McMANUS, Thomas Reed. A STUDY OF ROBERT A. TAFT'S SPEECHES ON SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES.

The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1960
Speech – Theater

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan
A STUDY OF ROBERT A. TAFT'S SPEECHES
ON SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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*** *** ***

The Ohio State University
1960

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Among the many individuals who contributed to this study, recognition is due those who supplied information in interviews. These included the following:

Robert Taft, Jr., of Cincinnati, son of the late Senator.

David S. Ingalls, of Cleveland, manager of all of Taft’s political campaigns except the 1950 Senatorial campaign.

John B. Dempsey, Cleveland attorney, who was Taft’s classmate at Yale and Harvard and a life-long friend and political associate.

Eugene Carr, Canton, President of the Radio Division of the Brush-Moore newspapers, who was Chairman of the Labor League for Taft in the 1950 Senatorial campaign.

Miss Blanche O’Berg, the Senator’s personal secretary for nine years, who made many of the speech texts available.

Special acknowledgment is given to my adviser, Dr. Paul A. Carmack, who encouraged the selection of the subject. His guidance in the research and writing of this study is very much appreciated.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Two veteran Washington observers wrote in 1950 that although Robert A. Taft had been in the Senate for twelve years, "throughout the swift, shattering, kaleidoscopic events of the years that have come and gone since 1938, Taft remains the same, his convictions, his opinions, and his prejudices virtually unaltered." ¹ This impression was shared by many people. Yet it was erroneous in many respects. As Time magazine stated, "On social legislation he first opposed far-reaching New Deal programs in three fields: housing, health, and education. Having studied the problems and rewritten the bills, he now supports the programs." ² Such discrepancies between the impressions of Taft and the facts of his career gave rise to this study.

I. PURPOSES OF THIS STUDY

The principal purpose is to evaluate Taft's speeches on social welfare issues in accordance with the standards of criticism of public address. Taft's reversal on the welfare issues affords the rhetorical critic an excellent opportunity to assess his arguments, his motivations and his effectiveness as a persuader. In addition, this study will seek

to understand the role of Robert A. Taft's speech-making in his career as a public servant. The events, the legislation, and the politics of his career have been studied and written about by many. The part that his speeches played in his career has been neglected in their accounts. A second purpose, then, will be to put his speech-making into focus in the light of his achievements and failures.

There have been three doctoral dissertations on Robert A. Taft's speeches. Their existence poses the question, "Why study his speeches further?" The fact that Taft, the Republican leader in the Senate and the Great Conservative, did considerable speaking on behalf of his social legislation should be of interest to the critic of public address. It was not within the scope of the previous studies to evaluate his speaking on welfare issues. Hence, it was felt that there was a place for an additional study of his speaking, one limited to welfare issues.

II. METHOD OF THIS STUDY

In preparing this study, the previous works on Taft were reviewed. Two books pertain to his career. The first appeared in 1952, a year before his death. Caroline Harnsberger's Robert A. Taft, A Man of Courage, appeared early in that year, just before Taft's strong bid for the Presidential nomination. Though unduly favorable to Taft, it is valuable for his family background.

The second was William S. White's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, The Taft Story, published in 1954. Then Washington correspondent for the New York Times, White was generally critical of the positions Taft took on public issues. The two books together provide an approach
to understanding the life of Robert A. Taft. Neither is a definitive biography.

The remaining major works on Taft are the three doctoral dissertations. The first two of the following were read in their entirety and the abstract of the third was read.

Donald Kleckner's dissertation submitted to the University of Michigan in 1952 was entitled, "Robert A. Taft: A Study of His Public Address with Emphasis on the Labor Issue." The study evaluated the Senator's speeches during the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Law in 1947. Kleckner also had the opportunity to hear several of Taft's campaign speeches during the Wisconsin primary battle in 1952.

The second study was Noel Rapp's "The Political Speaking of Senator Robert A. Taft, 1939-52." This was done at Purdue University in 1954. Rapp surveyed all of Taft's campaigns but centered on the 1948 and 1952 Presidential and the 1950 Senatorial campaigns. He also analyzed several of Taft's speeches on various subjects before non-campaign audiences.

The final one was Pauline Isaacson's, "Robert Alphonso Taft: An Assessment of a Persuader," completed in 1957 at the University of Minnesota. Apparently it was a general study of his speaking. No limits of the problem or conclusions of the study were reported in the abstract.¹

¹ Speech Monographs, XXVI (June, 1958), 104-5.
when applicable.

The purpose of using the preceding materials was to understand the principal events in Taft's life and the nature of the man. Books dealing with social welfare measures and with persons and events of Taft's time were studied for background. Especially valuable were memoirs of some of his contemporaries.

Because the Robert A. Taft papers are sealed in the Library of Congress and closed to research, extensive correspondence was conducted with his friends and classmates at Yale and Harvard and with his political colleagues in Ohio and Washington. Some interesting and useful information about his early life was obtained from the papers of his father, William Howard Taft, in the Library of Congress. Interviews were held with his son, Robert Taft, Jr., of Cincinnati; his campaign manager, David S. Ingalls, of Cleveland; his secretary for nine years, Blanche O'Berg of Washington; a Harvard and Yale classmate and life-long friend, John B. Dempsey, of Cleveland; and the Chairman of the Labor League for Taft, Eugene Carr of Canton. These interviews and correspondence revealed significant points of information about Taft and his speaking.

Several recordings of Taft's speeches were obtained in order to evaluate his speaking voice. Texts of speeches used in this study were obtained from the Congressional Record and from Miss Blanche O'Berg.

As an early part of the method of this study, the standards and traditional forms of speech criticism were carefully reviewed. Since the methodology of speech criticism is well-formulated, it will not be necessary here to review its development. In this study, the synthesis
of classical and contemporary methods as presented by Thonssen and Baird in their Speech Criticism will be the basic reference. Their concept of speech criticism was expressed as, "A comparative study in which standards of judgment deriving from the social interaction of a speech situation are applied to public addresses to determine the immediate or delayed effect of the speeches upon specific audiences, and ultimately, upon society."¹ Thonssen and Baird emphasized, "A rhetorical judgment is a composite of data and interpretation that is intended to reveal the effect of a given speech upon a particular group of listeners. The word effect, or response, is all-important. It suggests the central reason for rhetorical criticism."²

Wichelns' statement adds weight to this concept, "Rhetorical criticism is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect.... It holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator's methods of imparting his ideas to his hearers."³ Some critics would not emphasize the effects or results of a speech in the critical process to this extent.

Hochmuth believes that the critic who makes the fulfillment of the specific purpose the only test of eloquence is misguided. She maintains that the critic must focus on the methods of the speaker and not

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². Ibid., 9.

merely on the ends achieved. 1

Parrish more explicitly warned against emphasizing effects in the criticism of speeches:

It is even more important that the critic should not be diverted into an attempt to assess the result of the speech except as its effect may help us to judge the quality of the speech itself.

Rhetoric is not concerned with the effect of a speech but with its quality, and its quality can be determined quite apart from its effect. 2

In view of this disagreement over the importance of effects, the job of the critic is to formulate standards which he believes are valid and consistent with the theory and practice of speech-making. After study and reflection, the writer has formulated a standard of criticism which is based on both the quality and the effects of speeches. Since speeches are given for a purpose, an assessment of their effects is essential in criticism. This will involve a careful consideration of how the speaker adapted his ideas and materials to his audience and whether he achieved his desired response. But it is recognized that the effects, or response, standard is not infallible. So many factors bear on the speaking situation that an otherwise good speech may not achieve its desired effects. Hence, the quality standard is indispensable to speech criticism. The quality of a speech is determined by the speaker's skill in using the principles of speech composition. Such elements as


organization, proof, style, and delivery are evaluated on their own merits. This combination of effects and quality to be used as the basic standard of criticism in this study will raise the questions, "Did the speech achieve its purpose?" and "Was it a good speech?" The final judgment of the merit of any given speech will rest equally on both.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THIS STUDY

This paper will follow the traditional pattern of critical studies in public address. It will be organized in the following manner.

Chapter II, Prelude to the Senate, will survey Taft's formative years and his early political experience in Ohio before he entered the Senate in 1939. Chapter III, Senator and Presidential Candidate, 1939-1953, will review Taft's legislative accomplishments and his political campaigns in an attempt to reveal his place in the United States of his time. Chapter IV will consider the nature of his personality and how it affected his speaking. In addition, it will present evaluations of his speaking by other critics and his method of speech preparation.

Following, in Chapter V, is an analysis of his debates with T.V. Smith in 1939 on New Deal measures. These were analyzed because they reveal his political philosophy early in his career. The next three chapters will each be devoted to a criticism of his speeches on federal aid to education, public housing, and medical care. The final chapter will present a general summary and the conclusions of the study.
CHAPTER II

PRELUDE TO THE SENATE

Rhetorical critics are agreed that an understanding of the significant events in a man's life is essential to an appreciation of his speaking. The speaker's formative years and his early experiences are deemed to have an influence on his later speaking activities. When the speaker is a prominent man, his family background often enters into his public life. In Taft's case, his family background was the target of criticism by his opponent in his first campaign for the Senate in 1938.

The family's wealth and its "aristocratic tendencies" were brought out against him. When his opponent in the primaries attempted to make the most of Taft's uncommon beginnings by contrast, telling a group of coal miners, "I am just a simple, humble man," Taft's wife, Martha, told the same group: "My husband is not a simple man. He did not start from humble beginnings. My husband is a very brilliant man. He had a fine education at Yale. He has been well trained for his job. Isn't that what you prefer when you pick leaders to work for you?" 1

This illustration reveals how a man's family background enters into his public life. Since an understanding of the significant events in a man's life is essential to understanding his speaking, it will be the purpose of this chapter to investigate the life of Robert A. Taft.

1. Walter Davenport, "Bashful Buckeye," Collier's, 105 (April 6, 1940), 36.
until he entered the Senate in 1939. This brief biography will report:
(1) the Taft family background and its possible influences on Robert A.
Taft; (2) the circumstances of Taft's childhood, including his early
education, interests, activities; (3) his formal education which prepared
him for a life of public service; (4) his specific training and experi­
ences in speech while in school; and (5) his legal experience and public
service before 1939.

I. THE TAFT FAMILY BACKGROUND

The first member of the Taft family to achieve prominence in
America was Alphonso, born in 1810. Having emigrated from England, the
Taft family produced four generations of farmers, teachers, and judges
in New England before Alphonso was born. 1

Alphonso Taft.

Alphonso Taft attended Yale College, and after teaching for
several years, enrolled in Yale Law School. Upon graduation, he went to
Ohio in 1839, finally settling in Cincinnati. 2

There, he soon became a relatively important and well-known
figure. He did much to promote the railroads in Cincinnati. Alphonso
Taft helped organize the Cincinnati unit of the new Republican Party
in 1856. He was a delegate to the convention which nominated John
C. Fremont for the Presidency. It was Judge Alphonso Taft (he served on

1. Henry F. Pringle, The Life and Times of William Howard Taft

2. Ibid.
the Superior Court of Cincinnati for eight years), who enabled the
executors to carry out Charles McMicken's will which made the University
of Cincinnati possible. His part in the controversy over Bible reading
in the public schools sacrificed any possible chance of nomination to
higher office. The circumstances of this case were that Judge Taft held,
contrary to public opinion, that the school board was justified in abol­
ishing Bible reading. The state Supreme Court eventually upheld Taft's
opinion but the event made him unpopular with the electorate.¹

When he resigned from the Superior Court in 1873, the advertise­
ment of "A. Taft and Sons, Attorneys at Law," was appearing in the
papers. The sons, Charles Phelps and Peter Rawson Taft, were the two
born to his first wife who died in 1852. Judge Taft and his second
wife had four children: William Howard, later the twenty-seventh Pres­
ident and father of Robert A. Taft; Henry Waters, who became a distin­
guished New York attorney; Horace Dutton, founder and headmaster of the
Taft School for Boys in Watertown, Connecticut; and Fannie, who married
a California physician. The Judge's second wife was the chief promoter
of Cincinnati's first kindergarten.²

Alphonso Taft later served as Secretary of War and then Attorney­
General in President Grant's cabinet. After that, he became Minister to
Austria-Hungary and then to Russia. He died in 1891, two years after
the birth of his grandson, Robert Alphonso Taft.

¹. Alvin F. Harlow, The Serene Cincinnatians (New York: Dutton
and Company, 1950), 394.

². Ibid., 395.
Alphonso Taft succeeded in making the family name important in Cincinnati. He was the only American statesman to hold two Cabinet positions as well as two first-class foreign missions. At the time of his appointment as Secretary of War, he was known as "one of the ripest scholars, ablest jurists, and wisest men in the United States." Throughout his life his name remained a synonym for honesty and fair dealing, but his resolute stands won him a full share of criticism.\(^1\) This pattern was transmitted to his son and grandson after him.

He had no direct influence on Robert A. Taft since the latter was only two when his grandfather died. But the indirect influence was large. As a recent historian wrote:

The Taft family had stood for reputability, for solid, ultra-respectable achievement, ever since grandfather Alphonse doggedly walked from a Vermont farm to New Haven, became the first of 21 Tafts to graduate from Yale, refused a job in a New York law office because he found his would-be colleagues too grasping ("money is the all in all," he said), and settled into Cincinnati's most esteemed legal and political circles.\(^2\)

Alphonso Taft said at a family reunion in 1874, "... brilliant political careers have not been characteristic of the Tafts in the past." Then he added, "It is not safe to say what may yet be in store for them."\(^3\) Thirty-four years later, his third son, William Howard Taft, was elected President of the United States.

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William Howard Taft

A biographer noted William Howard Taft's heritage from his parents as follows:

Of exemplary character, fine education, unusual culture, democratic and affable in manner, they were two as good parents of whom to be the son as it is possible to conceive, and it is little wonder that their son should attain the unsurpassed success in life that he did. 1

William Howard Taft, born in 1857, spent the early years of his life as a typical schoolboy, trudging several blocks along Cincinnati's Mt. Auburn street to a district school, skating on the canal, acquiring "elegance" at M. Ernst's dancing school, which he temporarily forgot when fighting alongside his boy neighbors against gangs from Reading Road and Little Bethlehem. 2

This boyhood sketch reveals a significant difference between William Howard and Robert A. Taft, father and son. The son's boyhood was far from typical, as will be seen later.

William H. Taft attended Yale where he was an excellent student. A big young man, "quiet, good-natured, humorous, with an enormous interest in college politics, he loved to direct college activities." 3 One of his classmates said later, "He was in every bit of politics he could be, right through the college course. If there was a 'lit' beard to be elected, or the manager of the baseball team, or junior prom officers,

there was Taft doing the electing." He was second-ranking scholastically in his class at Yale.

His first job after graduating from college was as a law reporter on the Cincinnati Times and Commercial. After graduating from the Cincinnati Law School, he became assistant prosecuting attorney for the county in 1881 and served two years. W.H. Taft was then in private law practice for four years. During that time he married Helen Herron, the "charming and popular" daughter of John Williamson Herron and Harriett Collins Herron. They had a full social life, as a biographer reported:

And Taft loved people --- loved to surround himself with friends in his own home, to chat with them, learn about them and recount anecdotes, which he did extremely well, with such infectious relish of a joke that his enjoyment was bound to be shared.

He had the reserved manner of the Tafts, to be sure, a little aloof, as people usually are to whom things of the mind come first. But that it was the aloofness of dignity, not coldness, no one who knew him well could doubt.

In 1887, at the age of thirty, W.H. Taft became a judge in the Superior Court of Cincinnati. He rose to the position of United States Solicitor-General under President Benjamin Harrison in 1890, and then became a Federal Judge for the Sixth Circuit in 1892. In addition to his judgeship, he was serving as Dean of the University of Cincinnati Law School. Appointed by President William McKinley to be President of the Philippine Commission in 1900, he became the first Civil Governor. For his three year tenure as Civil Governor, he was credited with "not-

1. Ibid. 2. Ibid., 16.
able reforms, the restoration of peace, the solving of the problem of
church lands, and establishing limited self-government." 1

Theodore Roosevelt called him home in 1904 to become Secretary
of War. He was Roosevelt's personal choice for the Presidency in 1908.
Roseboom wrote that Roosevelt first thought that his Secretary of State,
Elihu Root, was almost ideally fitted for the highest office. But Roos-
evelt saw Root's limitations as a candidate against William Jennings
Bryan and "after much hesitation and with Root's approval, he turned to
William Howard Taft as the better candidate." Roseboom further cited
that Taft's tact and skill in handling difficult administrative problems
had been of value to Roosevelt. The fact that Middle Western Republi-
cans had confidence in Taft helped also. 2

W.H. Taft's political credo was succinctly summarized by a bio-
grapher as "a guaranty with respect to the right of property against
socialism." 3 After defeating Bryan for the Presidency, Taft served one
term. His term of office was troubled by the increasing problems of a
changing age and with Roosevelt's quarrel with him. In 1912, even his
home state of Ohio went to Woodrow Wilson who swept the election over
the divided Republicans. Taft rounded out his career with eight years
as a law professor at Yale and nine years as Chief Justice of the United
States.

1. Ibid.

2. Eugene H. Roseboom, A History of Presidential Elections (New

An understanding of W.H. Taft's personality would be helpful in determining his influence on his son. Duffy believes that:

He never mastered the technique of popularity in so far as it depended on manner. Any conscious effort to do so would have been repugnant to a man of his absolutely just nature.

When Taft stepped to the edge of a platform to address a crowd, he stood passive and kindly; there went out from him none of that eager paternal warmth and cordiality which seems to take each man by the hand.

His appeal was to their minds, on behalf of reason, not charm, which he possessed to such abundance in private acquaintance. Roosevelt was "Teddy" to vociferous thousands; Taft's staunchest admirers cannot quite be imagined calling him "Billy." 1

This is strikingly similar to what would be written about Robert A. Taft years later: "People loved Al Smith; they respected Bob Taft."

Robert A. Taft's mother, Nellie Herron Taft, was a driving force behind her husband. Her influence on her son was often over-looked.

Robert S. Allen, one of the few who gave attention to this matter, wrote:

Intellectually and temperamentally Taft is his mother's son. Because in her day Presidents' wives were seen and not heard, Mrs. William Howard Taft, nee Helen Herron, daughter of a prominent Cincinnati attorney, never emerged publicly in her true character. But those who knew her were aware that she was a very clever, ambitious woman, and the driving force behind her huge, amiable, lazy husband. Bob Taft has his mother's resolution and narrow but keen intellect. 2

Undoubtedly his father's career stimulated Robert Taft's interest in politics; he was a junior at Yale when his father was elected President in 1908. Archie Butt, personal aide to the President, asked, "Bob, do you take any interest in politics?" The future Senator replied, "A

Hornsberger believes that "it is quite improbable that his father's devotion to duty ... left Bob Taft unmoved.... The influence was there." 2

Among the William H. Taft papers in the Library of Congress is a sixteen-page letter in which the President discussed the political situation with his son, then at Yale. 3

Bob spent his vacations in the White House. He and the President engaged in long discussions on political affairs. "These conversations about national issues and Republican Party principles laid a good foundation for his future sound knowledge in the political field." 4

The personal characteristics of the elder Taft undoubtedly influenced his son. "One cannot follow W.H. Taft's career for even a brief interval without being impressed with his conservatism, and his devotion to justice and truth." 5 These qualities were later apparent in Robert A. Taft also. His family's influence can be directly inferred.

The influence of his father's political views was revealed in a letter written near the end of his Presidency. He wrote to his son at Harvard Law School:

Everyone whom I consult seems to think that my acceptance of the Yale Professorship is an appropriate way of retiring from the Presidency. I shall be able to preach some common sense, I hope, into the seniors at Yale, to keep their feet on the ground and

prevent their heads from sailing into clouds of socialism and other isms of a new dispensation. 1

His father's views on socialism were similar to those espoused all of his life by Robert A. Taft.

On the influence of his family background on his career, Robert A. Taft said in 1938, "I know it's a great asset . . . . It supplies the impetus which gives a man a start, but that impetus does not last forever. After the start is made, it is only by his own efforts that a man can keep going, and one with a family name has a lot to live up to." 2

Summing up the influence of his family background, Taft's legacy was a respectable name and characteristics of honesty and integrity. He developed a keen interest plus first hand experience in politics at an early age which gave him the drive and ambition to live up to the standards set by his ancestors.

II. TAFT'S CHILDHOOD

Robert Alphonso Taft, the first son of William Howard and Helen Taft, was born in Cincinnati on September 8, 1889. Writers like to quote the proud father's letter from Washington to his wife in Cincinnati in which he said, "There is something charming about Bobbie that I don't see in any other baby. . . . I need not argue with you to establish the fact that our boy is different from other babies in many most desirable ways." 3

Most fathers would probably say the same thing --- but in this case the baby did prove to be different. Bob Taft was an extraordinary boy. At the age of six he made records of the distances traveled by the fire engines as they left and returned to the fire house across the street in Cincinnati. His records for a year revealed how many miles each engine traveled going to and from a fire. The firemen later permitted him to copy the calls received at the desk and to make out the station's report. He also made a map of all the call boxes in the district and their signals. The firemen of course had done the same thing; they framed one of their copies and presented it to him on his eighth birthday. His sister recalled, "He thanked them politely, but was glum when he brought the copy home. 'They don't understand. I wanted to do it myself!'" 1

Commenting on this incident, White wrote:

This little episode, apart from its singularity as indicative of the concerns of a boy of six, is not without other interest. Always, or so it seemed, Taft preferred data to even the most fascinating of speculation, and in a way, even preferred facts to people in the mass.

The debates he really relished in the Senate had to do with facts... Toward the end of his life I recall his visible happiness when briefly he could turn to his interest in such measurable matters as taxes and the detailed provisions of the Taft-Hartley labor act and put aside for a time the exasperating intangibles of his role as the Senate Republican leader. 2

Bob Taft first attended the Hoffman public school in Walnut


Hills. Immediately his teachers were impressed with his "unusual power of concentration and exceptional aptitudes in arithmetic and reading. He was orderly and precise in his work. He had a great eagerness to learn, and his advance was rapid." 1

At the age of seven, he took a great interest in history and read a book about the Civil War. He became a good checker player and learned to play chess by reading a book on the fundamentals of the game. He learned to play bridge at the age of eleven in the same way. 2

William H. Taft, having been appointed to the Philippine Commission, took his family with him. Mrs. Taft wrote:

When we arrived in Manila in 1899 it was a source of great worry to us that we could not send our children to school. The Jesuits had a school for boys in the Walled City and Mr. Taft considered for a while the possibility of sending Robert there ... but so strong was the feeling against the Friars that this would have been taken by the people as a certain indication that the President of the Commonwealth was leaning toward the Church. 3

In view of this problem, a Mrs. LeRoy was hired to tutor Robert. She was a graduate of the University of Michigan and a "most excellent teacher." 4 This tutoring ended when Mrs. LeRoy became ill. W.H. Taft then wanted to send his young son across the Pacific to Horace Taft's school in Connecticut but Mrs. Taft opposed this strongly. She was relieved when an American school was opened. The children "were taught as well there as they would have been at home." 5

4. Ibid. 5. Ibid.
The family left Manila in December, 1901, and spent the winter of 1902 in Cincinnati. Bob attended the Walnut Hills high school for three months. His father was sent to Europe on business concerning United States possessions in the Pacific, and took the family with him. A trip to Europe presented a thrilling prospect to them. Bob, nearly thirteen, with a collection of maps, Baedeker guidebooks and timetables, planned their European itinerary and estimated its cost. 1 The family spent the summer of 1902 in Europe and returned to the Philippines in the fall.

While W.H. Taft was negotiating with the Vatican on lands owned by the Church in the Philippines, the family was granted an audience with Pope Leo XIII. During the audience, the Pope remarked that he hoped Bob would follow in the footsteps of McKinley and Roosevelt. He asked Bob what he expected to be when he grew up. Mrs. Taft reported, "My self-confident son replied that he intended to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court." 2 She explained this, saying, "I suppose he heard the Chief Justiceship talked about by his father until he thought it the only worthy ambition for a self-respecting citizen to entertain."

