% (101)	12% (126)	8% (221)
1898-99	3% (88)	7% (87)	9% (153)	30% (154)

[a]Total numbers of local government and public affairs stories in each sample year shown in parentheses.

TABLE 7

Local News Stories Devoted to Smoke and Water Pollution, Pure Food, and Other Health Regulations (Category 18[a]), Shown as Average Number of Stories per Week and as Percentage of all Local Government and Public Affairs Stories

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
Ave. Number Stories/Week				
1890-91	.25	.5	1.75	2.25
1894-95	.5	1.0	4.75	3.0
1898-99	.25	.25	2.25	1.75
% of all Local Gov't. Stories[b]				
1890-91	2% (52)	2% (135)	11% (63)	6% (155)
1894-95	2% (98)	4% (101)	15% (126)	5% (221)
1898-99	1% (88)	1% (87)	6% (153)	5% (154)

[a]See Appendix I, Tables B and C.

[b]Total numbers of local government and public affairs stories in each sample year shown in parentheses.

TABLE 8

Local News Stories Devoted to Charter Reform, Home Rule, Civil Service, and Related Structural Reforms of City Government (Categories 1 and 2[a]), Shown as Average Number of Stories per Week and as Percentage of all Local Government and Public Affairs Stories

Years	Globe-Demo	Post-Dis	Daily News	Tribune
Ave. Number Stories/Week				
1890-91	0.	.25	.25	0.
1894-95	.25	.25	.5	2.0
1898-99	.25	.5	1.5	1.5
% of all Local Gov't. Stories[b]				
1890-91	0% (52)	1% (135)	2% (63)	0% (155)
1894-95	1% (98)	1% (101)	2% (126)	4% (221)
1898-99	1% (88)	2% (87)	4% (153)	4% (154)

[a]See Appendix I, Tables B and C.

[b]Total numbers of local government and public affairs stories in each sample year shown in parentheses.

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# # #

TITLE OF THESIS Newspapers and New Politics: Municipal Reform in Chicago and St. Louis, 1890-1900

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