Taft's early childhood revealed a precocious mind, high intellectual ability, preoccupation with interests and games that usually comes later in life, and an opportunity to travel extensively in Europe and the Far East. His home life was that of the son of a high-ranking government official serving in a foreign land. His was an unusual childhood — just as his later life was to be unique in many ways.

III. FORMAL EDUCATION

It was decided that Bob should enroll in the Taft School for Boys in Watertown, Connecticut, where his uncle, Horace D. Taft, was Headmaster. He began his studies in 1903; at Taft School his intellect was to be developed by rigorous studies.

The Taft School.

A teacher of the old school, Horace Taft "has always believed in making his boys work hard, giving them heavy doses of Latin and mathematics." ¹ Horace Taft's educational philosophy was revealed in his statement:

But I am a great believer in the vital importance for character building of that which comes from training in old-fashioned obedience. I believe that a boy should get the habit of obeying the law because it is the law — of obeying the properly constituted authorities because they are such. ²

At Taft School, Bob concentrated on his studies which had suffered numerous interruptions due to his family's travels. The fact that the Headmaster was his uncle made no difference to him. As Harnsberger reported:

He was not looking for a soft thing or special favors because his good-natured uncle happened to be Headmaster. Before long, Bob's instructors began to realize that he was the possessor of a letter-perfect memory. In an average time spent on his lessons, he could store them in his mind as if it were a filing cabinet. ³

¹. "Taftless Taft," Time, XXVI (December 16, 1938), 62.
Not all his time was spent on his studies. He tried out for the
scrub football team, "but he was somewhat gangly and awkward, besides
being near-sighted, and not well suited to this activity." His uncle
wrote home, "Bob will never make a good football player, but he throws
himself into the game so hard that he raises the morale of the team." 1

He became the outstanding student in all his classes. Paul
Cruikshank, present Headmaster of Taft School, reported, "We do not have
any record of the courses taken by Mr. Taft. They undoubtedly, though,
included English, history, Latin, Greek, mathematics, science, public
speaking, etc." 2 These courses constituted the curriculum at the time.
It was a classical curriculum, consistent with Horace Taft's educational
philosophy.

Robert A. Taft stood first in his class at graduation in 1906.
His extra-curricular activities consisted of football, baseball, Glee
Club, President of the Chess Club, a member of the Oracle Board (the
school's literary paper), and Athletic Association. He was also a
Monitor of the school (student governing group). 3

Rollin G. Osterweis, present Director of Debating and Public
Speaking at Yale, wrote, "I myself was captain of the Taft School
debating team in 1925, and a kind of tradition lingered there that Bob
Taft had distinguished himself as a prep school orator." 4

1. Ibid.
2. Letter from Paul Cruikshank, July 8, 1959.
3. Ibid.
A reporter writing about Taft in 1940 said:

At Taft School — according to the memory of contemporaries — he appears as essentially the same person he is now. Never, by the slightest sign, did he seem to think of himself as the son of America's first pro-consul and nephew of the school's headmaster. He was just what he was, a small, freckle-faced boy, intensely pre-occupied with his own private concerns. 1

The pattern set at the Taft School was the one which followed in the rest of Taft's formal education. Here he was exposed to excellent teaching and his fine mind was challenged by a curriculum heavy in mathematics, Greek, and Latin. He undoubtedly had Public Speaking since this was a part of the school's curriculum, and Taft achieved some distinction as a debater in interclass debates. He finished at the top of his class and also participated in literary, music, and athletic activities to some extent.

Yale.

His prep school behind him, Bob Taft entered Yale University in 1906, two years before his father was elected President. White's impression of Taft's pursuits at Yale was that they were "almost exclusively mental, and mental in the bleakest sense." 2

This impression that his pursuits were "almost exclusively mental" is supported somewhat by Taft's record of extra-curricular activities and honors submitted by Ronald C. Marsh, Registrar at Yale:

President of Phi Beta Kappa, 1910.
President of the University Debating Society, 1909.


President of the City Government Club.
Member, Psi Upsilon, junior class fraternity.
Member, Skull and Bones, senior class fraternity.
Winner of the Woolsey Scholarship for the best examination in Latin Composition and Greek.
Winner of the Barge Mathematics Prize for the solution of an original problem in mathematics.
Winner of the Second Ten Eyck Prize, a second place award in a speech contest.
Rowed on the sophomore crew. 1

His disinclination to become excited by college activities was revealed in a letter to his mother, "Tomorrow is Tap Day, so there is great excitement through our class especially. Some people take it terribly seriously but I can't feel that it really decides much." 2

The records at Yale show that Taft was the high standing man in his class, with a four year average of 357 on the scale of 400, equivalent to 91 on the 100 scale. 3 His curriculum was typical of the remaining classical influences in early twentieth century colleges. It heavily emphasized languages; Taft had four courses in German, two in Greek, and one in Latin. In addition to Freshman English, he took four courses in English Literature and a course in Contemporary Drama. He had two courses in mathematics, two in history, three in the sciences, two philosophy, four in rhetoric and public speaking, and five in economics. 4

3. Letter from Marsh.
4. From information supplied by Ronald C. Marsh. See Appendix A for a complete listing of the course titles.
It is clear from the above courses that Taft followed the classical pattern in his first three years and emphasized economics in his last year. These courses indicated his interest in economics which was to continue throughout his life.

Fred Rogers Fairchild taught several of the courses in economics in which Taft was a student. Fairchild recalled, "In my classes he proved an excellent scholar, being one of the high-standing members of the class." ¹

One of his roommates wrote, "Bob was a hard worker, very intent on developing his abilities. I can think of no one in our class who made better use of the opportunity to get a good University education."²

Many others who knew him at Yale attested to his intellectual powers. In a different vein, Time magazine characterized this period of his life in this way:

Bob Taft, a solemn, studious boy, grew up to be stiff, shy, seemingly austere. He shrank from the role of the President's son, became more retiring than ever, dodged photographers, stayed away from campaigns, from school wrote stiff, formal replies to his father's genial, intelligent letters on national affairs. ³

Interestingly, his classmates at graduation voted Taft the "brightest member" (39 votes to 29 for second place) and the "most scholarly" (55 votes to 41 for the next highest). He ranked fifth as "most likely to succeed," and sixth as "hardest worker."⁴

¹ Letter from Fred Rogers Fairchild, September 10, 1959.
² Letter from Adrian Van Sinderen, July 29, 1959.
³ "Up From Plenty," Time, XXXV (January 29, 1940), 20.
Taft's four years at Yale resulted in the attainment of a fine education. His classical studies and some emphasis on economics stood him well in his further schooling and later career. A faculty member wrote to him at graduation, "I have taken much satisfaction in your splendid work at Yale. We all look to you for a career worthy of the Taft family." 1

Harvard.

With thirty of his Yale classmates, Bob Taft enrolled in the Harvard Law School on September 28, 1910. Confining himself largely to his studies, he took courses in Agency, Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property, and Torts. 2

At the end of Bob's first year in law school, the Dean wrote to his father:

I cannot help expressing my pleasure at the news (which has just reached me in Europe) that your son leads his class at the Law School. No success was ever better deserved. The faithfulness and severity of his work all through the year were remarkable, and were only equalled by his modesty. And as for his natural ability I was much impressed, even early in the winter, by his grasp of a law point, and the maturity and soundness of his thinking. 3

In the summer of 1911, Bob added to his informal education with another trip to Europe. This was described as "an instructive and exciting trip . . . in the company of three Harvard classmates." 4

Allen T. Klots, a classmate at Harvard who is now an attorney in New York City, provided a detailed description of Taft as a student:

We worked very closely together in preparing for our examinations and reviewed our various courses together. Taft had an unusually brilliant and capacious mind. Although he graduated with the highest marks in the class, he never seemed to be working as hard as the rest of us. Certainly, he never spent as many long hours as we did. Most of us got started at eight in the morning and worked until midnight. I don't believe he ever worked after nine in the evening.

His mind was such that he could hold and digest whatever he read or heard at the lectures very easily and simply. My notes of a lecture, for instance, might cover six or seven pages while he would cover the whole lecture in half a page; and yet he had grasped its full significance. 1

One of his distinguished professors, Roscoe Pound, recalled his impression of Taft at Harvard, "I had the habit for many years of getting to the law school early in the morning, and remember well that I used to find him waiting for me to let him into the library. In his class work he showed thorough reading, critical study, and assured good judgment." 2 Another professor added, "As I remember him, he frequently took part in class discussions and showed a great ability to get to the bottom of legal problems." 3

On the strength of his native intelligence and his desire to excel, it is little wonder that Taft consistently led his classes in school. Most important of all, he learned to use his natural capacities while in school. His intellectual ability served him well in his

career as a lawyer and legislator, as will be seen in later chapters.

Perhaps the most interesting description of Taft at Harvard came from a classmate who wrote his parents about the future Senator. A copy of this letter was found among the William Howard Taft papers in the Library of Congress. The student wrote:

Have I ever mentioned anything of the Taft boy? He --- Robert --- you know is in my class. He is quiet, appears not being even the slightest swell-headed, yet seems not to care at all what people think or don't think, but does exactly as he pleases. He gives the appearance of a person with lofty ideals, and the courage of his convictions and to spare. He dresses in very plain and sober clothes, which strike me as being somewhat out of date. Finally, he is a hard student, and an unusually intelligent one. I don't believe there is a brighter fellow among the 350 in our class. I had expected to find a very different person. He is well built but not very good looking. 1

The two prominent accomplishments of law school were his receiving the Fay Diploma at graduation and his work on the Harvard Law Review. The Fay Diploma is awarded each year "to the member of the graduating class who, in the judgment of the Law Faculty, has during his three years by his scholarship, conduct, and character given evidence of the greatest promise." 2

During his second year he was a member of the Board of Editors of the Harvard Law Review. Taft served as President of the Board in his third year. 3

The education of Robert A. Taft was probably as good as could be obtained in the United States in his time. He attended the Taft

3. Ibid.
School which was highly regarded as a preparatory school with its classical studies curriculum. His higher education was obtained at two of the finest institutions in the country, Yale and Harvard. His professors were impressed by his facile mind, his classmates respected his intellectual prowess, and his record was outstanding in all schools. He was remembered as full of ambition, shy, modest, and independent. His formal education prepared him well for his career.

On the basis of his outstanding record at Law School, Taft was recommended for a position as secretary to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. It was the custom of Mr. Justice Holmes to take one of the Harvard graduates for a year. Regarding this position, Taft wrote to his father, "I have no doubt that the work would be very interesting, but on my own judgment I would not accept the position because it seems better to get started permanently at once in Cincinnati." 1 Before reviewing his early legal experience and political activities, some attention will be given to his training and experiences in speech while in school.

IV. SPECIFIC TRAINING IN SPEECH WHILE IN SCHOOL.

The record of Taft's speech training and experiences reveals that he participated in debate and that he had courses in what would now be called "Speech" at the Taft School and Yale. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, he undoubtedly had a course in Public Speaking at

the Taft School. Osterweis' recollection of Taft's reputation as a prep school orator has been noted.

Taft included four courses in speech in his studies at Yale. Brief descriptions of them were supplied by the Registrar's Office.

Public Speaking A-1 devoted attention especially to vocal delivery, and correct and refined pronunciation of English. Taft took this course in his freshman year.

Rhetoric B-2, Oral Composition, was a full year course, taught one semester by Charles Sears Baldwin, and the second by Professor Thompson. The first term was preparatory training in the principles of speech composition. The second term was devoted to the study of the principles and practices of oratory. Taft took these in his sophomore year.

Rhetoric B-11 was Debating; it was taught by C.S. Baldwin. The first semester was spent in preparing briefs, analyzing models of debating, and practicing rebuttals. The second semester emphasized further practice in rebuttal, research, construction of the case, and presentation. Taft enrolled in this course in his junior year.

Oral Expression A-5 was devoted to systematic practice in forensic speaking and the interpretation of Shakespeare.

Thus his curricular work in speech was rather extensive. He had two courses under Charles Sears Baldwin who became widely respected for his books on rhetoric, Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic and Medieval Rhetoric to 1400.

Harold Obernauer, who took courses with Taft under Baldwin,
recalls that the courses taught by Baldwin were "fair to good. He had some strong teaching points. I thought, however, that he was stubborn, particularly in the selection of the debating subjects, the choice of material for use in the debates and tactics." 1

Taft gained additional experience in speech as a member of the Debating Association. He served as President of this group in 1909-10. A few of the topics he debated included the following. In December, 1908, he upheld the winning affirmative side of the proposition, "Resolved, that the United States should establish a system of Postal Savings Banks," against the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University. 2

In 1909, he debated the affirmative on the topic, "Resolved, that the United States Senators should be elected by direct vote of the people." This debate was against the Yale Divinity School; Taft's side won. 3

Taft was one of four to speak at the Junior Exhibition in Lampson Lyceum on April 23, 1909. The topic was, "The Working Out of the Fifteenth Amendment." He won second place. 4

Other details of his work in the Debating Association are sketchy. Apparently no records have been kept of its activities.

2. *Banner and Pot Pourri*, LXVII (Yale University, 1909), 281.
Only one person who was active in debate at Yale when Taft was a student there could be contacted. That was Harold Obernauer. He wrote that he has distinct recollections of Taft. He said further, "Because of our previous association and continued friendship, I read his senatorial and other public speeches. I am of the opinion that Taft's debating style had not changed very much from that of his college days." The main differences that he noted were that Taft was more mature as a speaker later in life and that he was sharper, more fluent, and ready in debate. He specifically recalled the following about Taft's debating at Yale:

In school it seemed to me that he had a deliberation in his speaking. In fact, Taft was not a quick speaker and, in my opinion, not quick in thinking. It was necessary that he prepare his case with utmost care and persistency so that he could have it at his tongue's end whenever he arose to speak or answer the previous speaker.

Taft was a persistent plugger, determined to study every angle of the subject and to formulate an answer whatever the strength of the opposition or his own weakness. I would not say that Taft was a ready debater, but whatever strength he had was acquired in his determination and persistency to cover the subject. He became a good debater because of those traits. He was thorough. 1

This impression is not unusual in the light of Taft's speaking at the peak of his career. He was known then as the well-prepared speaker who had carefully thought out his position beforehand. As Obernauer noted, Taft became quite fluent and ready in debate as he got older.

Because the records are incomplete, it is difficult to generalize regarding the effects of his training and experience on his speak-

ing ability in later years. It is known that he had classroom training in speech of a rather extensive nature. His work on the debate teams at Yale indicates that he had considerable skill as a college debater.

David S. Ingalls, Taft's campaign manager in his bids for the Presidential nomination, stated that Taft loved to debate. 1 Ingalls believes that Taft would rather have engaged in a debate than make a single speech of his own in the course of a campaign. Taft made it a point to challenge his opponents during the early campaigns, indicating that he felt he had some skill in the art of debate. His speech and debate training at Yale may have been responsible to some degree for this feeling.

Despite his training in speech in college, Taft turned down several invitations to deliver Fourth of July orations around Cincinnati, according to his sister. "He was convinced that he wasn't any good at public speaking," she wrote. "I think Bob first learned to make a good political speech after he had served four terms in the Ohio House and Senate and, through his political experience, discovered he had something to say." 2

V. EARLY LEGAL EXPERIENCE AND PUBLIC SERVICE.

With his law school record, Bob Taft probably could have obtained a position in a Wall Street firm but his preference was to

1. Interview, David S. Ingalls, Cleveland, July 13, 1959.
Cincinnati. He liked his hometown and his wife, whom he married the year after his graduation from law school, agreed that it was the place for them to live.

Martha Bowers and Robert Taft were married on October 17, 1911. She was a descendant of Jonathan Edwards and Timothy Dwight, who was once President of Yale and a leader of the Federalists. Her grandfather was Thomas Wilson, Chief Justice of Minnesota's highest court, and her father, Lloyd Bowers, was Solicitor General during W.H. Taft's Presidency. 1

Their marriage proved to be a happy one. Martha became an active aide in her husband's career. John Gunther wrote, "The brightest star in the family is a lady, Bob's wife, Martha. His debt to her is beyond compare. She is indefatigable and indispensable. She is a more accomplished speaker than her husband, and has assisted in all his campaigns." 2

Felix Morley wrote in 1948,

Possessed of as keen and quick a mind as her husband's, Martha Taft is also blessed with a personality as warm and radiant as his is cool and aloof. Martha has notably softened Bob's austerity. That she respects and loves her husband profoundly is obvious. That she fears he does not always do himself full justice in human relationships is also apparent. 3


While still in law school, Bob had turned down a chance to be Oliver Wendell Holmes' secretary. His father agreed with his choice. W.H. Taft wrote to Lawrence Maxwell in Cincinnati, asking that his son be taken into the firm of Ramsey and Maxwell. He said, in part, "I have the prejudice of a father, but I think you will find him a very earnest, quiet, hard worker, with courage to speak out when it is needed, but without any disposition to exploit himself." 1

Two weeks later, Lawrence Maxwell replied, "I shall be glad to make a place for Robert in my office and give him the opportunity to learn the ropes and make himself useful." 2 Thus, he started his legal career with the firm of Maxwell and Ramsey, at first without pay until Martha put her foot down.

When the United States became involved in the First World War, Bob was rejected for service in the Army because of near-sightedness. Seeking some place for service, he joined the legal staff of the relief agencies under the direction of Herbert Hoover. This involved work in Washington and later in Paris during the negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles. Hoover's memory of Taft at this time was,

In those overcrowded days in Paris, the principal members of my staff and I dined together as the only moment when we could consider our over-all plans and policies. On one of these dinner occasions, Bob joined in with an impressive advocacy of the League of Nations. One of his observations I remember well was an analysis of Article 19 of the Covenant and his fears that it might be a stumbling block to Senate ratification. 3

At the end of his service under Hoover, he returned to Cincinnati and opened a law office with his brother Charles. He practiced law only a short time when he decided to become active in politics.

He began his career at the bottom — as a precinct door bell ringer in "Boss Rudolph Hynicka's notorious Ohio Republican machine." 1 It was noted that as a precinct worker, "he was handicapped by a stiffness of manner, an aloofness, an inability to get on familiar terms with party workers and voters, no matter how many doorbells he rang." 2

Taft became strongly devoted to his party; he was a strict "party regular." His theory was "to work within the organization," in which he considered the Hynickas to be intruders. Time magazine reported, "The Hynicka machine elected Bob Taft to the state legislature. In a few years, Bob Taft, and not the 'intruders' controlled the machine." 3

Congressman William E. Hess of the Second District of Ohio disagreed with Time's report. He wrote,

"Time is absolutely wrong in stating that the Hynicka machine elected Bob Taft to the Legislature — Mr. Hynicka had already passed away at that time. It was also an error to state that he controlled the machine and the Hynickas were out.

Taft became Chairman of the Hamilton County Republican Executive Committee, but he was never Chairman of the County Central Committee. When he was Chairman of the Executive Committee a great many of Hynicka's close friends were still on the Committee, and no attempt was made to dislodge them." 4

Nevertheless, Taft rose to a position of power in Hamilton County political circles rapidly. Two things are noteworthy here: his difficulties in meeting people easily and his intense devotion to the party. These characteristics were to remain with him throughout his career.

Clarence J. Brown, Congressman from Ohio’s Seventh District and a long-time Taft political associate, wrote that he and others urged the Cincinnati lawyer to run for the Ohio General Assembly because they thought the city needed stronger representation. 1

In 1920, Taft was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives, serving there for six years. The 1920 election was a landslide for the Republicans in the state. They captured \( \frac{3}{4} \) out of 37 seats in the Ohio Senate; in the House, the Republicans elected 107 members and the Democrats sixteen. 2 A Cincinnati paper announced that friends started a boom for Robert A. Taft for Speaker of the House. 3

The New York Times reported that the genesis of his social philosophy was formulated here. 4 Noting Taft's legislative accomplishments, Short cited that Taft had taken a stand against the Yellow Dog contract; he had defended civil liberties in the Prohibition and poll tax fights. He had voted to establish a minimum wage for women. He was especially concerned with the problems of cities, in taxation matters and he

introduced a bill which saved the city libraries. 1

In 1926, during the last half of his third term as a Representative, Bob Taft became the Speaker of the House. This was cited as recognition of his political skills. 2

Taft did not run for reelection after his third term, preferring to return to the practice of law. But three years later he decided to run for the State Senate. Clarence J. Brown believes that Taft ran for the Ohio Senate because he was interested in reforms in the Ohio Constitutional provisions dealing with state taxation. 3 He won the Senate seat in 1930 and became Chairman of the Special Joint Taxation Committee which drafted new tax plans for Ohio.

Short concluded that it was only natural that Taft should head the committee drafting tax legislation in 1931 because when one thought of tax legislation Taft's name was the first that came to mind. In all, it was the tax legislation which Taft had sponsored and promoted that won for him his most important place in the history of Ohio's legislature. 4 Taft had also shown an interest in welfare and labor legislation. He voted for the public housing bill and urged action to deal with relief and unemployment. He did not always vote as labor would have had him vote, but he was not considered as hostile to labor. 5

When the time came for his reelection to the State Senate in

2. Ibid. 3. Letter from Clarence J. Brown.
1932, Taft was buried in the Democratic landslide which swept the country with Franklin D. Roosevelt. Taft again returned to his practice in Cincinnati.

Current Biography summed up his work in the General Assembly, "Except for his work on tax revision, Taft's tenure in the state legislature was called 'three fireless terms'."¹ This conclusion, however, appears to be unjustified.

Frazier T. Reams, a Toledo attorney who served as Ohio's Director of Public Welfare under Governor Frank Lausche and later went to Congress as an Independent Democrat, wrote, "I would say very definitely that to characterize Bob Taft's service as 'three fireless terms' was to give a completely incorrect idea of his service there." Reams further pointed out that he frequently disagreed with what Taft did. He concluded, "I would say that he started about as many fires in his service in the Legislature as he did later in the U.S. Senate."²

John B. Dempsey, Cleveland attorney who served in the Ohio House in 1923, stated that Taft in his second term there was the unofficial Republican floor leader. "In the 1925 session he was without question the most influential member of the General Assembly."³

John Vorys, Columbus attorney and for many years a Congressman from Ohio, served with Taft in the General Assembly. He wrote, "In

¹ Anna Rothe, ed., Current Biography (New York: H.W.Wilson, 1948), 611. Note: Taft actually served four terms: three in the House and one in the Senate of the Ohio General Assembly.
² Letter from Frazier Reams, September 2, 1959.
³ Letter from John B. Dempsey, August 11, 1959.
1925 Taft became the House floor leader, and completely dominated the House. Apparently, then, Taft's leadership securely established him as an effective member of the General Assembly.

His law firm was expanding and he was prospering after the 1932 defeat. Then, for the third time, he decided to get back into politics, this time on a larger scale. *Time* reported the story:

Last week Ohio Republicans scurried about to find a rival candidate to prevent the Ohio delegation from going to the Idahoan, William E. Borah, by default. Few avowed candidates wanted to risk a possible defeat in Ohio at the Senator's hands. To encourage them, the Republican State Committee took a poll of ten thousand Ohio Republicans on their preference in candidates.

The results:
- Governor Alf Landon: 56.3%
- Senator Borah: 20.8%
- Colonel Frank Knox: 13.2%
- Herbert Hoover: 1.1%
- Arthur Vandenberg: 2.9%

Balked at every turn, Ohio's leaders decided to pick the best man they could find from their own state. They selected Robert A. Taft.

Lawyer Taft's chief qualifications were: (1) his name, and (2) his "gold-clause" suit for $1.07 against the United States Government, suit against which the New Deal's best legal talent last week filed a brief in the Court of Claims.

Thus, Taft became Ohio's "favorite son" for the first of four times because no one else wanted to oppose Senator Borah in the Ohio primary. In March of 1936, he had been passed over in a poll of Republican leaders; in May of 1936, he scored his first statewide victory. Taft's eight delegates-at-large polled nearly two to one ahead of

1. Letter from John Vorys, August 26, 1959.
Borah's in the statewide vote. In all, Taft carried off forty-seven of Ohio's 52 votes.

This victory gave Taft his first sounding-board of a national scope. He declared stoutly that he was Ohio's favorite-son candidate for President, and that he stood on a platform of being "100% against the New Deal." *Time* commented, "The cry was scarcely heard in the thundering triumph of Franklin Roosevelt over Alf Landon." 1

One of the earliest definite statements of Taft's Presidential ambitions was recounted in the autobiography of Grove Patterson who wrote:

Robert A. Taft, a friend of long standing, was not a candidate for the Presidential nomination in that 1936 convention but early in the proceedings he asked me to come to his room and told me he would be pleased if I would write a speech and put up his name for the vice-presidency. I doubt if this is generally known, because he later changed his mind. 2

Thus, twenty-three years after his graduation from law school, Robert A. Taft entered the national political scene. He served his political apprenticeship in the Ohio General Assembly. His eight years there revealed a competent man in that parliamentary body. His chance to achieve statewide recognition came in 1936 when no other Republican wanted to face Senator Borah in the Ohio primary. His victory over the Idaho Senator, who had been a classmate of his father's at Yale, was an important one. It may have influenced his decision to run for the Senate two years later.


SUMMARY

This chapter, Prelude to the Senate, has sought to present significant events in Robert A. Taft's formative years and in his early political experience as a member of the Ohio General Assembly.

First, the family background was surveyed with the idea of determining its possible influences on the future Senator. His grandfather, Alphonso Taft, was responsible for making the name prominent in Cincinnati. An attorney who served as Judge of the Superior Court, he was active in civic affairs. He rose to national prominence when he served as Secretary of War and then Attorney-General in President U.S. Grant's cabinet. He had a reputation of being honest and fair dealing; he took resolute stands on the issues of the day.

Alphonso's son, William Howard Taft, continued the family tradition. His first important position was also as a Superior Court judge. He became successively Solicitor General of the United States, a Federal Judge, and the first Civil Governor of the Philippine Islands. He returned in 1904 to serve as Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of War, a position his father had also held. Four years later he was elected President with Theodore Roosevelt's blessing and help. His administration was not particularly outstanding and he was defeated by Woodrow Wilson in 1912. He then became a professor of law at Yale. In 1921, he became Chief Justice of the United States where he served until his death. The prominence achieved by his father and grandfather undoubtedly benefitted Robert A. Taft when he began his own political career.

By his example and by discussions and correspondence, William
Howard Taft influenced his son's political views. Both men strongly opposed any attempts to socialize the country without safeguards for the preservation of traditional American liberties and values.

Mrs. W.H. Taft, it is believed, was the driving force behind her husband. It is likely that she instilled a sense of ambition in her son as well.

Taft's childhood was that of the son of a high-ranking government official in the Philippine Islands. As such, he had the opportunity to travel in the Far East and Europe at any early age. He was precocious intellectually and an avid reader as a young child. He taught himself to play chess and bridge before he was eleven by reading books on the games.

His education having been interrupted by the family's frequent travels, he finally enrolled in the Taft School for Boys when he was fourteen. Here in this excellent school with its classical curriculum, he made an outstanding scholastic record.

He entered Yale in 1906, two years before his father became President. He continued his excellent work in his studies while following a liberal education curriculum. His courses were in German, Latin, Greek, English Literature, rhetoric, public speaking, with several courses each in mathematics, history, science, and philosophy. In his final year, he took mostly courses in economics. The top student in his class, he was elected President of the Phi Beta Kappa chapter in his senior year. His professors and classmates remembered him as a hard worker who was intent on developing his abilities.
Next he entered Harvard Law School where Roscoe Pound was one of his professors. Confining himself largely to his studies, he again was the top-ranking student in his class. His outstanding accomplishments were receiving the Fay Diploma, given to the graduating senior who shows the greatest promise, and editing the Harvard Law Review.

Robert A. Taft probably had as good an education as could be obtained at the time. All the schools he attended were highly regarded. His efforts were devoted toward receiving the best they could offer. He was remembered as a person who was full of ambition, somewhat shy and modest but independent of mind.

Some special attention was given in this chapter to his training and experiences in speech while in school. He had a course in Public Speaking at the Taft School. At Yale, he took four courses in what would be called "Speech." Two of these were taught by C.S. Baldwin who became widely respected for his books on rhetoric.

He participated in debate at both schools. One person who was active with him in the Debating Association at Yale recalled that Taft was deliberate in his speaking. He prepared his cases with care after studying the subject thoroughly. He became a good debater because of these traits, according to his contemporary. Even with this training and experience, he was still hesitant about accepting public speaking invitations in his early career. His sister believes he overcame this while serving in the Ohio General Assembly.

After graduating from law school he maintained a law practice in Cincinnati until he entered the Senate. His law career was inter-
ruptured during World War I when he served with Herbert Hoover's relief agencies. This gave him the opportunity to be in Europe in the aftermath of the war.

His marriage to Martha Wheaton Bowers gave him an invaluable aide in his later career. He began his political career as a precinct worker in Cincinnati where he was handicapped by an inability to meet people and converse with them easily. Despite this, his rise in the local Republican Party was rapid.

In 1920, he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives where he served six years. He became majority floor leader in 1925; he was Speaker of the House a year later. Out of the General Assembly four years, he was elected to the State Senate in 1930. His outstanding accomplishment was as Chairman of the Special Joint Taxation Committee which drafted new tax legislation for Ohio. In the final analysis, he was rated as an effective state legislator. His service as a member of the General Assembly and the experience he gained campaigning for a seat there were useful in his later political career.

His first chance for some nationwide political recognition came in 1936 when he was chosen to oppose William E. Borah in the Ohio Presidential primary. Not given much of a chance against the well-known Senator from Idaho, he scored a political upset by capturing forty-seven of Ohio's 52 delegates. He went to the National Republican Convention in Cleveland as Ohio's favorite son. This probably encouraged him to get into politics on a larger scale.

These were years of preparation; he was well prepared for his career as a United States Senator.
CHAPTER III

SENIOR AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, 1939-53

"While he never became President as his father did, historians will certainly record that Robert Taft did more than the elder Taft to alter the course of national policy." 1 This was the conclusion of Life magazine upon Taft's death in 1953.

In 1949, one hundred Washington newsmen in a poll chose Taft as "the Senator who contributes most to the nation's welfare." 2

Walter Lippmann summed up the reaction of many, "Taft is probably more responsible than any other man for leading the Republican Party into blind alleys of dumb obstruction on the vital issues of our times." 3

These were typical reactions to the record of Robert Alphonso Taft from 1939 to 1953. They run from highest praise to condemning blame. They suggest the paradox of Taft: he was an able Senator and the acknowledged leader of the Republican Party --- yet he was never able to win his party's nomination for the Presidency. He tried three times with everything he had. Each attempt ended in personal tragedy; he lost to men seemingly less qualified.


Immediately questions such as these arise: What was the man like? What did he stand for? How did his speaking ability help or hinder him? What was his place in the thought and talk of the United States? The rhetorical critic is interested in all these questions. Their answers are essential to the criticism of his speeches. It will be the purpose of this chapter to explore Taft's record with the above questions in mind. The following chapter will emphasize his personal characteristics as they affected his speech-making. Together they complete the biographical work on Taft in this study. But in a real sense, they are more than biography, for Taft's role as a speaker in the Senate and on the public platform will be considered in some detail.

For the sake of convenience, this chapter will be divided into three sections corresponding to his three Senate terms. In each section, the election campaign for the Senate, his record as a Senator in that term, and his Presidential campaigning will be considered.

I. FIRST SENATE TERM, 1939-1

In 1937, Robert A. Taft decided to run for the United States Senate. He had become convinced that the New Deal was a generally harmful course of action for the United States. He had achieved some degree of recognition in the 1936 campaign as Ohio's favorite son. After making a tentative decision to run, he visited political leaders in Ohio to ascertain the degree of support he might expect. He was sufficiently encouraged from these visits to announce late in 1937 that he would enter the race for the Senate seat held by R.J. Bulkley.
Senate Campaign of 1938.

His primary opponent, Judge Horace Day, was a formidable foe. Ohio's Republican chairman, Ed Schorr, favored the candidacy of Judge Day in early 1938. Out of Ohio's eighty-eight counties, Hamilton County's Republican Committee was for Taft; the other eighty-seven were for Day. ¹ At the start of the primary campaign, the odds were ten to one in Judge Day's favor, but when the votes were in, Taft had won by 75,000. ²

The primary over, the campaign for election was a bitter fight. Taft's opponent in November was Robert Johns Bulkley, once a roommate of Franklin D. Roosevelt at Harvard. Bulkley had been in politics since 1911 when he was elected to the House of Representatives. After two terms there, he became chief legal officer of the Munitions Board, the Emergency Fleet Corporation, and the War Industries Board. In 1930, Bulkley was elected to the Senate for a short term and was re-elected for a full term in 1932. ³

Bulkley generally followed the New Deal measures in his voting in the Senate. One correspondent wrote, "So far as his voting record is concerned, Mr. Bulkley has blindly followed the President." ⁴ Bulkley's

support of Roosevelt's policies became a major issue. At a rally in Cleveland, Taft charged that "Senator Bulkley has been just a stooge for the Democratic administration." 1 In a speech before the Hamilton County Republican Women's Club, Taft said that as a result of Bulkley's going along with Roosevelt, the issue was "Whether you want someone in Washington who will vote for any fool scheme the President happens to be for, or someone who will represent the people of Ohio." 2 Taft pressed his opponent on this point at every opportunity. As a result it tended to put Bulkley on the defensive. As a counter-attack he accused Taft of a "do nothing" policy, "Mr. Taft wants things to take care of themselves, but the American people aren't going to stand for any 'do nothing' policy. Our memory of bread lines and soup kitchens of those days is yet too vivid." 3

The outstanding feature of the 1938 campaign was a series of six debates between the two men. In the Lincoln-Douglas manner, each candidate was permitted to pick three topics and the side he would uphold on each. A political correspondent noted: "There is a large degree of good will among the voters generally over the discussions as they begin. There is a hope on the part of both Democrats and Republicans that their Senatorial candidates will give great argumentative


Because previous studies on Taft have not considered the Taft-Bulkley debates, considerable attention will be given to them in this study.

The first debate was at Marietta on October 8, 1938. Taft chose the proposition, "Resolved: that the planned economy of the New Deal is a failure and no cure for depressions and unemployment." Time magazine referred to it as a "dignified debate," and summarized Taft's case as favoring an "independent rather than a dominated Congress" and a protective tariff on pottery, glassware, and oil. Bulkley "indignantly denied that he was a Roosevelt rubber stamp" and called Taft a "belated New Dealer and a copycat." 1

A Cleveland paper reported after the debate, "Taft appeared to be about a two-to-one favorite with the crowd but this is not surprising in view of the fact that Washington County is normally Republican." 4 A Cincinnati reporter wrote: "Bob Taft, not the particular type which stirs a crowd into emotional outbursts, had the orderly and serious-minded gathering at Marietta out of their chairs not a few times and was applauded far oftener than his opponent." His appraisal of Bulkley was that the Senator spoke "clearly, convincingly, and much more freely

3. Ibid.
than is his custom." Bulkley got a "good natured bit of ribbing from the crowd when Taft told the audience in rebuttal that the Senator failed to stick to the subject but instead had ranged over the whole field of public affairs." 1

There was more than a statewide following of the debates. One reporter felt that the debates "are attracting national attention because many observers believe that Ohio has become the battle ground on which the issues of 1940 will be fought out." He predicted after the first debate that personalities would not distract attention from the issues and consequently the outcome of the debates would provide a clear-cut test of the popularity of the New Deal in an important state. 2

The second debate, at Dayton, showed that the immediate audience was against Bulkley's defense of the New Deal. He had chosen the topic, "New Deal recognition of new federal responsibilities for general welfare." A reporter wrote that Senator Bulkley was booed repeatedly. He had spoken but a few words in rebuttal when numbers in the audience started leaving. Taft went to the microphone and said, "I would be greatly obliged if you would not leave the hall until Senator Bulkley has concluded." Only a few returned to their seats. The booing was not only for Bulkley; Taft also was booed when he mentioned the Hoover

administration. 1 Just after this debate, Arthur Krock wrote:

They have toured the state together in joint debate. They are well-disposed toward each other, gentlemen and serious students of public affairs. No name-calling or political shenanigans has marred the discussions between them. They have dealt with the people of Ohio as people worthy of intelligent approach, and they have left no doubt as to the issue. 2

With the third debate, however, the people became greatly stirred. The audience reacted with boos, heckling, and a near-riot, when the debates were resumed in Cincinnati on October 21. Bulkley had chosen the topic, "The Truth About Federal Finances." Perhaps the Democrats were out to make trouble, for S. M. Johnson, chairman of the Hamilton County Democratic Executive Committee, asserted that Bulkley had not received fair play in his debates with Taft thus far, and urged Democrats to attend the debate in Cincinnati to "see that he gets it." 3

Bulkley contended in the debate that the national debt was more than off-set by the gains under the New Deal. Taft charged the New Deal with "utter and reckless extravagance." During Taft's address, the heckling and boos developed full force, requiring him to cut sharply his prepared text. 4 Bulkley began to speak in the din of a great deal of

applause. After he spoke about five minutes, someone in the right balcony called out, "Why don't you tell the truth?" From then on there was considerable applause and occasional booing all during his speech. During Taft's speech, the police chief had quieted five hecklers. The Chief reported that toward the end of Taft's speech the heckling and applauding from all parts of the hall became more intense. He believed that a riot might have started. For his final rebuttal, Bulkley stood at the microphone for five minutes before he could speak because of the demonstrations. These boisterous audience reactions insured capacity crowds for the remaining three debates.

The contestants met in debate at Youngstown on October 25 on the subject of Taft's choice: "New Instruments of Power Under the New Deal." As a major plan of attack, Taft demanded to know if Bulkley would support a New Deal "court packing" scheme again. Bulkley replied that he would. Taft's case rested on the point that the people must decide if they are going ahead with the New Deal program or back to an American system of free enterprise. Bulkley contended that the New Deal stands for the common advantage of all the people.

In contrast to the previous debate, the meeting was "as decorous and fine as the previous debate in Cincinnati was disorderly. There was


not a single boo." 1 A Youngstown paper reported that the debate was held before "the largest, most orderly audience ever to attend a political meeting in the modern days of Youngstown." 2 It further stated that Taft twice got applause during his first speech and the crowd cheered almost continually during his rebuttal. Bulkley was generously cheered and applauded several times. 3 In an editorial on the debate, the Youngstown Vindicator said, "In spite of straying a good deal from the subject in their debate here last night, they still succeeded in setting before the voters the issue on which their contest should be decided. That issue is the question of the new government powers under the New Deal." 4

As a sidelight on the debate, Bulkley demanded that Taft disclose his campaign expenses. The Senator charged that Taft had spent more than $100,000. 5 This charge was to be repeated many times in the campaign. Finally it was investigated by a Committee of the Senate which cleared Taft.

For their fifth debate, Bulkley and Taft went to Toledo on October 28. The question was, "Has labor gained or lost under New Deal policies?" Opening the debate, Bulkley stated that the Wagner Act, the new wage-hour law, social security enactments and other New Deal measures had advanced

1. Ibid.
the cause of labor further in five years than had been accomplished in fifty years before. Taft countered with a denial that the New Deal had bettered the lot of the working man. He cited the 11,300,000 unemployed, the millions working part time and the many more on relief. Bulkley brought out Taft's voting record in the Ohio General Assembly, stating that Taft had voted against labor on seventeen issues while supporting it only three times. Taft's reply: "Most of those had nothing to do with labor --- they were railroad bills." 1

Twenty police were stationed in the auditorium to guard against outbursts of heckling. The officers had little to do during most of the candidate's original addresses. But as Bulkley launched the final rebuttal, the police could not halt the cries of "That isn't true," and "You can't put that over." Partisans of each side then tried to drown out the other with shouting. 2 A Toledo paper reported that during Senator Bulkley's opening speech the audience was quiet, interrupting only three times with applause. "But while Mr. Taft had the floor, there was considerably more noise, clapping, whistling, and booing which increased as the debate progresses until the chairman was forced to ask for order so that Bulkley could proceed." 3 The day before the debate, the Toledo Blade commented editorially, "Those who want a new national policy on such momentous matters as unemployment, huge spending,


labor welfare, and dictatorial regulation of business and agriculture can demand such revision. That will be by voting for Robert A. Taft."

It was noted that a representative of Roosevelt's, former Congressman Charles West, was on hand. To one reporter, this gave "credence to the generally accepted belief that the national administration is watching closely, if not actually assisting in, Senator Bulkley's camp." The reporter stated further, "There were rumors that Mr. Roosevelt considered the case of Senator Bulkley serious after five straight strikes on him in the debates." 2

Cleveland was the setting for the last debate. Before two thousand people at the City Club on October 29, the two candidates discussed alternatives to the New Deal. Bulkley centered his arguments around the question, "Shall we go ahead or backward?" He asked, "Shall we support the policies of President Roosevelt and go forward toward prosperity or turn backwards and try the old methods again?" Taft replied, "Let's go back to the old methods of encouraging private industry. The New Deal policy threatens the entire Constitutional basis of the United States. We don't want a Russia or a Germany." 3 A reporter covering the debate reported that Taft received an ovation at the close of his talk. Bulkley was also given an ovation as he started to speak. The crowd interrupted


3. Cincinnati Times-Star, (October 30, 1938)
both speakers to applaud or cheer. "Give 'em hell, Bob," one spectator shouted as the Senator arose to open his talk. Bulkley's final shot at Taft was, "This has been my sixth debate with Mr. Taft and in all of them the trifling and inconsequential nature of the specific suggestions he offered for the improvement of or as alternative for the New Deal measures was striking and conclusive proof of the emptiness of his promise of statesmanship." 2

Throughout the debates and the campaign, Robert A. Taft emphasized the growing control of the government over the affairs of men. His position was stated:

Should our opponents win this fall, they will take it as a mandate to go on with their planned economy program.

You can't carry out a planned economy unless you get regulatory powers over all phases of individual and business endeavor. When you have such powers you have socialism. It is voluntary at first and when it fails to work it must be made iron-clad compulsion.

What must be done is to develop parts of the New Deal, develop private industry, provide adequate relief, halt regulation and encourage private initiative. 3

Since the debates were broadcast over Ohio radio stations, the people had an opportunity to hear both candidates on the issues. Taft usually pressed the microphone close to his lips when the booing and demonstrations occurred; as a result the radio listeners heard little of the noise. 4

Before the debates started, "certain newspaper vote-samplings in

Ohio show Mr. Taft in the lead. ¹ It was suggested that Taft must guard his advantage with "vigilant zeal," for the Democratic National Committee and the Administration were aware of the consequences that would follow the defeat of Senator Bulkley. "They are putting on all the pressure they can command. The great Federal bounty and patronage machines are ceaselessly grinding grist for the relief beneficiaries and labor in the cities, for the farmers and the Negro voters." ² To counter this advantage, the Republicans had no such resources. They had to rely on the impression made by Taft in his criticisms of the New Deal.

Comparing the two candidates, Mengert believed that Bulkley had an advantage in his experience in Washington totaling twenty-seven years. He felt that they were nearly equally matched in legal experience and in general educational background. "Both came from homes of the more fortunate, with family traditions behind them....Neither has any forte as a rabble rouser or any special oratorical gifts." ³

Two days before the election, the New York Times reported that political observers believed that the Democratic candidates in Ohio would win the Governorship and the Senate seat but the Republicans had an excellent chance in both. ⁴

One account of the Tafts --- Bob and Martha --- as campaigners scored their work as a team:

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Everywhere they have been greeted with mild surprise. Bob Taft, solid and ungainly in his store clothes, expounds his firmly conservative doctrine with an odd, plodding insistence.

Witty, frank-spoken Martha Taft, always cheerful and generally disheveled under her yoke of presentation flowers, overflows with a magnificent, boundless vitality. Both are strangely untheatrical. 1

The electorate voted to send Robert A. Taft to the United States Senate on November 8, 1938. His margin of victory was nearly 170,000 votes. The New York Times stated, "A tidal wave of anti-New Deal and anti-CIO sentiment rolled up from the Ohio River territory and central farming districts ... to sweep the Republicans to victory. 2 Business Week magazine stated, "It was the farm revolt which toppled over Senator Bulkley ..., ardent New Dealer." 3

In all, Bob Taft drove 30,000 miles in the 1938 campaign, visited eighty-seven counties and made six hundred speeches. Martha Taft did nearly as much. "But the striking aspect ... lay ... in the seeming demonstration that, if they could tell their story long enough and hard enough to enough people, the Tafts had a knack of rounding up a majority. 4

In typical Time style, that news magazine recorded: "Phenomenal in 1938 was Robert A. Taft's Ohio Senatorial victory over promising New

3. "Idealism or Realism, Up to FDR," Business Week (November 12, 1938), 11.
Dealer Robert Johns Bulkley. Mr. Taft was phenomenally dull, phenomenally serious, phenomenally popular at the polls." ¹

The Tafts found the successful formula for winning elections in spite of adversity. They covered the state thoroughly; in their speeches, they capitalized on dissatisfaction of the people with the New Deal. They put Bulkley on the defensive. Taft’s speaking in the campaign marked him as a formidable foe of the New Deal.

In The Senate.

Shortly after the election, Time reported:

Ohio’s tall, crinkle-eyed Robert A. Taft will be the Senate’s most conspicuous newcomer. With a distinguished record of public service in his own city and state, a Presidential name, an able and attractive wife, he already looms as large as Michigan’s Vandenberg for the GOP Presidential nomination in 1940.

Knowing this he took pains last week to say, "The Republicans have work to do, and a Senatorial term is for six years....Remember, we are still a minority." ²

Despite his important victory, White believed, "Taft’s recognition was primarily because he was a Taft." ³ His previous experience and interests suited him well to his first committee assignments: Banking and Currency, Appropriations, and Education and Labor. "His great interest, then as always, really was in fiscal affairs and he put into his committee work the almost incredible concentration of cold energy that typified all his life." ⁴

¹. "Hare and Tortoise," Time, XXXIV (December 18, 1939), 13.
Taft soon dispelled any doubts about his efficacy as a Senator.

He lived up to his name, and then some:

Through his industry, his great ability, his connections, his point of view and his rising utility, Taft got along well enough with the old formidable of the Senate. This was true of such as Borah and Hiram Johnson. He had, from the start, just the right sort of presence for his new job — gravity, solidity, and an instinctive, and perhaps in part inherited understanding of the habits and prejudices of this body where he was to reach his highest distinction. And his great industry did him no harm.

Taft continued to use his unrelenting industry. The result was that "he takes his job more seriously, works harder and has more organized ambition and native intelligence than most of his colleagues." 2

His first speech in the Senate came early in 1939. Senator Adams of Colorado led the fight to prevent restoration of $17,206,000. for construction of TVA dams which had been stricken out by the House. "Mr. Adams' efforts were reinforced by Ohio's tall, squinty Robert A. Taft, the new Senator of noble name and nominal fame in current Presidential polls, who had chosen this subject for his maiden Senate speech." 3 By a wide margin the Senate voted the money for the dams. Time reported that Minority Leader McNary shook hands with Freshman Taft as he sat down. Michigan's Arthur Vandenberg, "doubtless recognizing no forensic threat in this serious son of the twenty-seventh President, leaned over grinning amiably from his near-by seat." 4

Afterward, Taft said to reporters, "It was just like making a

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4. Ibid.
speech any place else, except the acoustics are terrible. I have a pretty good voice but I felt I had to shout to make people hear me."  

His first effort was on a losing side, a position he often held in those early years. His first major victory in the Senate came in the battle over the 1939 "spending-lending" bill.

A large part of Mr. Taft's questioning in committee, and his speeches on the Senate floor were so flatly put that they were never reported in the newspapers. Metaphorically, he said to the New Deal: "T'ain't so." He humiliated Mr. Morgenthau, drove administration experts and Senators into raging silence. It was the New Deal's first big money bill to be totally defeated.  

In his early years, the Senator listened to Franklin D. Roosevelt's expressed desire for non-partisanship. He questioned the wisdom of allowing the President to have arbitrary power. Because of Taft's comparative conservatism, his great intelligence was labeled, "The best nineteenth century mind in the twentieth century." One critic made the remark: "Taft has reached more wrong decisions more ably than any other man in public life." Thus, the attacks began; as with all men in public life, he was subjected to frequent and vitriolic personal attacks.

A major factor in promoting Taft's position in the public's mind so early in his career was his selection to debate T. V. Smith, New Deal Representative from Illinois. They engaged in thirteen debates which were broadcast nationally in 1939. This focused attention on Taft as a New Deal foe and provided a forum for his criticisms shortly after his


successful campaign in Ohio in 1938. These debates will be analyzed in detail in Chapter V.

When Congress convened in 1939, events in the world caused the United States to turn its attention overseas. In his annual message to this, the seventy-sixth Congress, President Roosevelt warned of "storm signals from across the seas."¹ The year 1938 had witnessed Germany's annexation of Austria, the partition of Czechoslovakia, the strengthening of the Rome-Berlin Axis, and the establishment of German economic and military predominance in Central and Eastern Europe. Franco's insurgent armies progressed in Spain with Italo-German support, while the Japanese invaders expanded their conquests in China.² In his annual message, Roosevelt for the first time since taking office proposed no new domestic reforms, but stressed the dangers posed to democracy and international peace by these forces of aggression.

Robert A. Taft took his stand with those who favored non-intervention in the European war. This led to his being labeled an "isolationist," a charge that was continued throughout his career. In the years from 1939 to 1941, he opposed war on the grounds that it would impair American freedom.

Before World War II he opposed conscription, lend-lease, the

². Ibid., 162.
destroyers-to-Britain deal, the arming of United States merchant ships. 1

Robert E. Sherwood, adviser to President Roosevelt, labeled Taft's statements as a "myopic form of Congressional isolationism." 2 Sherwood believed that Taft and others used "their rostrum on Capitol Hill to publicize what they considered Roosevelt's attempts to dupe the American people into a war which they believed was none of our business." He quotes Taft as saying:

I do not know what the Germans may do, and no one knows what they may do until they are freed from the present war and have an opportunity to show. When they do, we can adopt the same methods. We can take the same steps that may be necessary to meet the particular kind of German "blitzkrieg," if there is such a blitzkrieg, at the time we find out what it is.

Many of Taft's statements during these times were used against him to show his "wrong-headedness, his bad judgments," in later political campaigns. In his Inside U.S.A., John Gunther wrote,

I confine myself strictly to the record.

On April 11, 1940, he said, "I am opposed to the Selective Service Bill because in my opinion no necessity exists requiring such tragic action.

On February 16, 1941, he said, "It is simply fantastic to suppose there is any danger of an attack on the United States by Japan."

On February 22, 1941, he said, "An invasion of the United States by the German army is as fantastic as would be the invasion of Germany...by an American army and as unlikely to be undertaken.

On August 1, 1941, he said, "My opinion is that the situation today...looks infinitely safer.... I cannot understand the statement


that the situation is more perilous today than it was a year ago.

On September 22, 1941, he said, "There is much less danger to this country...today than there was two years ago; certainly much less than there was one year ago. 1

This lifting of statements out of context makes the Senator appear weak in his perception of international events. But, nevertheless, his foreign policy speeches haunted him for the rest of his life. Taft stoutly denied that he ever said, "It is simply fantastic to suppose there is any danger of an attack on the United States by Japan." He maintains that this statement was created by a CIO writer for use in Taft's Senatorial campaign in 1944. He told the Senate in 1951, after this statement had re-appeared in Gunther's book and other places:

I did not say it because I did not believe it. I always took the position as to the Far East that I thought Secretary Stimson's policy might very easily provoke an attack by Japan, and that I hope he would get away with the kind of bluff we were making toward Japan. But I thought that we could not be certain, and I did not know whether or not it was likely to produce an attack.

In any event, this particular statement has been repeated so often that I should like to put on record in the Senate the statement of fact that it is absolutely untrue. 2

Because his views were similar to those of the America First group, Taft often was identified with it although he was never a member. The America Firsters maintained that the effect of the war was to undermine the democratic process itself and that the preservation of traditional liberties would be threatened by involvement in the struggle.


2. Congressional Record (January 15, 1951), 227.
They talked about the possibility of a negotiated peace in 1940, and they argued that there was little physical danger to the United States from the activities of Hitler. 1

Taft's opposition to the extension of selective service in 1941 and his vote against the Lend-Lease Bill of 1941 were further "proof" of his isolationism. He said that he opposed lend-lease because it gave "excessive and unnecessary powers" to the President. Taft maintained that the bill gave the President power to give away our army or navy (referring to the fifty destroyers given to Britain) and the power to make war without a formal declaration by Congress. His opposition was because "no people can give any man such powers and retain a democratic form of government. The delegation of powers to one individual because of some supposed emergency has always been the means by which democracies have committed suicide throughout history." 2 He offered a substitute bill authorizing loans to Britain and Canada through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation which he maintained would give aid effectively without the danger of becoming involved in war. 3

Fortune magazine analyzed his isolationism in these days. It "resulted to a large extent from his lack of imagination and even more, his sheer lack of interest in Europe and Asia......His prime interest


2. Robert A. Taft, speech before the New York State Bar Association, January 25, 1941.

in foreign relations is to keep other countries from being too much of a burden on the United States." ¹

Nevertheless, Taft's views represented the thinking of many Americans. In the midst of the controversy over neutrality, the Presidential election year of 1940 arrived. Taft's name had been mentioned as a possible candidate ever since his election of 1938. His debates with T. V. Smith over the New Deal in early 1939 had given him further prominence. His speeches on the international situation kept his name before the public. Commenting on his candidacy, a liberal magazine writer said, "He appeals to conservatives as an eminently sound man, with no New Deal nonsense about him, but if he has fathered one proposal of a progressive and constructive character, I have yet to hear of it." ²

President Campaign of 1940.

Taft announced his candidacy for President on August 3, 1939, in a letter to the Chairman of the Hamilton County, Ohio, Republican Executive Committee. He had a full program ready for publication at the time the announcement was made. This program called for a balanced budget within two years, an end to production restrictions in agriculture, a better coordinated social security plan, the repeal of the arms embargo,


the sale of munitions on a cash and carry basis, and a reconstruction of
the National Labor Relations Board. 1

In a key speech in the 1940 campaign, Taft stated: "The great
question before the American people is whether we continue the New Deal
administration or return to the basic principles which have guided every
Republican and Democratic administration prior to 1933." 2 He charged
that the New Deal had failed to achieve a higher standard of living or
a balanced budget or sound currency. It had not brought about higher
farm prices or improvement in the condition of the underprivileged. "In
spite of the dispensation of billions of dollars of Government money, there
are more underprivileged than there were before," he charged. He then
offered a four-point program as a Republican candidate:

1. To take every possible measure to encourage the development
of private enterprise through a repeal or revision of the regulatory
measures which have prevented its growth.

2. To cut government expenses so that there will be no deficit
...and the slide toward bankruptcy will be checked.

3. To continue those humanitarian activities like relief, old-
age pensions, unemployment insurance, and housing and medical aid to
the poor, but revise the administration so that it is intelligent,
economical and fair not only to those who receive aid but to those
who are trying to get on without it.

4. To aid business and agriculture through measures designed
to build up private enterprise without regulation, and curtail all
extension of government activities in competition with private
enterprise.

In foreign policy, "We favor an adequate preparation for defense

1. "Taft is Candidate, Sets Out Program, "New York Times
(August 4, 1939), I, 4.

2. Speech in Boston, December 12, 1939.

(68)
and the keeping out of war." He concluded with an expression of faith in free enterprise:

Private enterprise has made America what it is today....We are the same people. We face substantially the same conditions we have faced for the last fifty years. This is not a new era any more than 1929 was a new era. The American people can be as thrifty and industrious and prosperous as they ever were.

Many were skeptical of Taft's chances for the nomination. One wrote, "But to think that Mr. Taft could put on a campaign to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of the American people, especially if FDR should decide to run again, is to expect a miracle." ¹ At the end of 1939, Time reported his campaign efforts to win votes:

Tortoisy Mr. Taft was nowhere. He had piled one inept act on another, bumbled when the script called for a gag, stumbled over his own and others' feet.

In Iowa he denounced corn loans the day the Agriculture Department unloosed $70,000,000 in corn loans. In Kansas City, he crossed a year old AFL picket line for no good reason; in Texas he shot his first deer, his first turkey, was photographed in business suit and starched collar gingerly holding the dead bird --- a picture that brought a wave of nostalgic memories to Calvin Coolidge connoisseurs. ²

Six months later, Time reported, "Ohio's solid, glamorless Robert A. Taft, the number one Republican Bumbler, beetled off around the U.S. putting his foot in his mouth." ³ In St. Louis, Republican leaders from eight states told him of the growing sentiment for more substantial aid to the Allies. "GOP leaders, from Alf Landon down, had warned him to go

². "Hare and Tortoise," Time, XXXIV (December 18, 1939), 13.
³. "Campaign," Time XXXV (June 3, 1940), 16.
slow on isolationism....That night Senator Taft spoke, made his strongest appeal yet for strict United States' neutrality.  

In 1910 before the Convention in June, Taft traveled over 30,000 miles and made forty major speeches in twenty-eight states. Another account estimated that he made more than 300 speeches all told. Martha Taft went with him as they campaigned in New England, Florida, Texas, and the Northwest. According to one account, "She helped to overcome a widespread notion that Taft is a set of facts and figures, rather than a vital and sharp-witted man who likes fun as much as the next fellow."  

Franklin D. Roosevelt "challenged in bristling manner" Taft's ability to balance the budget. He offered Mr. Taft "a handsome prize" if he would show the President how it could be done. Taft used this challenge many times in speeches to needle the Administration. In one speech, he said, "Roosevelt admitted that he does not know how to do it." Taft's formula for balancing the budget was: "The first prescription for balancing the budget is that the President of the United States shall wish to balance it....I have seen no evidence of a desire on the part of anyone in the present administration to abandon the deficit borrowing policy." Taft then offered his proposals, centering chiefly around removing unnecessary and wasteful expenses.

1. Ibid.
Harold Ickes, in his Secret Diary reports a conversation he had with Roosevelt three weeks before the Republican convention in 1940. Roosevelt guessed that Taft would be the Republican nominee and that Dewey might be nominated for Vice President. Roosevelt thought that Willkie doesn't "have much of a chance even though he is coming up very rapidly in the Gallup Poll." ¹

The Republicans met in Philadelphia on June 24, 1940. "The outstanding candidate for the nomination at the outset was Thomas E. Dewey, the young district attorney of New York City who had gained national fame as a racket buster." ² Another leading contestant was Senator Taft of Ohio. "Senator Taft had the experience in both state and national affairs which Dewey lacked, and he had the political advantage of coming from the Middle West. His conservatism appealed strongly to many members of his party." ³ Arthur Vandenberg, Senator from Michigan, was a potential dark horse candidate. One other possibility "stood in a class by himself, a man who had never sought nor held public office, a newcomer in the party, one who had made no preliminary campaign to round up delegates, Wendell Willkie. ⁴ He had gained fame as President of the Commonwealth and Southern

⁴ Ibid.
Electric Company when he obtained for his company the demanded price from
the government for subsidiaries taken over by TVA. "He was regarded as a
liberal conservative who would offer the best opposition to the New Deal.
Although the old-line politicians were cool to Willkie, he received
enthusiastic support from a younger and more internationally minded
group." 1 The convention galleries were packed with his supporters,
primed to shout, "We Want Willkie."

Grove Patterson recalls that as he rose to present the name of
Taft in nomination, "the galleries began to roar like a mixture of
Niagara Falls and a battery of machine guns: We Want Willkie! We
Want Willkie!" 2

Brogan believes that the Taft forces thought their job was to
stop Dewey and they stuck to that plan too long. "On the sixth ballot,
to the delirious delight of the spectators and to the wonder and
apprehension of many of the delegates, the darkest of dark horses was
nominated." 3 Willkie's late candidacy helped him considerably. Taft
and Dewey, who had announced early, committed themselves to a foreign
policy that was "defensible and tactically shrewd in 1939, but became
less defensible and less popular with every week that passed after the
outbreak of the European War." 4 Even as the delegates met in Philadel­
phia, the story of Dunkirk and of the catastrophic French defeat was

3. Dennis W. Brogan, The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New
4. Ibid., 293.
competing for headlines. "The Republican choice of Willkie proved that the Republican Party had no mind to challenge the policy of Franklin Roosevelt in the foreign field." 1 Another analyst believed that Willkie had assets which Taft and Dewey lacked:

A big tousle-headed man in the prime of life, Willkie had a dynamic personality, supreme self-confidence, a disarming frankness, and an ability to win friends....That he was no politician was entirely in his favor. Business and professional men, wearied of the New Deal and dubious over the ability of any politician candidate to defeat Roosevelt, trooped into the Willkie camp.

Willkie could appeal to conservative Democrats and independents. 2

Taft's rise in the Republican Party was almost meteoric. Roseboom pointed out that Taft seemed "to be reaching for the grand prize before he won his spurs in the Upper House. ...by avoiding primaries and working with practical politicians, he bagged a goodly number of delegates and had strong second-choice support." 3 In the last analysis, Taft lost out because his appeal was to those Republicans of a conservative bent who favored non-intervention or isolationism with regard to the situation in Europe. It appeared that such a candidate would not be able to defeat Roosevelt in 1940.

Rise Of Influence In The Senate.

Returning to the Senate, Taft continued to gain importance as a Republican leader. Late in 1942, Newsweek magazine reported that Senator


3. Ibid., 461.
Robert A. Taft "is coming to the front rapidly on Capitol Hill. His views on taxes, the draft, and foreign affairs are carrying increasing weight." ¹

In 1943, Taft fought against the Hill-Thomas educational bill and beat it. Ramsey Marsden, the National Education Association's legislative representative, said, "In 1943, the NEA considered Taft the leading monster of the age." ¹ His efforts against the bill enhanced his prestige in the minority party. Further consideration will be given to this issue in Chapter VI.

In summary of his first Senate term, it must be said that Taft fulfilled the role of an able critic of the Democratic administration. He won his Senate seat in a battle with a strong New Dealer largely on the basis of his constant criticism of "meddling, inefficient" New Deal. He rose to a position of unofficial leadership in the Republican Party as a result of his opposition to Roosevelt's international policies. It was ironic that Taft was elected on the basis of his opposition to the New Deal domestic programs but foreign policy became the paramount concern after he took office. His statements on foreign policy caused him considerable harm in the long-run.

Taft was passed over by the Republican Party when Wendell Willkie was chosen as its nominee for President in 1940. Willkie was more appealing as a candidate and his international beliefs were more harmonious with the times. Taft sponsored no major legislation in the Senate in his first

term; he made it his business to carefully analyze bills offered by others. Through his unrelenting industry and incessant opposition he began to increase his stature in the Senate as his first term ended.

II. SECOND SENATE TERM, 1945-50

For the great majority of Democrats, Roosevelt was the only choice in 1944 for the first wartime Presidential election since 1864. There were three leading Republican candidates: Thomas E. Dewey, Governor of New York; John W. Bricker, Governor of Ohio; and Harold E. Stassen, former Governor of Minnesota, in the Navy at that time. Willkie had withdrawn from the race after his poor showing in the Wisconsin primary. Robert A. Taft was not a candidate.

In a letter to Bert Long, Republican Chairman of Hamilton County, Taft had written in 1942, "John Bricker supported my candidacy in 1940 --- I intend to support his in 1944." 1 It was written later that Taft didn't run for President in 1944 because he realized "he had no chance" to win it. 2 Taft replied, "This is untrue. I felt an obligation to permit John Bricker to run, and did not desire to give up my seat in the Senate. I was up for re-election." 3

Senate Campaign of 1944.

Taft's opponent for the Senate seat was William Pickerel, "a

harmless, political non-entity." 1 "Taft did not greatly stir himself locally in Ohio and possibly because of this and his placarded hostility to Roosevelt and to Roosevelt's international policies he was saved only by tradition." 2 He got back into office by 17,999 votes out of 2,983,219. 3

Taft devoted more attention in the campaign to attacking Roosevelt than his opponent; it was as though Roosevelt and not Pickerel was the opponent. "In the campaign, so far as Mr. Roosevelt was involved, Taft had fought a fight of almost savage candor. Where other Senators, particularly in the Democratic South, anathematized Roosevelt only in their hearts, he anathematized Roosevelt on the stump." 4

The Administration countered by sending Vice President Henry Wallace into Ohio twice to denounce Taft. The Vice-Presidential nominee, Harry S. Truman, demanded that Dewey repudiate eight isolationist Republican Senators. "If the Republicans win the Senate," he said, "Robert Taft would become majority leader or the whip, and in either case would be one of the principal leaders in determining Republican policies." 5

An added opponent in the campaign was the CIO's Political Action Committee which had been organized to "get out the votes" of labor and

housewives. Taft had become a target of the CIO when he supported the Smith-Connolly Act in 1933 which gave the President power to seize striking industries in wartime. The Congress had passed this measure over Roosevelt's veto. Taft further incurred the enmity of organized labor when he supported the Case bill, an anti-racketeering bill. 1 These two forces —- the Democratic Administration and the CIO-PAC — almost succeeded in retiring Taft from the Senate.

As noted, Taft was active on the national scene. He was chairman of the Platform Committee at the Republican National Convention which met in Chicago. He presented the platform to the delegates. It was accepted unanimously; the convention went on to name Dewey and Bricker as their standard-bearers. 2

Robert Sherwood relates that several of Roosevelt's advisers had urged the President to go to Ohio during the last week of the campaign to speak against Taft. Roosevelt refused to do so. "But he was later inclined to regret this decision, for he figured that had he gone to Cleveland he might well have carried Ohio and thereby brought about the defeat of Senator Robert Taft." 3

Still, Taft was back in the Senate where "margins of victory are short and the recognition of the fact of victory is long." White points out that for the first time Taft began to "bestride that old chamber.

In the first place, he represented then, as he did to the end of his life, and accurately led or reflected, far more private thought than might be supposed." ¹

White's analysis of the reasons why Taft rose to power in the Senate was: the Republicans were on days of leanness; free enterprise was dying; Roosevelt had begun a dangerous course in international affairs; and in the face of all this, the Republican Party itself was beginning to show alarming deviations. Taft was a traditional Republican, more and more members of that Party turned to him as their spokesman. ² Republican Leader in the Senate.

Within eight months after starting his second term, Taft saw two major events; the death of Roosevelt and the end of World War II. Fast-moving events altered the course of history. The United States entered into a world organization for the first time when the Senate ratified the United Nations Charter. Taft supported this treaty but he offered a series of amendments to its implementation bill in the Senate. The first would require the United States' representatives to cast their votes in disputes or on application of sanctions in accordance with "international justice as well as international peace." ³ A second would require that any penalties imposed by the President for violation of economic sanctions shall be effective for only three months; the President then shall ask Congress for further appropriate legislation. The third amendment would urge the Security Council to take immediate action to limit armaments and

prohibit weapons such as the atomic bomb and poison gas; the veto power should be eliminated in these matters. All three amendments were defeated on the floor of the Senate. Taft therefore voted against the bill clarifying the powers of the President granted by the Senate when it approved the United Nations Charter. 1

Taft opposed the Bretton Woods agreement establishing an International Monetary Fund and an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Senate Committee on Banking and Currency favorably reported the bill to the floor; Taft offered a minority report. In his Senate speech against the agreement, he charged that it would involve expenditures of millions of United States dollars with negligible benefit to the United States; the agreement would give the United States less than one-third of the voting power despite our vast contributions; the agreement would cause the United States to embark on a vast lending program which would be wasteful and would inflate the export trade leading to a depression and would likely create ill-will toward the United States; and the agreement would result in an attempt to set up a worldwide monetary authority and a system of managed currency. Recognizing that he could not round up enough votes to defeat the measure, Taft attempted to have its consideration postponed. He failed in this tactic and the Bretton Woods agreement was passed. 2

His speeches on other post war problems brought further support and condemnation. In a public opinion poll, this question was asked, "Are there any members of Congress on this list who usually take a

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1. Ibid., 645-9.  2. Ibid., 465-7.
The popular and able Senator from Michigan, Arthur H. Vandenberg, was best liked for his "stands," with Robert A. Taft second. As leaders of the Republican Party, these two divided responsibility for foreign affairs and domestic affairs. Vandenberg, the converted isolationist, became the Republican spokesman on foreign affairs while Taft led the domestic affairs legislation.

In the same poll as mentioned above, an attempt was made to ascertain what people didn't like about important Senators. The question on Taft was, "In what ways has Taft taken stands you haven't liked so well?" The results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stands or slants not liked:</th>
<th>83%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolationist</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactionary, conservative</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Roosevelt, a Republican</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't like him, his views</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too partisan, plays politics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand on labor, capital</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other stands</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<th>Personal characteristics or failing</th>
<th>20%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obstructionist, dissenter</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old-fashioned, prejudiced</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other personal reasons</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Express no opinion                  | 9%  |


2. Ibid., 191-2.
Thus, in the public's mind, Taft was still identified as an isolationist and a conservative. Yet in 1946, A Democratic Congress polled itself and voted Taft its ablest member. 1

In 1945, Taft called the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, providing medical care at public expense, "the most socialistic measure that this Congress has ever had before it." 2 Yet, in May, 1946, Taft, along with Senators Smith and Ball, introduced a Republican version of a medical care bill. In the same year, he became co-sponsor of the Thomas-Hill Bill for federal aid to education. He had largely been responsible for defeating this same bill in 1943. Taft joined with the sponsors of another bill, a public housing bill, which he had formerly opposed. These welfare measures constituted what some called "a Republican New Deal." Since the major emphasis of this study will be Taft's speaking on the social-welfare issues, further consideration will be given to them in succeeding chapters. Other major legislation with which Taft was identified was a bill establishing a Fair Employment Practices Commission with no power to coerce compliance. Due to the filibustering tactics of the Southern Senators, the FEPC bill never got to a vote. 3

Probably the most controversial speech of his career was delivered on October 5, 1946, at Kenyon College in Ohio. Speaking on "Equal Justice Under Law," he developed the theme that international actions must be

2. Congressional Quarterly Almanac, II (1946), 663.
3. Ibid., 8h.
governed by law. He criticized the United Nations Charter because it largely ignored justice in favor of rule by the Big Powers. Then, the most explosive sentence:

I believe that most Americans view with discomfort the war trials which have just been concluded in Germany and are proceeding in Japan. They violate that fundamental principle of American law that a man cannot be tried under an ex post facto statute.

He stated further, "about this whole judgment there is a spirit of vengeance, and vengeance is seldom justice. The hanging of the eleven men convicted will be a blot on the American record which we shall long regret."

The speech caused great furor and Taft became the object of bitter scorn from all sides. Yet he spoke his convictions: the punishment of men responsible for great suffering in the world should be conducted under the traditional American idea of justice—not vengeance. Taft's life-long habit was to say what he thought, regardless of the opinion of others.

In the years 1945-46, the Truman administration ran into difficulties in post-war conversion. "The difficulties with which Harry S. Truman was beset and hedged about when and just after he succeeded to the Presidency are not likely ever to be overestimated and to overstate them would be next to impossible." 1

In a "shrewdly conducted campaign" during 1946, the Republicans capitalized on the citizens' dissatisfaction with shortages, controls,

strikes and the alleged softness of the Administration toward Communists. "Had Enough? Vote Republican!" provided a winning slogan. The G.O.P. won both houses of Congress for the first time in sixteen years. ¹

Pointing up the conservative nature of the Eightieth Congress, Goldman wrote, "A considerable percentage of the new majority were the kind of Republicans who saw dark premonitions of socialism in a bill for free school lunches." ² Goldman continued, "Now the Senatorial powerhouse was unquestionably Robert A. Taft, the best mind in the Senate, as liberals wryly commented, until he made it up." Liberals also assigned Taft the slogan, "Come weal, come woe, my status is quo." ³

Thus, the Republican triumph in 1946 solidified Taft's position of power in the Senate. As Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee and "thus in this case the Party's intellectual and practical head, he was for the first time since he had reached the Senate in a position of responsibility consistent with his already large and growing power." ⁴ Senator Wallace White of Maine was the nominal Republican floor leader but as someone said, "He should install a rear-view mirror at his desk so he can easily see Taft's signals."

White wrote, "This was a great hour for Taft. He now had in his hands, so he felt, the power, since his party now had control, to transform into action the millions of words of complaint and caveat with which the orthodox Republicans ... had so long showered the public and official

At this time, it was written of Taft:

He possesses more sheer ability than any other man in Congress today. His industry is so unrelenting, his mind so indefatigable that he did in the last session what no Senator in memory has ever attempted. He familiarized himself in detail with every significant domestic bill that came before the Senate; if the Republicans wanted amendments, he drafted them; and where no bill met his requirements, he went to work and wrote one himself...

He is not immensely popular, but his powers are greatly respected, and indolent senators are glad to let him do the work for them. This is the foundation of Taft's leadership.

He puts it simply: "I don't try to supply great moral illumination, or stir people up. There's probably only one man in a generation who can do that. What I do is work out each problem as well as I can, and then if my solution suits other people, they go along." 2

Another source, analyzing his rise to power, stated, "Mr. Taft's power springs in part from the fact that he long ago made himself a reputation as a brusquely outspoken foe of New Deal reforms and spending and of Government restrictions on business. In a few years this gave him a position of leadership in Senate party councils." 3

Not only was he the leader of the Republican majority; he had the support of many Southern Democrats, often operating for him along "his flank as a sort of guerilla band to harass the regular, or Truman, Democrats." In all, Taft formed a strong front in this, Mr. Truman's despised, "worst" Eightieth Congress. 4


Taft was succeeding well in those days of 1947. With the Taft-Hartley Act and other legislation, he was conscious that he was putting the name Taft before the public with more force than it ever had been put there before except, perhaps, by his father as President. "He had the enormous personal satisfaction of carrying the Taft-Hartley Bill through both houses of Congress, with a bi-partisan majority. And, sweetest of all to him, he achieved this same bi-partisan majority in the overriding of Mr. Truman's veto." 1

Taft, along with Senators Ball and Alexander Smith, was designated by the Republican Conference to draw up suitable labor legislation. Even President Truman in his State of the Union message on January 7, 1947, called for labor legislation. 2

The Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, of which Taft was chairman, opened public hearing on labor legislation on January 23, and sat for twenty-seven days, ending on March 13. At the close of the hearings, three members, Senators Morse, Thomas, and Pepper, who differed with Chairman Taft on the legislation itself complimented him on the conduct of the hearings. 3 The Senate committee then analyzed thirty-two bills on labor which had been introduced. On the basis of their discussions, Senator Taft drew up a "working print," sixty-two pages long, embracing the entire field of labor legislation. 4 After considerable

1. Ibid., 77.
3. Ibid., 422. 4. Ibid., 426.
revision in Committee, the bill was reported to the Senate and debated from April 23 to May 13. Many amendments were offered, and the Administration itself got a substitute bill on the floor. The labor committee's was passed, giving Taft substantially what he wanted. After a conference committee met to reconcile the vastly different bills passed in the Senate and the House, both houses concurred and the measure was sent to the President. President Truman vetoed it, calling it, "a bad bill, and a shocking piece of legislation," in a veto message broadcast to the nation. Taft followed him immediately on the radio and said, "The President's veto message shows that he knows practically nothing about the bill itself." ¹ After attempts at a filibuster, the Senate overrode the veto by a 68 to 25 vote.

White called the Taft-Hartley achievement a tremendous one. Taft, though this was not so well known, had fought off reactionary extremists on this issue almost as fiercely as he had fought off liberal Democrats. Ordinarily a partisan Republican, he had gained the support of a majority of the Democrats against a Democratic President. "It was the first real and major uprooting of an established New Deal policy — and in 1953, six years later, it remained the first and last." ²

Taft again introduced his social welfare measures in the Senate. The housing bill passed the Senate but the opposition of House leaders prevented any vote there. The same happened with his federal aid to

education bill. The medical care bill was never reported out of committee. ¹

The accomplishments and the failures of the Eightieth Congress received a great deal of attention. Truman effectively labeled it a "Do Nothing Congress." To many, the Eightieth Congress was a return to a conservatism not known in many years. It was called "so many months of anguish for liberals." ² Goldman went on to characterize its work: it undercut the Wagner Act with the Taft-Hartley bill, killed effective rent control, slashed funds for soil conservation and crop storage, and trimmed all federal payrolls to the point of forcing the discharge of tax collectors who took in $20 for each dollar they cost. It tried to enact tax legislation and a tariff that smacked of post-Civil War bonanza days. It ignored the 800,000 displaced persons begging for admittance into America, the estimated six million Americans desperate for housing, the demands for extended social security, and an ominous increase of monopoly in the major industries. ³

In another book, Goldman considered the efforts of the 1947-48 Congress "a wrathful counterrevolution." He wrote:

When the actual record of the Congress began to emerge in 1947, it proved an assault on the legislation and tendencies of the Half-Century of Revolution. The practical political basis of the session was a deal between Southern Democrats and right-wing Republicans, which meant the end of any hopes for civil-rights legislation. The two most important laws passed were the Taft-Hartley Act, which weakened the power of unions, and a new income tax formula that reduced the disproportion of taxes on high incomes. The structure of government aid to farmers was attacked by cuts in funds for

¹. Congressional Quarterly Almanac, II (1946), 209.
soil conservation and for crop storage. The Congress refused demands for federal help in the form of more public housing, strong price controls, extended social security, or aid to education. Both what was done and what was not done in the field of immigration legislation reflected distaste for immigrants of southern or eastern European origin. Over the whole sessions hung the air of wrathful counter-revolution. 1

Six Presidential vetoes were overridden by the Eightieth Congress. The Republicans could boast of tax reduction, a cut in the budget, and the Taft-Hartley Act. Truman could blame Congress for the failure of his civil rights and anti-inflation proposals, and could point to Congressional inaction on housing, minimum wage extension, and other social welfare measures. 2

It was natural that the record of the Eightieth Congress be equated with Taft. Discussing Taft's role, Goldman wrote:

...basically Taftism amounted to a call for counter-revolution against the Half-Century of Revolution. The Senator reacted to almost any foreign affair situation by trying to limit American commitments; the issue was at home and it was urgent. For too long, as Taft saw things, the emphasis had been on economic and social opportunities. The stresses should be returned to the "traditional American heart of things, liberty" —— the greatest practicable freedom of the individual in both his economic and governmental relationships. 3

White believes that Taft saw his function as making a Republican record and a record on which he himself would stand again for the Republican nomination for President. "As it turned out, the Republican record he made...probably defeated the Republicans in 1948 and elected President Truman to his first full term in the White House. And it

flung over Taft the shadow that never left him: *He can't win." ¹

This conclusion needs to be explored. On its face value it may not be entirely fair to Taft, for it places the onus of the Republican defeat in 1918 on him. It is true, as Roseboom pointed out, that Taft's leadership in the Eightieth Congress had enhanced his reputation. Roseboom listed as Taft's liabilities his generally conservative and isolationist record, his forthright but sometimes inept public utterances, the pronounced opposition of organized labor, and his lack of voter appeal. ²

It is also true that Taft came to personalize Congress for Mr. Truman. The latter "often found that Mr. Taft was the key man who was blocking the enactment of his proposals." ³ Taft's opposition consisted of more than mere negation. "When he says no to a Presidential plan, he usually has a plan of his own to propose as a substitute." ⁴ As a result, the President chose Taft as a symbol of the Republican opposition, and fired directly at him.

After Taft's death in 1953, Truman said, "From my point of view, he was a violent partisan, and I disagreed with him strongly on what the role of government was in relation to the people. Nevertheless, he was an important member of the Senate who represented and spoke for his side vigorously and ably." ⁵

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⁴. Ibid.
Presidential Campaign of 1918.

Thirteen months before the Republican convention, Taft was not particularly popular as a candidate, although he had gained somewhat in the polls since 1916. A poll by the United States News and World Report magazine in May 1917 revealed the following popularity ratings for the candidates:

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<tr>
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<th>1917</th>
<th>1916</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dewey</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stassen</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandenberg</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taft</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eisenhower</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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Using this poll as a gauge of popular opinion, Dewey was far in the lead in 1917. Taft was a poor fourth. Possibly because of the results of such polls, Taft announced that he would tour the West to determine the extent of his support. He chose to tour seven states in which he was not notably strong in 1910, evidently figuring that his assessment of the situation there would be a good indication of his strength. "The real Taft campaign will start after he completes the Western trip, if he is convinced by his journey that he has a good chance to capture the Presidential nomination." 2

The trip turned out to be a noteworthy one on several counts. Discussing the high prices and shortages of food with fifty reporters in Santa Cruz, California, Taft said, "Voluntary reduction of con-

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summation is the first step. We should eat less ... eat less meat and eat less extravagantly." 1 These statements received full play in the press; Taft was made to appear as an austere person who cared little about people. *Time* reported, "The Senator was honestly startled by all the furor, but after the first shock, he seemed almost resigned .... He had hoped to make a quiet, semi-vacation trip, sounding out the reaction to his hopes for the Presidency. But speaking invitations had begun pouring in..." 2

A second occurrence which gave much publicity to the trip was the picketing of Taft's appearances by union members. On September 16, outside the Elks Temple in Los Angeles, 300 pickets jammed the sidewalk, singing "Solidarity Forever," and chanting, "L.A. Doesn't Want Taft," Typical placards read: "Taft's Creed - Mein Kampf"; "Get Out R.A.T." Six pickets wearing grotesque caricatures of Taft were arrested for masquerading. 3 Fifteen hundred pickets met him in San Francisco where he went to address the Commonwealth Club. *Newsweek* reported that although most of the audience was conservative, Taft's thirty-seven minute speech was never once interrupted by applause. 4 "Plainly the Ohioan has yet to make the emotional effect on his friends that he had on his enemies," the report concluded.

2. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 23.
Time stated that many Republicans were proud as Taft pushed through the West. His speeches were "flavorous with facts. He talked reasonably and on a high plane, never sinking to a discussion of personalities." 1 It continued, "In a way he was selling his party more than himself, and he undertook to define the differences between the Republicans and Democrats in great detail." 2 Taft asserted that the Republicans would handle foreign affairs with realism, reduce government controls, lower taxes, encourage business, keep labor happy but in check, and administer the nation's affairs with a sense of sureness and a minimum of confusion. He defined the Democratic Party as the party which never knew precisely where it was going because of its alliance with labor and leftist groups. It was thus waver ing in foreign policy, bumbling at home, and suppressing initiative. 3

He said in one speech that Congress would pass no major social welfare legislation until 1949 because it could not trust the Truman administration to put it into effect. 4

As the tour continued, the picketing continued. Three hundred pickets met Taft at Seattle. But by this time, it was obvious that the pickets were doing him more good than harm. A well disciplined band of Communist hecklers tried to break up a coast-to-coast broadcast, finally stomped out of the hall one by one. Labor leaders urged their members to stop the outbursts because they had become tainted with Communists. 5

2. Ibid. 3. Ibid. 4. Ibid.
By the time Taft returned home to Cincinnati, he had traveled 12,000 miles within twenty-seven days and made two dozen speeches throughout California, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Wyoming. 1

One source felt that the Senator returned from his Far West tour with "his political stature increased." He achieved that result by "a most unusual method, which consisted in speaking his mind on any and all subjects — food, labor-capital relations, foreign policy — with a don't-give-a-hoot bluntness which took some people's breath away." 2

The Republicans had long demanded that the trend toward socialism be reversed. "Others, Governor Dewey among them, had talked, Taft had acted. He had gone forward to the very hot firing line; he had carried the assault in Congress." He had become a leader in the national sense; he decided to make the try for the Presidential nomination again. 3

Although the public opinion polls revealed that Taft wasn't a particularly popular candidate, a poll of the members of Congress revealed that they thought Taft was best qualified of the Republicans to be President. 4 In a Fortune magazine poll in April, 1918, which attempted to find out why people reacted negatively to the various Presidential candidates, the three most common criticisms of Taft were: he is honest and forthright but he almost always takes the wrong

position on things; his foreign policy is poor; and he is not smart
enough for the job. 1

He knew that he had a fight on his hands. Dewey was far out in
front; Taft sought to get enough delegates to prevent a first-ballot
nomination for Dewey. Taft campaigned vigorously and aggressively up
to the time of the Republican convention in Philadelphia. At the con-
vention, Roseboom stated that the Taft demonstration was the longest;
the Stassen parade, the most colorful. But the Dewey band-wagon drive
did not depend on ballyhoo. Behind the scenes the efficient Dewey
managers rounded up the votes. 2

On the first ballot Dewey received $\frac{1}{3}$ of the necessary $\frac{5}{4}$
votes; Taft had 224, Stassen, 157, Vandenberg 62, and Warren 59. On
the second ballot, Taft gained a few delegates but Dewey zoomed up to
515. A coalition was talked about to "stop Dewey." But failure to
agree on any one candidate to do the stopping left the coalition
vulnerable. There were too many hopefuls; each of the dark horses
thought he had a chance to win, and without agreement their strength
was not tightly held. 3

Roseboom credits Dewey's nomination to "the skillful work of his
general staff and the inept tactics of his rivals." The Dewey managers
carefully timed their announcements of new adherents. They created
rumors of other prospective defections. All this "created a band-wagon

XXV (July 2, 1948), 12.
psychology that drew in the hesitant and demoralized the opposition. Yet a coalition might have stopped him, had not jealousies and mismanagement delayed cooperation until too late."  

Roseboom believes that Taft was "the victim of inept management. His supporters arrived with a baby elephant and a theme song ("I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover That I Overlooked Before") and seemed to feel that they could ballyhoo his nomination. In Roseboom's view, Taft deserved different treatment, "but he could hardly have won in any event, with a record that was so vulnerable on both domestic and international issues."  

Thus, after years of attack on the Democratic Administrations, after leading the opposition in Congress, and after an aggressive campaign, Taft failed to receive the Republican nomination. In the ensuing campaign between Dewey and Truman, he was disappointed in the campaign that Dewey conducted. The latter, confident of victory, failed to be specific on major issues. Truman scored the greatest electoral upset in American history, and the Democrats regained control of both houses of Congress in the 1948 elections. Truman's constant references to that "no good, do-nothing Eightieth Congress" were felt by many, including White and Goldman quoted above, to be responsible for the Republican defeat. Many analyses showed that many other factors were operating. The U.S. News and World Report magazine polled both Congressional winners and losers on why the Democrats won. From this the


editors concluded that Mr. Truman's aggressive campaign, coupled with Dewey's "me-tooism", voters' fears of a bust, of wage cuts, of a collapse in farm prices, labor's opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act, and the bolt of farmers to the Democrats were responsible. 1 Roseboom offered as reasons: farm prosperity under the Democrats and farmer distrust of the Easterner Dewey; labor's weight in the cities; Truman's whistle-stop campaign, stressing the record of the Eightieth Congress; Dewey's failure to come to grips with the issues; Republican overconfidence and consequent failure to get out a full vote; and an unusually strong crop of Democratic candidates for the Senate and state governorships; and the failure of Wallace and Thurmond's splinter parties to take support away from Truman. 2

Back in the Senate.

Thus when Taft returned to Washington for the Eighty-first Congress in January, 1949, after the unexpected defeat of the Republicans, he was again a member of the minority and, in White's views, "he returned as another Taft. He was at times almost literally beside himself. His stated view that the Democrats were destroying the country was not a mere forensic but a fact of his life; he meant it when he said it." 3

As the Republicans were organizing in Congress, an abortive revolt brewed in the "liberal" wing of the Party. Senator Irving Ives called a meeting of a dozen Republicans; as a result of this meeting, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge was proposed as chairman of the Republican


Policy Committee in place of Taft. Taft announced that he was willing to be re-elected chairman. The total Republican membership in the Senate voted to retain Taft by a 28-14 vote. This challenge to Taft had chiefly been an Eastern challenge; he was never supported extensively there. White believes that this movement "stirred Taft in unfortunate ways." That is, Taft seized any opportunity to criticize the Administration. The McCarthy issue over Communists in the State Department was one such opportunity.

White cites that Taft was quoted by several reporters as having said at the height of McCarthy's campaign that McCarthy should "keep talking and if one case doesn't work he should proceed with another." In a newspaper column, Taft complained that Truman had the bad habit to "assume the innocence of all persons mentioned in the State Department." Again, he declared, "Whether Senator McCarthy has legal evidence, whether he over-stated or under-stated his case, is of lesser importance. The question is whether the Communist influence in the State Department still exists." White concludes, "This sort of thing was not the Taft that one had known, the Constitutionalist, the lawyer, the man of privilege and education."

Two authors of a book on McCarthy state that of all the major candidates in 1952, Senator Robert Taft was "the most equivocal. He stalked around the McCarthy issue, eyeing it from every angle, alternately drawing toward it, then pushing away from it. It was a strange

3. Ibid. 4. Ibid. 5. Ibid. 6. Ibid.
They conclude, "History will decide whether Taft was using McCarthy or McCarthy was using Taft."

Despite such unfortunate "stirrings," Taft was considered "the outstanding personality of the present Democratic Congress," by Benjamin Stolberg. He points out that Truman offered substantially the same program in 1949 and 1950, "from the Brannan Plan to the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act." But it was rejected twice by a coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats under the leadership of Senator Taft. "The fact is that Taft exercises a far greater influence, due to sheer ability, than anybody has had in the Senate since the days of Penrose. 2

The event which had the greatest effect during the Eighty-first Congress was the outbreak of the Korean War on June 26, 1950. Prior to the outbreak of the War, Taft had again introduced his social welfare measures: aid to education, housing, medical care. Again, none was passed into law.

But with the coming of war, attention was again centered on foreign policy. Taft had continued his criticism of the Administration's foreign policy. He led the fight against ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949. 3 Debating with John Foster Dulles, who was then Senator from New York, Taft made seven main charges against

1. Jack Andersen and Ronald W. May, "McCarthy, The Man, the Senator, the 'I'm'," (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), 351.


3. In the Senate, (July 11, 1949).
the Pact centering around the fact that it would commit the United States to defending any member which was attacked. Since Congress alone had the power to declare war, this provision was unacceptable to Taft. Although only six Senators voted against ratification, Taft's speech on the treaty helped "clothe it in meaning and dignity simply because he insisted on pointing out that it did commit us to plain and naked force — if that became necessary to save the free West." ¹ White concedes that his position in some senses was quite strong although he called Taft's vote against the treaty "perhaps the most famous of his isolationist actions." ²

When the Communists attacked in Korea, Truman committed American troops to defend South Korea. Taft spoke on the Korean War to the Senate on June 28, 1950. He stated that the President had never consulted the Republicans on Far Eastern policy matters; that while he approved the use of United States armed forces he felt that there was no legal authority for the President to take his action. Taft charged that the crisis was caused by "the bungling and inconsistent policies of the administration." ³ After a review of the Administration's policies, he asked for the resignation of Secretary of State Dean Acheson. He closed his speech by saying:

"I merely do not like to have this action go by with the approval of the Senate, if it is what it seems to me, namely, a complete usurpation by the President of authority to use the Armed Forces of the country. If the incident is permitted to go by without protest, at least from this body, we would have finally terminated for all time the right of Congress to declare war, which is granted to Congress alone by the Constitution of the United States."

Thus Taft again rose to speak out in favor of strict legal procedure, as he had often done. The situation produced by the Korean War led to a full-scale debate on American foreign policy. Taft's role in this debate came early in his third term in the Senate in 1951.

In summary of Taft's second term in the Senate, 1945-50, it was seen that he had been re-elected by a narrow margin in 1944, and that he rose to a position of considerable power in the Senate as chairman of the Republican Policy Committee. He finally got his chance to put through a Republican program when he became Senate Majority leader in 1947. He used his record as the basis for his candidacy for President in 1948.

In a hard-hitting campaign for delegates, he won only enough to prevent a first-ballot nomination for Thomas E. Dewey. In the end, the convention turned down "Mr. Republican" and selected Dewey. Taft's disappointment here was only outweighed by the results of the election which swept Truman into his first full term and put the Republicans in a minority in Congress again. Taft continued his opposition to the Administration's domestic program and offered a series of substitute social welfare measures. The end of his second term saw the United States again involved in war. Taft's differences with Truman over foreign policy again were accentuated. The election of 1950 brought to Taft the greatest fight of his life --- the fight for his place in the Senate.

III. THIRD SENATE TERM, 1951-53

The tone of Taft's 1950 campaign was set by James C. Petrillo, President of the Musicians' Union, when he said, "Mr. Taft, in 1950,
we're going into Ohio and believe me there will be nothing we won't do to knock your silly head out of the United States Senate, and keep it out."

Senator Campaign of 1950.

Realizing that he would face a hard struggle in his reelection battle, Taft went to work early. Starting on Labor Day in 1949, Taft toured the state in what he called a "nonpolitical report" to the people. His plans for 1950 called for a visit to every county starting in August. The crucial importance of this test for the Republicans and for Taft was great. "If the Republicans can't re-elect Senator Taft in his own state, then indeed the Grand Old Party will be plucking at the coverlet, if it can find a coverlet to pluck at. A resounding Taft victory, on the other hand, would be penicillin for the ailing elephant." 2 Another account pointed out that "at stake also in Ohio is the new type of Republican doctrine that Mr. Taft ... has evolved. He believes the party may never return to power unless it realizes and acknowledges that the people want better housing, health, and educational facilities, and more social security, but with such things stripped of socialistic trappings." 3 Taft's stands on welfare issues promised to play an important part in the campaign.

Taft’s opponent was Joseph T. Ferguson, Auditor of Ohio since 1937. Popularly referred to as "Jumping Joe," he was described as a "small, cocky, bouncy, baffling figure," and as a "bundle of hand-shaking horsepower who prances into the fray with the confident cry: 'I'll beat the pants off Taft.'" ¹

Political commentators outside Ohio, not having heard of Ferguson, tended "to dismiss him as an obscure hack politician who will be a pushover for the nationally known Taft." ² But Ferguson was not obscure in Ohio. In 1948, his plurality was 291,000 votes, the biggest ever registered by a Democratic candidate for state office in Ohio. ³ Ferguson was described as making "no pretensions to being a great man or to having overpowering knowledge on large national issues. He is for the little man and the Fair Deal, has many friends .... He sends out 100,000 Christmas-card pictures of his family every year. He has so many friends in the State that he says he is sure to be elected." ⁴

Representative of the bitter campaign was a statement put out by Ferguson early in the campaign saying he thought Senator Taft secretly was hoping for an American defeat in Korea to help him win re-election. Labor leaders went to Ferguson and said, "Joe, some people claim you hit Taft below the belt with that one." "I'll hit him any place I can," retorted Mr. Ferguson. "He's hitting me where he can." ⁵

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Ferguson leveled every charge he could think of. For example, he told the Democrats during the course of the campaign, "Taft says the unions are taking over the Democratic Party. He lies and he knows he's lying. He says that I'm a controlled candidate. He is controlled by the big money interests and he can never be a free man. I'll be the freest man that ever treaded the U. S. Senate." 1

Comparing the two candidates, Ernest K. Lindley wrote, "Neither Taft nor Ferguson is a glamorous candidate." 2 He analyzed Taft's position shortly before the election:

Taft has never been very popular in Ohio, not even in his home city of Cincinnati. He is respected but not beloved.... I doubt very much that he is really hated by any large number of people in Ohio.

Taft is criticized by his active supporters for being a poor politician and especially for speaking out when he might avoid alienating votes simply by remaining silent.

Many Republicans and independent voters in Ohio have been profoundly disturbed by Taft's foreign policy record. Ferguson's supporters are working hard to get those votes. 3

Another major factor in the campaign was the power of organized labor. Smith pointed out that the election "will also be a critical test of organized labor's political power. Ever since Taft's successful sponsorship of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, labor leaders have made him their Ogre Number One." 4

1. "Ohio: Mr. Republican versus Mr. Nobody," Time, LVI (October 30, 1950), 22.


3. Ibid.

Believing that they could defeat Taft even with a mediocre candidate, the labor leaders pointed out that Taft had won by only 18,000 votes in 1914, when labor's effort to beat him was nothing like its efforts in 1950. ¹ It was noted earlier in this chapter, however, that Taft himself did not make much of a campaign in 1914.

The labor campaign was a united one. The five big labor groups joined together into the United Labor League of Ohio for the drive. "In their over-all operations, the unions of Ohio seem to be reaching a new high in political unity." ² The unions turned out thousands of volunteers to get voters registered, checking membership straight down into factory locals. They mailed millions of pieces of campaign literature; they distributed materials house-to-house. A million copies of a comic book ridiculing Taft were given out over the state. A more elaborate, 200-page book detailing Taft's voting record was given to labor speakers.

The Taft supporters fought back. "They are worried by the fury of the campaign against Senator Taft. This has set them to working harder, and in a better organized unit, than they have in many years." ³ The extent and hard work of the many organizations for Taft played an important role in the campaign. The Taft-for-Senate Committee, headed by Willis Gradison of Cincinnati, organized committees in each of the eighty-eight counties. The Republican State Central Committee under Ray Bliss gave strong support. The President of Oberlin College, William Stevenson, was chairman of the Ohio Committee of Independent Voters.

The Woman's Brigade for Taft had 45,000 members. There were the Ohio Farmers' Taft Committee and the Ohio Veterans for Taft and the Labor League for Taft.¹ This latter group was organized by Eugene Carr of Canton, President of the Radio Division of the Brush-Moore Newspapers in Ohio.

In an interview with Mr. Carr, he stated that his group secured the signatures of 10,691 union members who agreed to support Taft.² The Labor League for Taft arranged for visits to factories and sought to combat the efforts of the United Labor League of Ohio. Carr tells of a rally in Youngstown where 1300 people crossed CIO picket lines to hear Taft speak. In the question and answer period following his speech, Taft was asked why he opposed public housing. As has been noted, Taft, who originally opposed the Wagner-Ellender housing bill, had later joined in sponsoring a public housing bill. Although his bill was not passed, his support of another version received the commendation of President Truman. Truman had written Taft in December, 1949, that he was sorry the Senator could not be present for the signing of the National Housing Act of 1949 since Taft had been so prominent in its passing. Taft read portions of this letter to the audience in answering the question. He was widely cheered at this point.³

Taft engaged the services of a public relations man, L. Richard

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². Interview with Eugene Carr, Canton, Ohio, August 28, 1959.
³. Ibid.
Guylay, to assist in the campaign. Newsweek reported nine years after the campaign, "Guylay sold Taft on the value of polls in 1949 when the senator was preparing his 1950 campaign for re-election. . . . At a meeting of his twelve top advisers in Cincinnati, Taft asked what each thought the issues were. He got twelve answers. "All right, Lou, she said, 'we'd better find out." 1 After his survey, Guylay found that the voters had "an image of Taft as anti-labor, anti-housing, and anti-welfare, and a stuffed shirt in a starched collar to boot." 2

The Senator described his basic campaign tactic as "volume in detail." Time stated that he was trying "to reach those people — the great majority he figured — who would not turn out for a political mass meeting, but would listen to a candidate if he came to them." 3

His campaign activities and appearances bear out his "volume in detail" theory. By the time the campaign ended, he had broadcast fifteen-minute radio speeches over 35 Ohio radio stations for eighteen months, had written a newspaper column for sixteen months which appeared in 180 Ohio papers, had toured 334 factories and coal mines, had attended 129 receptions and 145 meetings, had made 13 television appearances, and had delivered "The Speech" 873 times. 4 His speaking activity was dubbed

2. Ibid.
"The Speech" by some newspapermen because of the similarity of all his campaign speeches. In them, he covered many issues, sometimes changing the order of points from town to town. According to David Ingalls, his campaign manager, Taft felt "that if a speech was good in Cleveland, it was good in Toledo." ¹ A week before the election, U.S. News and World Report stated: "Senator Taft is taking his personal campaign into every one of the 88 counties, shaking hands, speaking as many as from 12 to 20 times a day, meeting all sorts of people, stating his own position bluntly." ² This prodigious effort was without precedent. In the end, it paid off.

One reporter, accompanying Taft on his campaigning, wrote,

"His talks are as dry and factual as a municipal report. They are also extemporaneous, simple, and straightforward — three virtues which, with art, could add up to eloquence. Taft does not have this art. Yet this ... gives his talks a homesly strength." ³

In his speeches, Taft usually ignored Ferguson. "He simply presented his own, well-known position on national issues, while lambasting the CIO as the directing force behind his opposition." ⁴ Another account stated, "But chiefly Robert Taft was running against the Truman administration and the bosses of organized labor." ⁵ It stated

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1. Interview with David S. Ingalls, Cleveland, July 13, 1959.
further, that by way of retaliation, Administration and labor strategy was to save their final barrage for the last week. "The biggest gun in their artillery, Vice President Barkley, would be rolled into position in Canton and Cincinnati." 1

The reporters covering the Ohio campaign noted a change in Taft. "A personality change is enabling Senator Taft to conduct a more effective campaign this year..." 2 The veteran writer Gould Lincoln thus reported to the Washington Star, "Taft the statesman, Taft the mind of facts, Taft the schoolmaster is an old story. But Taft the man who can raise a laugh and can arouse an audience to personal and spontaneous enthusiasm is something new. Yet, that's the Taft who is touring the eighty-eight counties of Ohio." 3

Discussing the effects of the personality change, Carl Ebright wrote:

In previous years, the Senator made many campaign speeches, but he seldom took the time to shake hands with very many of his listeners or engage them in conversation about domestic problems or campaign issues in their respective communities.

This year, because of the personality change, his campaign techniques is different and much more effective, to say the least. He is still making lots of speeches, but more emphasis is being placed on a personal campaign of meeting the people face to face. He seems to enjoy shaking hands, even in industrial plants where union leaders have announced their opposition to his program. 4

The new, more personal Taft reflected itself in his speeches as

1. Ibid., 24.
2. Carl Ebright, Columbus Sunday Dispatch, (September 24, 1950)
well. "His speeches also are showing evidence of what some describe as the 'human touch.' Bore some statistics, which marked the Senator's speeches in years gone by, have been junked in favor of jokes and amusing incidents about his family." 1

So the campaign went. Taft was without the aid of his wife, Martha, for the first time in a campaign. She had suffered a stroke in 1949 and was unable to take the stump for her husband. With many forces operating in the campaign, Taft was favored to win but no one foresaw his margin of victory — 430,000 votes.

The Senator, in a post-election interview, stated that he had expected to win by 250,000 votes. Comparing the 1950 campaign with the 1948 campaign for the Presidential nomination he said that "nothing was done" in 1948 by comparison. 2

The role of labor in the election was watched most of all. David Lawrence had written in an editorial on October 20,

If Senator Taft is defeated — and indications today are that it is a toss-up — the result will not be accomplished by the free votes of the people of Ohio. It will be due to economic coercion by national labor unions which are spending illegally hundreds of thousands of dollars collected from union members outside of Ohio. 3

The apparent failure of labor leaders to deliver the votes to Ferguson was a cause of much speculation. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor said, "We cannot understand the outcome

1. Ibid.


of the election in Ohio.... So we're trying to analyze the undercover influence that seemed to affect a number of the workers in Ohio." 1

Jack Kroll, Direction of the CIO Political Action Committee, said, "Taft-Hartley was hardly an issue, only as Mr. Taft made it an issue in Ohio." 2 He attributed Taft's victory to the same conditions that prevailed throughout the nation, "uncertainty because of world conditions today." Joseph D. Keenan, Director of Labor's League for Political Education (AFL), answered the question, "What weaknesses in labor's campaign do you think you discovered?"

First of all, the weakness of getting to our people. When all other means were shut off to us, we had no way to get to them. Taking Ohio, in the last week Taft embraced the New Deal. He told people there he passed minimum wage, he passed housing, he passed everything. And there was no way for us to get back and give him an argument on it. 3

The record shows that Mr. Taft was right and Mr. Keenan was unaware of the Senator's welfare legislation.

Clearly the labor leaders did not have the answers for Taft's victory. Naturally they would not place the blame on labor's campaign tactics. Two historians believed that labor's attempt failed because of the weak candidacy of Ferguson and in part because of "an apparent determination of many voters to resist labor union dictation." 4

Samuel Lubell wrote, "From my talks with those voters who shifted from Truman in 1948 to Taft in 1950, I would say that their desire to halt a

2. Ibid., 26. 3. Ibid., 27.
drift which threatens to get out of hand" was responsible for Taft's victory. 1 D. W. Brogan stated, "It is possible that the CIO helped Taft, that the high-pressure sales campaign alienated many voters and brought out on Taft's side many normally indifferent voters who thought that labour was showing an excessively vaulting ambition in daring to try to defeat a great man on a class issue." 2

The effect of the election on Taft caused him to believe "that only his type of campaign in Ohio, the smashing, rock-breaking sort of campaign full of nothing but attack" would put any Republican over anywhere. 3

Return To The Senate.

Back in the Senate for his third term in January, 1951, with the Republicans in the minority 49 to 47, "Taft felt compelled to make the attempt at becoming a foreign policy expert." 4 Vandenberg was ill and he died in April, 1951. Thus the man who had led the Republicans in post-war foreign policy affairs was removed. White believes that Taft decided to try for the Presidency again in 1952 after his overwhelming victory in 1950. Taft told White of his many plans in the field of domestic legislation. "What about foreign policy?" he was asked. "A shadow fell over his face and he replied: 'I wish I could just stay out of that; but of course I can't'." Later,

4. Ibid., 118.
he said publicly; "I am charged with moving in on foreign policy; the truth is that foreign policy has moved in on me." 

Taft got right into the "Great Debate" over foreign policy which the Korean War had precipitated. On January 5, 1951, he addressed the Senate on "The Basis of an American Foreign Policy." After considerable criticism of the Administration's foreign policy and after calling for free debate on foreign affairs, he defined the purposes of an American foreign policy as (1) maintaining the liberty of our own people, first and foremost, and (2) attaining peace in the world. To accomplish these ends, the United States must have complete control of the sea and air since these were indispensable in modern warfare.

Taft's only book, *A Foreign Policy for Americans*, was published early in 1951. His general thesis was that the United States should abrogate all military alliances which committed American troops and arms to every spot in the world and replace the alliances with a Monroe Doctrine for crucial areas of the world. He felt that this would deter, and much less provoke, an attack by the Soviet Union. He further called for a world organization based on world law in place of the United Nations. 

The Last Try For The Presidency.

On October 16, 1951, Taft issued four statements simultaneously that announced his candidacy and set forth the reasons for his decision.

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1. Ibid. 2. Text taken from Congressional Record.

to run, and outlined his plan of campaign. Said Taft:

I have decided to accept the invitation of Thomas E. Coleman and other leading Republicans of Wisconsin to enter the Wisconsin primary as a Republican candidate for President of the United States. I have also agreed to the use of my name as first choice by the delegates of Ohio.

I have taken this action because I am convinced that a majority of the Republicans in those states and also throughout the nation really desire me to be the candidate for the party. That majority is especially pronounced among those most interested in the Republican Party and most determined to restore Republican principles of liberty, integrity, and sound judgment to the councils of the nation...

I am going to run because I believe I can conduct the only kind of campaign which will elect a Republican to office. I believe we can extend to the entire nation the methods which we use in Ohio — a forthright presentation of our case to the people of the country.

Thus, less than one year after his triumph in Ohio, Taft embarked on a campaign extending his winning Ohio techniques to the entire nation. The "experts" watched the New Hampshire primary closely, for it pitted Taft against Eisenhower and Stassen. Taft conducted an intensive campaign in that state. One reporter wrote, "Everywhere Taft stopped in New Hampshire he drew attentive crowds. But he was abrupt and cold in greeting local leaders, brushed off autograph hunters and hand-shakers, cut short or side-stepped questioners." The results in New Hampshire foreshadowed the outcome of the Republican race: Eisenhower had 16,661 votes; Taft 35,838, and Stassen, 6,574. Taft


was strong among Republicans but Dwight D. Eisenhower was more popular at the polls. Almost from the start the field was narrowed to these two men.

By March 2, the supporters of Taft and Eisenhower reported to the New York Times their estimates of first ballot strength. Taft's men claimed 579 delegates for Taft while Ike's expected 549 first ballot votes at that time. 60% would be needed for nomination. 1 But the fight was by no means over; the campaign had just begun.

By mid-April it was reported that Taft was stressing four main points in his campaign speeches:

1. The New Deal - Fair Deal philosophy had brought about ruinous conditions from which the country was hoping to find some way out.

2. A Republican standard bearer had never squared off against this philosophy; he had always compromised and temporised.

3. Only he could conduct the campaign that could present the alternatives to the country, and this was the only way the Republicans could win.

4. By inference, generals were suited to wage war but inept at statecraft. 2

April, 1952, was an important month for the candidates; a number of primaries were held. In well-organized, hard-hitting campaigns, Taft won in the Wisconsin primary over Warren and Stassen and in Nebraska over Eisenhower and Stassen. In Illinois, Taft defeated Stassen easily, winning 49 out of fifty delegates. Iowa gave 15 votes to Eisenhower and nine to Taft. Things were going well for Taft's candidacy. But the tide

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1. Ibid., 33. 2. Ibid., 47.
turned in New Jersey where Eisenhower got 390,591 votes to Taft's 228,916. ¹ By the end of April, with over half of the Republican delegates selected, the Associated Press count showed Taft with 274, Eisenhower with 270, Stassen 23, Warren 6, and 111 unpledged. ²

Going into the final stages of the pre-convention campaign, it was reported that Taft had given more than six hundred full-length speeches from April, 1951 to July 7, 1952; he had appeared in forty-three states, on innumerable radio and television programs, held 187 press conferences. ³ "It was a campaign effort without precedent in American political history."

Warren Guthrie believes that "the Taft speech, when given to a friendly audience, usually won an enthusiastic response. Neutrals and opponents were not visibly moved, however." ⁴

At the close of the campaign, the New York Times commented editorially, "It is the Old Guard of the Republican Party from which Senator Taft derives much of his support.... It is the public impression, and a justified one, that Senator Taft --- no matter how liberal his views on such questions as housing may be --- is associated with the conservative elements of the party." ⁵

Marquis Childs noted Taft's shortcomings,

¹. Ibid., 45-7. ². Ibid., 49.
⁴. Ibid., 278.
Senator Taft was no alternative. His views on domestic policy had undergone a great alternation... embracing federal aid to education, strong civil rights laws, and most other doctrines that put him... well to the left of center. But on foreign policy he retained all the prejudices that made him, if not an out and out America Firster, then the next thing to it.1

Roseboom evaluated Taft's campaigning:

...but in his own way he was an effective campaigner. His intelligence, earnestness, command of facts, and unrelenting partisanship made sympathetic listeners overlook his lack of humor or imagination. Believing that the party had lost too many times with 'me too' candidates, he took issue with every major Truman policy and gave the voters his version of true Republicanism. 2

Roseboom cited Taft's weaknesses:

Internationalists and liberals could see no hope in Taft's line. He was calling primitive Republicans to arms; but independents and anti-Truman Democrats would look askance at a man who had been an isolationist, a defender of McCarthy, a critic of organized labor, and an extreme conservative. 3

New York Times editorials on "Mr. Taft Can't Win," summed up the feelings of many when it was stated, "We do not think Mr. Taft can attract any substantial proportion of the normally independent vote on the basis of his views on foreign policy." 4 The Times charged that although his position on foreign policy has undergone considerable modification, he still voted for crippling reductions in proposed funds for the mutual security program, and he argued for a cut of over twenty per cent in the military budget. "In his more than thirteen years in the Senate, Mr. Taft has usually voted for the reduction, limitations,

3. Ibid.
and restrictions that would have the purpose and effect of wrecking important proposals affecting foreign policy."

The Times' analysis of Taft's delegate strength revealed that Taft "is getting a disproportionate amount of his delegates from states the Republicans cannot hope to carry, but in the areas where the Republicans are a live party and have a real possibility of victory, General Eisenhower is obviously the favorite candidate." It was pointed out that of Taft's 475 first-ballot votes, 126 came from border and Southern states which were normally Democratic; 127 came from non-Southern states that were usually Democratic. Thus 253 delegates or 53% of his total came from states that he could not reasonably be expected to carry in November. When the disputed votes in Southern states were added, it made a total of 70% of Taft's votes. Of the fifteen states which had Republican Governors and Republican majorities in their legislatures, Taft had 117 delegates, Eisenhower 232, while 117 were in dispute.

Such analyses were strong arguments against Taft's chances. Nevertheless, as the Republican convention opened in Chicago on July 6, 1952, Taft appeared to hold the upper hand. Out of 1206 votes, Taft claimed 530 although a number of them were disputed. Eisenhower had 427 definitely lined up to support him while Warren was a distant third with only 76 delegates.

1. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
Some political analysts believe that Taft's fate was sealed on May 27 in Mineral Wells, Texas. On that day, the Texas Republicans met to select delegates to the national convention. Although they had been outnumbered and outvoted at the county conventions, the Taft forces still were able to control the state convention. Realizing this, the Eisenhower forces held their own convention. Each convention then proceeded to name separate slates of delegates. The issue over which was legal would be resolved at the national convention itself. The Eisenhower supporters made the most of this incident. In Dallas on June 21, Eisenhower charged that Taft's backers were guilty of "a betrayal of the whole Republican Party and its principles," when they "deliberately and ruthlessly disenfranchised the majorities that voted for another candidate."  

Since the Taft forces were in control of the Credentials Committee, they awarded the majority of the disputed 70 seats to Taft. But the fight was carried to the floor of the convention. Eisenhower's leaders were able to get a rule passed that delegations opposed by more than a one-third vote of the national committee should not vote on the credentials of any delegations. The key vote came on a proposal to exempt seven Louisiana delegates from the operation of this rule. After a bitter two-hour, nationally televised debate, the Taft forces lost by a margin of 110 votes. The Eisenhower proposal then carried."  

"This exposure of southern dirty linen did the Taft cause no good. Eventually the Eisenhower delegates were then seated in all cases."  

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The importance of this parliamentary struggle over the disputed seats was reflected in the first ballot. Picking up nearly seventy additional votes as a result of the contest and making the most of the "dirty tactics" of the Taft camp, Eisenhower got only nine votes short of nomination on the first ballot. Taft's support was undercut and the convention nominated Eisenhower on the second ballot.

A magazine which had consistently opposed Taft stated:

We feel great sympathy for Senator Taft. We are by no means sure that, in his place, another politician would have seen the pitfall in Texas any more clearly than he did, or avoided it any more successfully. And we believe that, purged of one kind of ambition, he will now become once more the rather forbidding, rough-edged but tough minded, independent and immensely valuable public servant he used to be.

Thus, the short view was that the tactics of Taft's supporters --- which cast a shadow over the ethics of Mr. Integrity --- were responsible for his defeat. But, in the longer view, it was what the Senator stood for that defeated him in his greatest bid to realize his ambition, the Presidency.

Representative of the long-range view is White's:

To attempt to pass judgment on his defeat is a hard and perhaps a presumptuous task. As one on-looker, my own view of the business was this: Taft had to be rejected if the historic movement of the Republican party toward liberalism and internationalism was to continue, whether or not he had to be defeated in order that the party could win in November.

Grove Patterson wrote, "Despite my friendship through the years

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1. Ibid., 512.
with Bob Taft, I felt the times, particularly the military situation, called for the nomination of General Eisenhower." 1

Brogan believed that it is

not accidental that great parliamentarians who sought the nomination after the modern convention system developed, Webster, Clay, Calhoun, ... Blaine, Reed, and Robert Taft either were not nominated or were defeated. For in Congress, it is often necessary to take a line; to choose sides. The leading congressional candidates are almost certain to have angered some group, injured some interests, to be associated with some legislation ... that may cost many votes in a Presidential election." 2

Taft wrote his own analysis of his defeat in the fall of 1952.

This memorandum was not made public until 1959 when there was speculation over Nelson Rockefeller's chances to defeat Richard Nixon for the 1960 Republican nomination. Newsmen compared the Rockefeller-Nixon speculation to the Taft-Eisenhower battle. Although it had not been published, a copy of Taft's memorandum was made available for this study by Blanche O'Berg, the Senator's former secretary.

Taft's own reasons for his defeat were: (1) the New York financial interests worked hard for Eisenhower; (2) the General was supported by four-fifths of the newspapers which in effect became propaganda organs; and (3) because of the preceding factors, Taft was unable to win enough support from governors of major states which offset the slight advantage he had in delegate strength.

He believed that it was a mistake to allow the delegate dispute to go to the floor (where the Taft forces were beaten), but giving up the delegates without a fight would have been regarded as a sign of weakness.

2. Brogan, Politics in America, 198.
John S. Knight, whose papers Taft rated as neutral in the struggle, believes that Taft's analysis was only partially right. Knight did not believe that the press were as unfair to Taft as he believed them to be.

Knight added as the major reasons for Taft's defeat, "Eisenhower's glamour and the chant that 'Taft can't win' proved too large a handicap to overcome." ¹

After the Convention, Taft went to Murray Bay, Quebec, where the family always spent their summer vacations. Because of the bitterness of the nomination fight, many speculated on Taft's role in the campaign. At the invitation of Eisenhower, Taft went to New York on September 12. After a two-hour conference, the two men emerged for a press conference. Some newspapermen called the affair the "Morning-side Surrender", for Taft had carried a written statement of his own to the press conference evidently prepared beforehand.

Taft told the newsmen and the press conference:

As I see it, there is and has been one great fundamental issue between the Republican Party and the New Deal or Fair Deal or Stevenson Deal. It is the issue of liberty against creeping socialization in every domestic field....

After a satisfactory discussion with General Eisenhower this morning, I am satisfied that that is his philosophy. I am convinced that he will carry out the pledge of the Republican platform, which express that philosophy, as adopted unanimously by Republican representatives from all parts of the country. ²

Senator Taft later campaigned for Eisenhower before the election.

¹. John S. Knight, "The Editor's Notebook," Akron Beacon Journal, November 29, 1959, 2D.

Many watched with interest as Congress met in January 1953, with the Republicans in charge of both the Executive and Legislative Branches. They watched Taft carefully, speculating on how much he would cooperate with Eisenhower.

**The Senator's Last Months.**

But Taft's performance in the five months he served in the Eighty-third Congress allayed the fears of any who doubted his willingness to cooperate. It soon became apparent that "instead of a struggle in Congress, Senator Taft has been willing to cooperate in a friendly fashion. He is giving every evidence of having put aside his personal ambitions and being willing to work for the success of the Administration."

It was only natural that the new Administration would fumble and misstep on occasion due to its inexperienced staff. To these men "Senator Taft is appearing as a tower of strength... He had experience, know-how and ideas at a time when a Republican Administration needs such things. All of this has tended to make Taft the man of the hour." 2

White commented, "No President within twenty years had so effective a Senate leader as Eisenhower had in Taft in the brief months between the Republican return to power in January of 1953 and Taft's death in July." 3 The New York Times wrote that Taft had "risen from opposition and defeat to become the President's political mentor and

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2. Ibid.
lieutenant and to wield great influence as Senate Majority Leader." 1

It was commonly felt that Taft had won warm and widespread popular affection in the last year of his life because he had proved himself so good a loser and had continued to smile in the face of political and personal affliction. 2

There were some points, of course, on which Taft differed with Eisenhower. The most notable was over the President's appointment of Martin Durkin as Secretary of Labor. Durkin was a union man, a Democrat, and an outspoken foe of the Taft-Hartley Act. Taft considered his appointment "incredible."

The last speech that Taft wrote also represented a sharp difference of opinion with Eisenhower over foreign policy. Taft had been asked to speak at the National Conference of Christians and Jews meeting in Cincinnati on May 26, 1953. He was in the hospital at the time and his son, Robert, read the speech for him. The essential ideas expressed in the speech were:

1. The United States might as well forget the United Nations as far as the Korean War is concerned.

2. The United Nations cannot prevent military aggression because of the veto power in the Security Council.

3. Therefore, the United States should abandon any idea of working with the United Nations in the East and reserve to ourselves a completely free hand.


2. Ibid.
The United States must have real sympathetic support of its allies if it is to have unified opposition against Communism. 1

Taft concluded on a milder note,

The present Administration has the job of trying to maintain the world-wide alliance against Soviet Russia. We have spent billions for that purpose. I hope that it can be carried through and only raise here the doubt as to whether it is in fact possible over any long period of years.

The conclusion drawn by newsmen was that Taft favored "going it alone" by the United States. "The response to all this among nearly all shades of internationalism was violent, and justifiably so." 2

Taft later denied that he ever meant or said "the United States should go it alone." He maintained that he was convinced that the United Nations was ineffective. 3 It is somewhat ironic that after five months of being the President's close adviser Taft should, in his last speech, assume the role that he had held so long, that of a minority critic.

Just five weeks before this speech, Taft had played golf with Eisenhower in Georgia. He complained about his hip and that he was short of breath and felt weak in the knees. Tests and X-rays did not reveal the nature of the difficulty which kept paining Taft. By the end of the first week in May the Senator was limping and in considerable pain. On May 21 he entered a hospital in Cincinnati; he was there

when his son read his last speech at the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Within a week, twelve experts agreed on the diagnosis: widespread, malignant cancer. The prognosis was not at all hopeful.  

He returned to Washington on crutches but was soon in a New York hospital under an assumed name for treatments. On June 10, he returned to Washington and turned over his job as Senate Majority Leader to William Knowland. An exploratory operation on July 8 in the New York hospital failed to reveal the origin of the cancer. He died on July 31, 1953.  

The suddenness of his affliction had surprised everyone. Less than a year before a pre-convention checkup pronounced him physically perfect.  

Two of his staunchest enemies paid high tributes. John L. Lewis said, "Our organization had many differences with him, but they were honest differences on both sides. Honest difference of opinion is what made Senator Taft a great statesman and a great American. His sincere conservatism was an ingredient of our way of life." Harry S. Truman said, "He and I did not agree on public policy, but he knew where I stood and I knew where he stood. We need intellectually honest men like Senator Taft." 

2. Ibid., 11-21.  
3. Ibid., 8.  
4. "A Dedication to Mr. Republican," Cleveland Plain Dealer, (April 5, 1959), 1-B.  
In order to temper the generous appraisals of a man's stature that often accompany his death, it is more valuable to note what was thought of him while he was still living.

In 1948, Richard Rovere, reviewing Taft's record to that time, wrote:

For ten years he has obstructed the Democratic Administrations to the very best of his considerable abilities. He has not in every instance voted against it ... but even when he has agreed to any of its proposals, he has made it plain that his agreement was based on his own values and assumptions, not the New Deal's. 1

Foreign policy was Taft's undoing as much as anything. Rovere believed:

In foreign policy, he has come closer to the ideal of total obstruction. From the beginning of Hitler's military assault on Europe right down to the present, Taft has opposed the Government's foreign policy in very nearly every legislative action which embodied the policy. The only cases in which he has voted with the Government have been those in which everybody agreed....

It is in his foreign policy record that Taft has incorporated knowledge with manifest error. He was wrong about Britain's and Russia's capacities for resistance, wrong about Japanese intentions, wrong about allied chances for victory, wrong about this country's ability to wage total war without becoming a totalitarian state. Almost nothing he predicted in those years came to pass, and almost everything he said could not happen did come to pass. 2

In 1950 it was written, "Taft is the most feared and respected figure in the Senate. His mastery of facts, personal courage, and stubborn tenacity have made him the Samson holding up the badly sagging Republican temple." 3 The authors illustrate their point:

... when Wherry, after glumly perusing a batch of newspaper clippings, took the floor and waving his arms, bellowed, "Taft! Taft!

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Everybody's always talking about what Taft has done to OPA. I'm the fellow that knocked out meat control, and I've done more to that bill than anybody else. Why do they always talk about Taft?"

Nobody answered the plaintive cry. It might have been painfully embarrassing.

For the truth is that everyone talks of Mr. Taft because he is the dominating intellectual figure of the Party and is generally about three jumps ahead of Wherry and his cohorts. In fact, most people, even in Washington, often think that Taft leads the party single-handed. 1

The key to Taft's preparedness as a Senator was two-fold:

(1) a hard working office staff, the largest of any Congressman, and the experts of the Republican Steering Conference who kept a flow of detailed analyses of every legislative issue moving across his desk; and (2) he has reduced to a minimum his "errand-boy" duties for constituents, thus remaining free of the voluminous correspondence which ties down other Congressmen. 2 "Besides, Taft has the asset of being a professional senator —— second only to LaFollette. Weaned on national politics, he is devoid of any other interest." 3

It has been noted that Taft spent the greater part of his Senate career in opposition. He became the most relentless enemy of the New and Fair Deals which earned him the name "Mr. Republican." Yet Time said in 1952 that Taft was better as a framer of constructive program than as a leader of the opposition. "In the Eightieth Congress, Taft showed a brilliant grasp of practical legislative problems, a willingness

1. Ibid., 243.


3. Ibid.
to move with the changing patterns of American life. But opposition
chafes him; then he seems captious, impatient, and gives many the
impression he is a reactionary." 1

Yet he will be remembered most for his acts of opposition. As
White wrote:

If one sought to identify above all others the Man of Resistance
one would have to settle on Taft. It was he, more than any other,
who forever clamored for and sometimes actually secured the re-
cognition of the rights of Congress that the strong executive de-
partments of Roosevelt and Truman extended only grudgingly and
under duress.

And when it comes to that it was Taft who most of all dragged
from a reluctant and more or less uncaring public a respect for him
as a symbol of a political instrumentality, Congress, that had
generally and vastly declined in public respect during the crisis
years from The Great Depression to the Second World War. 2

Commonweal, a magazine that usually opposed Taft's views, wrote
after his death, "Robert Taft was a conservative in a very honorable
sense. He represented ways of thought which are deep in American
tradition." 3 These include distrust of big government, of foreign
entanglements, of social paternalism; he respected the individual, fought
for freedom and initiative. The editors concluded their evaluation, "We
do not think he was a great man in the sense that he came to actual grips
with the problems of his century — his historical vision was too narrow,
his partisanship too rigid for that. But we think that he was a man who
served his country unselfishly, and that, ultimately, is the important

test." 1

On May 1, 1957, five Senators were named to the Senate Hall of Fame. They were chosen to "represent to the extent possible the periods in the history of the Senate." The five were chosen for their "over-all statesmanship, their service to the nation and their impact on the Senate, the country, and our history." 2 The five were: Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, Robert M. LaFollette, Sr., and Robert A. Taft. "Taft was chosen to represent conservatism as distinguished from the progressivism of LaFollette," 3

On April 11, 1959, a memorial on the Capitol grounds was dedicated with these words: "This memorial to Robert A. Taft, presented by the people to the Congress of the United States, stands as a tribute to the honesty, indomitable courage and high principles of free government symbolized by his life."

Taft's third Senate term, lasting only two and a half years, was packed with two intensive political campaigns. The first saw him re-elected to his seat over the combined forces of organized labor and the Democratic administration. The second saw him attempt to extend his winning techniques of campaigning to the entire nation in a bid for the Presidential nomination. But for the third time, his party passed

1. Ibid.


over Mr. Republican and selected a more popular man. In the new Republican Administration, Taft occupied a role somewhat like an active elder statesman. For the first time in his life he achieved a degree of popular esteem. His death cut short his career as a legislative leader for Eisenhower. Taft probably will be remembered as "The Man of Resistance," for most of his public life was spent in opposition to everything that he felt would impair fundamental liberties.

SUMMARY

This chapter was devoted to an exploration of Robert A. Taft's record as a Senator. It sought to explain his place in the United States of his time while emphasizing his speaking activities.

He entered the Senate at the age of 49 after a bitterly-fought campaign against Robert J. Bulkley, an ardent New Dealer. With the aid of his wife, Martha, Taft covered the state of Ohio telling his side of the issues and making specific criticisms of the New Deal. The outstanding feature of the campaign was a series of six debates between the two candidates. Taft was able to put Bulkley on the defensive with an all-inclusive attack on the New Deal. In a contest watched by the entire nation, Taft was the victor by 170,000 votes.

It was noted that Taft's personality impaired his effectiveness as a campaigner, but by intensive effort, he got "his message across" to the people.

His victory immediately boosted his prestige as a possible Republican candidate for President in 1940. His frequent attacks against the
the New Deal spending policies and his opposition to Roosevelt's foreign policy gave further impetus to his candidacy. He was rapidly becoming a spokesman for the Republican Party. His appeals for non-intervention in European affairs led to his being called an "isolationist," a charge that did him considerable harm in his political campaigns.

Seven months after he entered the Senate, Robert A. Taft announced his candidacy for President. Covering the country on speaking tours, he called for a restoration of free enterprise and individual initiative as they existed before the New Deal. He continued arguing for strict neutrality in foreign affairs.

As the Republican Convention opened in Philadelphia on June 24, 1940, Taft was second to Thomas E. Dewey in voting strength. The G.O.P. astounded observers by selecting as their standard bearer the erstwhile Democrat, the "darkest of dark horses," Wendell Willkie. Political analysts concluded that Taft was passed over because he possessed little personal charm and his appeal was to those of a conservative nature who favored isolationism.

Nevertheless he continued to enhance his position as a minority critic. As his first Senate term ended, he was gaining in importance as a Republican leader although he had sponsored no major legislation.

Since he was up for re-election in 1944, he was not a candidate for President. His Senatorial campaign that year was on a limited basis; he made fewer than twenty speeches in Ohio. Partly because of this and partly because of the opposition from labor groups, he was re-elected by only 18,000 votes over the relatively unknown William E. Pickerel.
It was during his second term that Taft was given the name "RG. Republican," in recognition of his leadership. As the nation turned to post-war problems, Taft reversed his previous stand against social welfare legislation. He sponsored bills for public housing, federal aid to education, and medical care which surprised many of his conservative colleagues.

His speech at Kenyon College in 1946 in which he criticized the trials of the Nazi leaders probably was the most controversial of his career. The public was becoming accustomed to Taft's forthrightness, saying what he thought regardless of the consequences.

When the Eightieth Congress convened in 1947, the Republicans were in control of both houses for the first time since 1931. Taft was their acknowledged leader although Arthur Vandenberg was the Party's expert in foreign affairs. This promised to be Taft's "greatest hour," his chance to put into policy those Republican principles he had advocated for so long. After guiding into law the Taft-Hartley Act, Taft was unable to get his social welfare measures passed against the coalition of Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans. As the leader of the Eightieth Congress he was also blamed for the things it failed to do. President Truman succeeded in labeling it a "Do-Nothing Congress" in 1948. Taft had decided to make an all-out bid for the Presidency after a successful "trial-run" in the West in 1947. Although he was never popular in public opinion polls he was recognized by many leaders as the most able Republican. After an intensive campaign for delegates, he went to the Philadelphia convention to find Dewey again
in the lead. Capitalizing on their advantage, the Dewey managers created a "band-wagon psychology" and he was nominated on the second ballot. Taft was extremely disappointed — seemingly with all the qualifications he was passed over — but Truman's re-election in the greatest electoral upset in history was an even greater disappointment.

The Republicans were again in the minority in Congress in 1949. They were able to block Truman on many fronts and to capitalize on the mistakes of his Administration. Taft unsuccessfully opposed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization because it would commit the United States to defend any member which was attacked. Since Congress alone had the power to declare war, this provision was unacceptable to Taft. He criticized Truman's action in committing United States forces in Korea in 1950 on the same grounds. In addition to fighting for individual and states' rights, Taft fought for the rights of Congress against a strong executive officer.

By 1950, organized labor was fully prepared to defeat Taft in his bid for re-election for a third term. Since no outstanding Democrat would oppose Taft, the nomination went to Joseph Ferguson, auditor of the state since 1937. Taft went to work in August, 1949, and continued his campaigning until election day in 1950. In a campaign which he described as "volume in detail," he covered the state thoroughly. He recorded broadcasts for radio stations, wrote a newspaper column, and spoke in every county at least once. Many observers felt that the efforts of organized labor and the Democrats might be able to topple Taft in the bitter campaign. In the end, the intensive campaign against
a valued public servant may have back-fired. The people of Ohio seemed
to resent the interference of organized labor and its attempts to dic­
tate for whom they should vote. It was noted that Taft conducted his
greatest campaign and that he had become more personable as a campaigner.
His margin of victory was astounding --- 430,000 votes. His success was
a major factor in his deciding to make one last try for the Presidency
in 1952.

The publication of his only book, A Foreign Policy for Americans,
was the culmination of his concerted study of foreign affairs --- his
weak spot in former Presidential bids. He decided to apply his winning
1950 formula to the 1952 election; volume in detail. His efforts
resulted in winning more delegates than any Republican candidate prior
to the Chicago Convention.

But once again, he was passed over for a more "appealing" can­
didate, Dwight Eisenhower. Seventy disputed delegates from the South
were seized upon by the Eisenhower backers who made a moral issue of
the affair. The debate over the disputed delegates on the Convention
floor resulted in an Eisenhower victory which stampeded to the nomi­
nation.

In the last analysis, Taft lost because of what he symbolized:
no matter how liberal he had become on welfare measures, he was still
regarded as the classic conservative; no matter how much of an inter­
nationalist he became, he was still thought of as an isolationist.
These, coupled with the charge, "Taft can't win," resulted in his fail­
ure to receive the Presidential nomination for the third time.
He became Eisenhower's valued aide before illness forced him to leave the Senate in May, 1953. He died of cancer on July 31, 1953.

All but two and a half of his fourteen and a half years in the Senate were spent as a member of the minority. This was his place — a minority critic. In many ways, he was an extremely vocal critic. He probably delivered more speeches than any man of his time. In six political campaigns, three each for the Senate and the Presidency, he made over 3,000 speeches. In the Senate, he studied all major legislation and gave speeches on a wide variety of subjects there. He was in demand as an occasional speaker at commencements, before economic and social groups and bar associations. His was a prodigious effort to make his views known.

He was accused of being an obstructionist, of blocking progress. But he obstructed or opposed those things he distrusted: Big Government, Big Labor, Big Business. Throughout his life he championed the cause of the individual in everything he did. In so doing, he may rightfully have earned the epithet, "The Indispensable Opposition."
Listing the things that Taft symbolized, Richard Rovere included, "Candor, integrity, rigor of intellect, independence, conscientiousness, professional competence --- in Taft's case, they accompany republicanism, capitalist orthodoxy, and isolationism." How did these characteristics affect Taft's speaking? How did they relate to his ethos? Answers to these questions are important prerequisites to an analysis of his speeches.

In order to present a complete picture of the man speaking, this chapter will be divided into three sections: (1) the ethos of Taft, considering those aspects of his personality which established him as a man of character, competence, and good will; (2) the evaluations of his speaking by others, both rhetorical and non-rhetorical critics; and (3) his method of preparing his speeches. Information in this chapter was obtained from published materials and from interviews with those who knew him well.

I. THE ETHOS OF TAFT

In considering ethos, the critics of public address are generally agreed that "... the attitude of the audience toward the speaker --- based upon previous knowledge of the latter's activities and reputation --- cannot accurately be separated from the reaction the speaker induces

1. Richard Rovere, "Taft, Is This The Best We've Got?" Harpers, 196 (April, 1948), 292.
through the medium of the speech." 1 This section will be concerned
with the attitudes people had toward Taft: the things he symbolized as
a person speaking. To most of the public Taft exhibited the character-
istics of candor, intellect, integrity, partisanship, and aloofness.
Each of these qualities will be explored in the following pages to deter-
mine their relationship to his speaking.

Candor.

Walter Davenport, the political writer for popular magazines, was
nearly correct when he wrote, "Senator Taft is no hand at two-timing.
He's just about as subtle as a load of buck-shot." 2

Taft's characteristic candor exhibited itself in his unabashed
criticism of other's ideas. In this regard it was said, "His person-
ality is his political career's worst enemy. His fast mind rides
roughshod over less intelligent arguments. He meets what he considers
silly contentions with a rough 'That's stupid.' People get mad." 3

Rovere's description was only a little exaggerated:

Taft's candor does him little good inside the profession. His
standing among his colleagues could easily be improved if he would
enroll in the mutual admiration society to which most office-
holders belong. When, for example, Taft wishes to dispute some-
thing that has been said on the Senate floor, he does not rise "to
pay my respects to the distinguished Senator from Old Catawba
before going on to point out that I think the gentleman has been

York Times (June 1, 1917), VI, 50.
The words would stick in his throat, for the chances are that Taft does not think the man distinguished or the state of Old Catawba great. He probably thinks the Senator is a jack-ass who is not misguided but witless beyond all hope of redemption, and so when Taft gets the floor it is generally to blurt out, "That's stupid," or "I don't see how the Senator can talk such tommyrot."  

His candor did not permit him to engage in the little niceties which are considered standard behavior. Even his close friends did not escape his frank expression of his views. Everett Dirksen, the Senator from Illinois who associated closely with Taft, recalled that in the Senate debate over the number of housing units to be provided in 1952, he argued vigorously to reduce the number. "When I finished, Bob Taft stood up very suddenly and, as if he had never known me, began to assail everything I had said, and began to take apart my argument, piece by piece."  

Many believed that Taft's caustic forthrightness revealed a lack of tact. This didn't seem to bother him in the least. Because of his lack of tact, Taft was called a "poor politician." One writer believed, "In a conventional sense he is. He not only lacks tact but scorns it --- 'to be tactful in politics is to be dishonest,' he informed a friend."  

Life magazine characterized him as "a thoughtful man with the life-long habit of saying exactly what resulted from such moments of 


deep cogitation....Such uncompromising personal integrity eventually lifted him into a peak of public esteem attained by few Americans." 1

Thus, his remarkable candor caused him to admonish Americans in 1947, a year of food shortages and high prices, to "eat less." It caused him to speak out against the Nuremberg trials of Nazi war criminals on the grounds that the Allies had no right to try them in civil courts, at a time when public clamor for punishment of the Nazis was almost unanimous. It resulted in his speaking out against the United Nations as an instrument of foreign policy in 1953, a move which embarrassed the new Republican administration. His candor won him little affection, but it caused many to respect his sincerity.

Men in the Senate and people in general began to realize that when Taft said something, he meant it. His speeches were full of forthright criticisms; even when people disagreed with him, they gave him some degree of respect because of his candor.

His frankness extended to all his activities. As an illustration of this, a Judge once called on him and said, "Senator, you may not remember me, but I was an inconspicuous member of your class at Yale." Mr. Taft looked him over and replied, "No recollection." 2 At the very least, the ordinary politician would have made the man feel that he remembered him, even if he didn't. But such was not Taft's nature.


"Fact has neither latitude, longitude, nor expansion. You're right or you're wrong; you can't be nearly either." This statement was so typical of Taft's way of thinking that one can almost hear him saying it in his abrupt, no-nonsense, challenging voice. It clearly typified his great intellect.

After discussing Taft's personality weaknesses, Schlesinger wrote, "His saving grace is a clear-cut logical intelligence and a basic respect for fact, which undercut his own impulses toward dogmatism." Even his enemies respected his intellectual honesty and his reasoning powers if not his conclusions. "He has the best mind in Washington," remarked Paul Porter, former head of the Office of Price Administration, "until he makes it up." Newsmen soon realized that they could ask Taft about any issue and they would get a straight-from-the-shoulder answer. This was because his mind could digest facts superbly.  

Grove Patterson, the great editor of the Toledo Blade, said, "Taft had a fine mind, by general appraisal the best in the Senate of his time. He literally devoured facts, figures, statistics. He read the most involved and detailed report on any sort of governmental operation however complicated, and instantly it became clear."  

William S. White stated that Taft "was not impervious to facts, provided that he could search these out for himself." The sources were almost as important to him as was the information itself. White viewed

this as the reason for Taft's unpopular views on foreign policy. White explained, "He had no opportunity, or no compelling need, to get at the facts of the world lying outside the United States. He was, but for the last two or three years of his career, a strictly domestic political leader." 1

Rovere paid a high compliment to Taft's intellectual ability when he wrote,

"There have not been more than half a dozen men in high elective office during the past thirty years who have had as sound a grasp of the processes of government as he has. He knows government better than any President since Woodrow Wilson, and since he learned what he knows from long legislative experience as well as from the universities, he might reasonably be given the edge over Wilson." 2

In selecting Taft as one of the Senate's most valuable ten members, Time paid tribute to his intellect:

"He has the Senate's finest legal mind. He is often the catalyst of Senate thinking. His abrasive mind can find the soft spots in an argument or a plan as surely as a dentists' drill..."

"He holds the leadership in the Senate by sheer intellectual prestige. He is a powerful check on any ill-advised experiment; in fact his liberal colleagues would be the first to admit that, while fighting them, he has often made their badly drawn legislation make sense." 3

The descriptions quoted above are representative of the impressions of Taft's intellect. Most observers agreed that his process of thinking was superior although many disagreed with the product of his thinking. Typical of the latter is John Gunther's discussion of Taft's

voting record which he called "fantastically bad judgments." 1 Gunther believed that an "almost pathological setness of vision and stubbornness" plus his Presidential ambitions and false identifications of the temper of the times were responsible.

Also typical of the attacks on Taft's reputation as an intellect was Walter Lippman's statement, "Though Mr. Taft is an intelligent man who would always get a high mark in school, he has never acquired sufficient wisdom and understanding..." 2

That Taft had a fine mind was not disputed. Whether he used it wisely depended largely on one's political orientation. It is likely that his colleagues in the Senate had a greater respect for his intellect than did the general public. The public saw him as an advocate of his particular point of view rather than as an intellectual leader of his party. Although his speeches usually revealed a careful analysis of a problem, his vocabulary was that of a common man. Nothing about his style suggested an intellectual man.

In summary, his great intellectual ability was perhaps Taft's strongest quality. His mind could study facts and draw conclusions on the most intricate of problems. His leadership in the Senate depended on his intellectual prowess. Often considered dogmatic, he was willing to modify his views in the light of changing conditions once he was convinced the facts called for something different. "Get him tied up in sub-committee and rub his nose in facts," said one Senate colleague,


"and then his automatic negative reaction starts melting away under the pressure of evidence." 1 This tendency to "face the facts" was well illustrated in Taft's views on social welfare measures. After his support of social legislation, his Ohio colleague, Senator John W. Bricker, half-jokingly said, "The Socialists must have gotten to Bob Taft." 2

**Integrity.**

That Robert A. Taft was an honest and responsible man was probably the strongest factor in his ethos as a public speaker. Those who frequently disagreed with his judgments consistently credited him for being a man of integrity.

To fellow Senators he was known as a man who "never broke an agreement, who never compromised his deeply felt Republican principles, who never practiced political deception." 3

Although they sat on opposite sides of the Senate aisle, Alben W. Barkley paid tribute to Taft's reputation, "While I frequently disagreed with Bob Taft's political ideas, he was a man of great ability, integrity, and patriotism.... He was criticized for shifting his position so frequently.... But even that showed a great deal of courage, a willingness to admit that new facts can alter one's judgment." 4

Senator John F. Kennedy wrote that Taft was "a brilliant political analyst who knew ... that only by flattering new blocs of support

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could he ever hope to gain his goal. Yet he frequently flung to the
winds the very restraint his own analysis advised, refusing to bow to
any group, refusing to keep silent on any issue." 1

Kennedy also believed that Taft endangered "his own leadership
in the Republican Party by his support of education, housing, health,
and other welfare measures." 2

Another account said, "It was political masochism for Taft to
let his name be associated with the end of price control, and he could
be declared 'insane' for getting the name Taft into the Taft-Hartley
Act. Almost every act of Taft's has been that of a man guided by con­
science rather than expediency." 3

Of course, his personal integrity was subject to attack through­
out his career. Terms such as "a son of privilege," and "moss-backed
reactionary," and others were used to discredit Taft. His support of
McCarthy and his statements that certain members of the Truman Admin­
istration "betrayed" the United States on the China policy were labeled
"demagogy." 4 But for the most part, the attacks on his character were
not effective. The public respected and admired him for his honesty
and responsibility. This quality of integrity was the strongest com­
ponent of his ethos in his public speeches.

4. Richard H. Rovere, "What's Happened to Taft?" Harpers, 204,
(April, 1952), 144.
So strong was the public's impression of Taft as a man of integrity that even William S. White's flattering comparison could be accepted. White wrote, "Here began to arise the belief that for the name Taft there was a synonym in the great English noun Integrity.... The slogan 'Mr. Integrity' was a truly applied one." ¹

Partisanship.

The three preceding characteristics of Taft — candor, intellect, and integrity — were more often than not positive appeals in his ethical persuasion. His strong partisanship was not as positive an appeal. Besides "Mr. Integrity," Taft was also commonly referred to as "Mr. Republican." This attested to the fact that he became the spokesman for the Republican Party after World War II. Naturally, the strong Republicans would consider Taft's leadership as a strong ethical factor in his speaking. The strong Democrats would react negatively to him on these grounds. The Independents or moderates recognized Taft as a strong partisan; many professional political analysts believed that it was his failure to interest these people which prevented his winning the Presidential nomination.

T.V. Smith spoke with considerable accuracy when he said, "Taft is a conservative who talks like a damn radical!" In his speeches, Taft often gave the appearance of being angry as he attacked the views of his opposition. On the floor of the Senate, he was described as "raging in debate and blunt to the point of rudeness." ² On television

programs, he sometimes gave "the impression that he wants to give everybody a fight about everything." 1 His aggressiveness in lashing out at the New Deal or the Truman administration indicated to many that he was a man of violent temper.

William S. White, who seems to have known Taft well, wrote, "He had no real time for anger; he could rage but the storm was usually over within five minutes. Once over, it was really over. He dismissed it." 2

Blanche O'Berg, his personal secretary for nine years, said that she saw Taft really angry only once. That was when he heard about Martin Durkin's appointment as Secretary of Labor by President Eisenhower. Miss O'Berg said that Taft retired to his study for about an hour and emerged with a statement in which he called the appointment "incredible." 3

His Administrative Assistant, I. Jack Martin, wrote that Taft became most angry during Senate debates when one of his colleagues would pursue an intellectually dishonest argument. At such times, Taft "reacted quickly and vehemently." 4

Hence, it seems reasonable to conclude that his aggressive statements and use of sarcasm were indicative of strong feelings and not a violent temper.

It soon became apparent to newsmen that Taft had a serious defect as a politician: "His passion for privacy is almost morbid. He presents himself to the public in the bleak terms of a Who's Who sketch." 1 Soon, the reports began to flow that Taft was arrogant and dull, cold and aloof.

Rovere was finally led to the conclusion:

It is surely a tragic circumstance that the ablest figure in American politics today, and in many ways the man of the firmest integrity and independence of mind, is at the same time a man of impregnable parochial culture and of a personality even less beguiling, when viewed from a distance, than that of the late Calvin Coolidge. 2

David Ingalls told of an incident in Iowa during the 1940 campaign which illustrates why the public felt that Taft was aloof. Republican leaders from all over the state gathered in Des Moines for a breakfast meeting with Taft, then relatively unknown. Taft spoke briefly about his candidacy and then answered a few questions. There seeming to be no more questions, Taft sat down and read his newspaper while all the Republican leaders in the state looked on. Ingalls said, "Taft felt he had done what was expected of him. It didn't occur to him to meet the people there personally and talk with them privately." 3

Incidents such as these gave rise to the belief that Taft was cold and aloof, that he didn't care about people. This could be fatal

3. Interview with David S. Ingalls, Cleveland, July 13, 1959.
to a politician. Lockett summed up the belief of many about Taft when he wrote, "Taft makes up for his lack of personal color and oratorical flair with sheer work, a passion for hard, cold facts, and powerful aggressiveness." 1

But, nevertheless, his campaign manager, David S. Ingalls, realized that many thought Taft lacked the necessary color and appeal that a political candidate ought to have. Ingalls made an effort during each campaign to dispel this impression. To the charge that Taft lacked color, Ingalls said, "To this I say that he has the colors which last and do not fade. He has the color of ability, the color of experience, and the color of courage." 2 To those who said, "Taft is the best man we have, but he can't win," Ingalls replied, "Taft's following was solid, because it was a result of the fact that everyone knew where he stood." 3

That Taft was aloof and colorless was accepted as true by many people. The available evidence indicates that his shyness was responsible for these defects. All his life, Taft was plagued by a basic shyness. It was noted in Chapter II that his classmates in school and college remembered him as a shy person. John B. Dempsey, a classmate at Yale and Harvard who later served with Taft in the Ohio General Assembly, said that Taft fought his shyness all his life. But his personality made

him appear cold. 1 Those who regarded him as an aloof man would get only disagreement from Blanche O'Berg, his secretary for nine years.

"He was just plain shy," she said. 2

Taft's "coldness" was widely reported; those who came in contact with him expected it. Only after getting to know him did they see Taft in a different light. Senator John F. Kennedy attested to this when he wrote,

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from this that Senator Taft was cold and abrupt in his personal relationships. I recall, from my own very brief service with him in the Senate and on the Senate Labor Committee in the last months of his life, my strong impression of a surprising and unusual personal charm, and a disarming simplicity of manner. 3

The general public did not get to know the Senator in this light. He remained a rather cold and aloof person. This feature had its greatest effect on his campaigning where he was expected to meet people individually in addition to making speeches. In interpreting its effects on his actual speaking, Taft's shyness was not a great factor. He appeared anything but shy as he challenged Roosevelt or Truman or the Democrats in general. He had been able to overcome his shyness as a public speaker on the platform. His lack of color which resulted from his shyness was the thing that stuck in the public's mind. It contributed to the feeling "Taft can't win" as a candidate.

1. Interview with John B. Dempsey, Cleveland, August 24, 1959.


Summary.

The purpose of this section was to discover and report the personal characteristics of Robert A. Taft which had a bearing on his ethos as a speaker. His qualities of candor, intellect, and integrity contributed to his stature as an ethical persuader. His forthrightness in stating his views regardless of the consequences won him much respect and admiration. Equally admired was his intellectual ability which enabled him to analyze problems skillfully. The name, "Mr. Integrity," was given him in recognition of his being an honest and responsible man.

It was more difficult to assess the effects of his extreme partisanship on his ethos. His being a spokesman for the Republicans enhanced his stature -- but on the other hand, many people probably dismissed his ideas as those of a Republican partisan. With him, there was no middle ground, no compromising of his views or ideals. His speaking exemplified, to a considerable extent, his feeling that the Republicans were always right and the Democrats were always wrong.

Taft's noted lack of color as a person adversely affected him as a Presidential candidate. But as a public speaker on the platform, his aloofness was not a major detriment to his effectiveness. It was chiefly in informal gatherings where his personality hurt him.

In all, the public impression of Taft was a rather curious one. In evaluating his impression, it is clear that he was not a friend, not a popular leader, not a hero to the general public. He was, as someone once said, "perhaps a widely-quoted minister in another church, a church one ought to attend some day just to get a line on the man's ideas." The analogy symbolizes extremely well the ethos of Robert A. Taft.
II. EVALUATIONS OF TAFT'S SPEAKING

Consistent with the title of this chapter, Taft: The Man Speaking, this section will report evaluations made by rhetorical and non-rhetorical critics of Taft's speaking effectiveness. The purpose will be to provide a basis for comparison with the results of this study.

The Rhetorical Critics.

The evaluations to be considered here were made by men trained in rhetoric and criticism. The first is Donald Kleckner, writer of the first doctoral dissertation on Taft. Kleckner's final estimate of the Senator's speaking was:

Senator Taft cannot be called a great speaker, but his speeches should be of interest to the student of public address because they reveal the ideas of a top political leader who has been unafraid to express his views. Whenever Senator Taft has spoken in the past, people have listened carefully and thoughtfully, for his views have often affected the welfare of this nation. 1

On much the same basis, the second dissertation, done by Noel Rapp, rated Taft an effective speaker:

Despite violation of many principles and techniques of public speaking textbooks, Senator Taft was an effective speaker, as is evidenced by much testimony and his record of influence in the Senate and within the Republican Party.

His effectiveness was the result of his ethical appeal to his audiences, who respected his fearlessness, and his forthrightness. His lack of the graces of the polished orator probably strengthened his ethical appeal. 2


While Kleckner concluded that Taft cannot be called "a great speaker," Rapp rated him "an effective speaker." Both critics credited Taft's stature as a man of influence in their evaluations.

The reports of two other rhetorical critics were evaluations of Taft's campaign speaking. Lionel Crocker, after reviewing the Stassen-Taft fight for Ohio's delegates in 1948, concluded, "The personal and emotional appeals of Stassen were almost entirely lacking in Taft .... And strangely enough the logical proof of Taft was sufficient to stop the onrush of Stassen's runaway campaign that had swept through Wisconsin and Nebraska." 1

As a result of viewing Taft's 1952 speaking, Warren Guthrie wrote, "The Taft speech, when given to a friendly audience, usually won an enthusiastic response. Neutrals and opponents were not visibly moved, however." 2 Evaluating Taft's speaking on the basis of the constituents of rhetoric, Guthrie concluded:

In content the Senator's speeches were always well-organized. He knew his beliefs thoroughly, and had a rationale for each which was logically valid, if his basic premises were accepted. His style, although often almost too plain, did hold attention. His delivery was marred by a flat, harsh voice and by choppy, repetitious gestures but possessed a strength and sincerity of considerable impact.

Both observers agreed that Taft's logical proof was his chief strength in the campaigns of 1948 and 1952. Taken together, the four reports...


rhetorical critics noted Taft's effectiveness in the use of logical proofs. Two of them mentioned his stature as being important in their evaluations. None seemed to consider Taft a "great" speaker.

The Non-Rhetorical Critics.

The following brief sketches of critical comments were made by newsmen, columnists, and political analysts. These men were not trained in criticism of public address although their analyses were based on a great deal of experience in observing public speakers. It will be interesting to note how their evaluations correlate with those of the rhetorical critics.

Representative of the judgments by non-rhetorical critics are the following:

When Taft leveled his guns on an item of legislation they were loaded with logic and facts rather than with oratorical skill. It was not his dry, flat voice that held the attention but rather the facts he marshalled for their consideration.¹

Taft has the knowledge. One only has to read his bony, non-rhetorical, disputatious speeches, a difficult but sometimes rewarding job to appreciate the fact that his disciplined, hard-working mind can be an instrument of precision and force.²

One reason why his speeches fall on such unresponsive ears is that they are altogether free of the flare-words to which the past century of political oratory has conditioned the American voter.³

He writes honest and lucid but dull speeches, and the way he delivers them doesn't help any. And yet the man has the great gifts of clarity and simplicity.⁴

¹. "Robert A. Taft Lived Up To His Famous Name," Chicago Tribune, (August 1, 1953), 6-F.
³. Ibid.
Whether his listeners are businessmen or clubwomen, farmers or factory workers, he makes precisely the same points in precisely the same way. His talks are heavily loaded with economic and political theory, and they are as crammed with statistics as a textbook. 1

Mr. Taft stands solemnly back of the reading stand and delivers a humorless indictment of the Truman administration. He makes few gestures. In a scolding tone, he hurls blunt phrases at his audience. 2

In the representative evaluations above, Taft's speaking was not regarded as particularly effective. The non-rhetorical critics, while noting his strength in logical matters, focused on his plain style and delivery. One observer even called his speeches "unrhetorical," indicating that they lacked something in the way of an effective style. The writers and reporters believed that he did not make use of emotional or ethical appeals in any extensive way and that his speeches lacked audience adaptation.

Summary.

The judgments of the two groups of critics differ in the amount of emphasis placed on invention. The non-rhetorical observers were more concerned with style and delivery; the rhetorical critics emphasized the effects of the speeches in relation to the materials of invention. Taken as a composite, the previous evaluations of Taft's speaking will serve as a useful comparison with the final estimate of this study.


III. METHOD OF PREPARING SPEECHES

The rhetorical critic is always interested in the way in which the speaker prepared his public addresses. This gives added insight to the process of evaluating the speeches themselves. The last part of this chapter, Taft: The Man Speaking, will be concerned with his method of preparing his speeches.

The materials for this section was gained from interviews with his son, Robert Taft, Jr.; his campaign manager, David S. Ingalls; his personal secretary, Blanche O'Berg; and the chairman of the Labor League for Taft, Eugene Carr. These sources were supplemented with the meager accounts found in periodicals and books. The process of preparing a speech may be divided into four steps: planning, research, composition, and rehearsal. Taft's methods in each of the four steps will be considered in this section.

Planning the Speech.

As might be expected, Taft considered the nature of the audience and occasion in planning the speeches. The subject and its development were decided upon with reference to the group addressed.

Ingalls stated that at the start of a campaign, Taft would decide what issues were significant, which ones he wanted to emphasize. If some were especially important in a particular region, they were to be emphasized there, e.g., farm problems in the Mid-West, foreign trade in the East. As noted in Chapter III, Taft was on record with his thinking on nearly all issues of importance during the course of a campaign. Mainly Taft wanted to "cover the issues" in a single campaign speech.
A marked similarity of his speeches in any given campaign was noted by reporters. Ingalls explained this by saying that Taft felt if a speech was good in Cleveland, it was good in Toledo. Also, because he gave so many speeches, time did not permit drafting a new speech for each place.

The planning of his Senate speeches was dictated by the action on the floor. From the start, Taft studied all major legislation rather carefully, and spoke on a wide range of subjects in the Senate. Much of his Senate speaking was to introduce or support legislation he had worked on in committee, or to oppose such legislation. In relatively few instances did he deliver a major "policy" speech in the Senate.

In his occasional, non-campaign speeches, the audience or occasion usually was the deciding factor in planning the speech. There were several notable exceptions, such as the Nuremberg Trial Speech at Kenyon College on October 6, 1947, and the United Nations Speech on May 26, 1953, before the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Cincinnati. On these occasions Taft's subject was not inherently related to his particular audience, but he chose subjects on which he felt something needed to be said at that time. The occasion provided a forum for his thinking in such cases.

Reporters generally were impressed with the fact that Taft did most of his own research for his speeches. His excellent memory enabled him to retain much of what he read, thus providing a back-log of information. He also had the largest legislative research staff in Washington and he had the benefit of the Senate committees' research staffs to make information available to him. Much of the research for
a specific speech was done by him personally. One account said, "If it is a subject with which he is not familiar he does considerable research. He makes copious notes." 1

One writer even referred to this as an "intellectual arrogance." He said further, "Mr. Taft writes his own speeches and does all the important parts of his own research. He is reported to dislike having draft suggestions placed before him for fear he might inadvertently employ someone else's words." The writer felt that Taft's "intellectual arrogance" was responsible for his making "the same speeches over and over." 2

Another writer termed it "intellectual self-reliance." He stated, "He does his own research. He writes his own articles, his own speeches, his own broadcasts. Even the people who work with him don't know what he is going to say." 3

Whether it was termed intellectual "arrogance" or "self-reliance," it was agreed that Taft did most of his own research for his speeches.

Composition.

Just as the research was done personally by Taft, so was the actual composition of his speeches. All four of those interviewed in connection with this section stated that he used no "ghost writers" at any time.

For the campaign speeches, Taft usually listed from five to ten

points he wanted to cover in a talk. Seldom was a complete, word-for-word text prepared in these cases. Sometimes the notes would be broken down into sub-points; other times just key words would be used, e.g., civil rights, Korea, housing. When the speech was delivered, Taft would just "talk through" these notes. When he gave up to ten speeches a day during a campaign, he would use the same notes all day. Ingalls reported that Taft usually changed the order of the points from town to town but the total speech covered approximately the same material.

For those few campaign speeches which were written out word-for-word, Taft always dictated them to a secretary, usually Blanche O'Berg. She said that he went rapidly, for he always knew what he wanted to say and how he wanted to express it. She said that sometimes he might stop to think a point over several minutes before dictating it orally. After she had typed a draft, he would pencil in a few changes and she would have the final version typed and mimeographed for distribution to the press. On a few of his occasional speeches, he worked from notes he had made in his research.

Whenever Taft delivered a major occasional speech, he had the manuscript before him. He would make few references to it. His memory enabled him to retain the sentence structure with but few changes from the manuscript. Ervin supported this by saying, "When he faces an audience he often does not refer to his manuscript, although what he says is very little different from what he has previously written." 1

White reported that most of the times when Taft spoke in the

Senate, he used no manuscript or even notes. 1

Adding to the fact that he always composed his own speeches is Walter Davenport's statement, "Twice and only twice, he permitted publicity men to spangle speeches he had written. He read the garnished versions of his uninspired but forthright manuscripts and threw them away." 2

Ingalls told of one case when Philip Porter of the Cleveland Plain Dealer offered Taft a draft of a speech during the 1928 campaign. Porter had felt that "Taft wasn't getting across" to the people; he drafted a speech expressing Taft's ideas in an attempt to show the Senator how he could be more effective. Taft thanked him, complimented him on the "good speech" and then discarded it.

Among the speech texts in possession of Blanche O'Berg are two "suggested drafts" of speeches prepared for Taft for the 1952 campaign by his public relations man, L. Richard Guylay. Miss O'Berg said that the Senator read them but that he never used them.

As far as "polishing" the speech through successive drafts, Miss O'Berg stated that the Senator made corrections of the original draft only in places where he thought the meaning of the sentence might be confusing to some. There usually was no further revision of the texts.

Taft's speech composition was done just like everything else that he wrote: he dictated a draft to his secretary, read it over marking changes, and then forgot about it until time to deliver the speech.

Rehearsal.

In most instances, Taft did not rehearse or practice the delivery of his speeches. He read them over to himself perhaps several times in the process of composition and then turned his attention to other matters.

The thing that distinguished Taft's speech preparation was that substantially it was his own work through the entire process. He did much of his own research, he decided what should be said and how it should be phrased, and he dictated the actual draft without resorting to anyone else's ideas.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the man as a speaker was reviewed as a preliminary to the analysis and criticism of his speeches in succeeding chapters. Three aspects were considered: the ethos of Taft; evaluations of his speaking by other critics; and his method of preparing his speeches.

It was developed in this chapter that Taft as a speaker symbolized candor, intellect, integrity, partisanship, and aloofness. All of these affected the public's attitudes toward him. His frankness, his logical thinking ability, and his responsibility as a speaker enhanced his stature. His strong partisanship either helped or hindered his credibility, depending on the political views of the listener. His lack of color was a deterrent to popular acceptance by the electorate; it did not greatly affect his public speaking per se.
Next, the previous evaluations by rhetorical and non-rhetorical critics were reviewed. These judgments generally agreed that Taft was strong in logical proof but rather weak in his use of emotional appeals. The reactions to the effectiveness of his ethical appeals were both favorable and unfavorable. Most agreed that his style and delivery left something to be desired.

The third section of the chapter dealt with his method of speech preparation. The distinguishing feature was that Taft did nearly all his own research and all of the composing of his speeches. His method was to dictate a draft to his secretary and then to make changes for the sake of clarity. The fact that he did not spend time refining and polishing the speech probably explains his plain style.

With these aspects of Taft as a speaker in mind, the following chapters will be devoted to the criticism of his speeches according to the traditional standards and criteria of criticism of public address.
CHAPTER V

THE SMITH-TAFT DEBATES: FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY

In 1939, the Columbia Broadcasting System sponsored thirteen weekly broadcasts which they described as "a series of debates on the traditions of government in the United States, in the light of the major issues now before the nation." The series was called "Foundations of Democracy" and was later published in a book under the same title. The two men selected to participate in this series were T.V. Smith, Congressman from Illinois, and Robert A. Taft, Senator from Ohio.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE DEBATES

The reason for the selection of these two men was explained in a letter from T.V. Smith. He wrote that he was on CBS's "national board." Continuing, he wrote, "We had often at CBS grieved over the low estate of public discussion. When I was elected to Congress, it was natural for CBS to ask me to put up or shut up. I put up." 1

Smith also stated that they tried to get Bruce Barton or two or three other Republicans who were "in the public eye" to oppose him. But all refused. "Taft was the only one we approached who ignored the political notion that you are not punished for what you do not say."

The New York Times noted that many Washington observers felt

1. Letter from T.V. Smith, September 1, 1959.
that Senator Taft had made a mistake — that the debates might "build up" Representative Smith, an experienced radio speaker, without aiding the cause of the Senator. 1

The main purpose of this chapter will be to evaluate Taft's effectiveness in supporting his point of view in the debates. They furnish a relatively complete picture of Taft's views in 1939. Although the broadcasts were not strictly debates, but rather a "comparing of notes," they furnish a good basis for evaluating a predominately Republican man's ideas as opposed to a Democrat's.

Preliminary to an analysis of the speaking, an understanding of the speaking situation would be helpful. These debates, occurring early in 1939, followed the Congressional elections of 1938 in which Roosevelt was rebuffed somewhat, as noted in Chapter III. The New Deal had not been able to arrive at a long-lasting solution to the economic ills of the nation. Taft had received much support from disgruntled farmers in Ohio in his campaign for the Senate in 1938. Criticism of the New Deal was widespread, and the Smith-Taft debates served as a focal point. The occasion of the debates was indeed significant.

No complete estimates could be found on the size of the audience which heard the debates. The broadcasts were carried nationally on the Columbia network. After ten of the debates had been held, an American Institute of Public Opinion poll estimated that a total of five million persons had heard one or more of the first ten debates. 2

The two speakers were fairly well known nationally. Taft's campaign for a Senate seat received considerable nationwide coverage. As a result, he was even mentioned as a possible Presidential candidate for 1940.

Thomas Vernor Smith's background presented an interesting contrast; he was born in a log cabin in Blanket, Texas. Most of his life up to this time had been spent in teaching. After graduating from the University of Texas in 1915, he took his master's degree there the next year. T.V. Smith's first teaching position was at Texas Christian University where he was instructor of English and philosophy. In 1922, he earned his doctorate at the University of Chicago and joined the faculty there at that time. Later, he became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Chicago. His first political position came when he was elected to the Illinois State Senate in 1934 as a Democrat. He entered the House of Representatives in 1939 as Congressman-at-Large from Illinois. 1

Smith was regarded as a skillful public speaker, having debated Clarence Darrow in 1925 on the question, "Can the Individual Control His Conduct?" He was a founder and frequent participant on the University of Chicago Roundtable. 2

In his letter, Smith stated that neither had an advance copy of


the other's speech and that any refutation was prepared on the spur of the moment. There were no rebuttal speeches; each alternated opening the debates. The thirteen debates will be divided into three groups in this chapter: (1) those on the functions of government; (2) those on the problems of the government in 1939; and (3) the detailed analysis of two debates. The texts of the speeches to be analyzed were taken from the book, *Foundations of Democracy*. ¹

II. DEBATES ON THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT


T.V. Smith began the first debate with his typical salutation, "Kinsmen in Texas, neighbors in Illinois, friends in Maine; women and men of America; greetings from Washington." He referred to Lincoln’s birthday, commented on Washington’s and Jefferson’s up-coming birthdays, and mentioned the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Congress in his introduction. Throughout the speech, he quoted Mark Twain, Clarence Darrow, Will Rogers, and Oliver Wendall Holmes in addition to excerpts from two poems. His answer to the question, "What is the American Way of Life?" was:

Don’t we or do we --- believe, I mean, in these ideals of equal opportunity, equal protection, equal participation? We do .... They represent yet and ever our faith, our way of thought. But they do not fully represent our way of life.... Americanism as a way of life is a large faith in, and a smaller practice of, what we of ourselves do so well know: friendliness, Humility, and humor.

Taft’s much more serious introduction was typical of his manner:

"It is a pleasure and a privilege for me to join in this series of broadcasts with Representative T.V. Smith."

Taft's answer to the question, "What is the American Way of Life?" was founded in his concept of liberty. He said:

The basis of the American business and constitutional system is political and economic liberty. The basis of the American way of life has been equal opportunity to improve one's condition by one's own effort.

What the Government must do is to provide the conditions under which it is possible for the people to achieve individual progress, and much of the increased Government activity in recent years is justified on that ground. . . . Government must be administered so that the people generally are not taught to lean on the Government and let other people think for them.

The caution which he frequently administered throughout his political life also appeared in the conclusion of this speech: "In improving the condition of one-third of the people, we must not drag down the other two-thirds to a lower standard of living and a lower incentive to intelligent, directed effort."

Summing up, the first debate did not bring out a controversy to any extent. The central issue was: What should the government do to preserve the American way of life? Smith favored extensive government participation; Taft only wanted the government to insure that all had the opportunity to exercise their own initiative.

Second Debate: The Constitution --- Written or Unwritten?

Senator Taft opened the second debate with the question, "Why have a Constitution?" His answer was stated in a simple sentence: "The greatest value of the Constitution is to keep all our public officials from bossing us around." He went on to state his concept of the Constitution:
The Constitution did not create the American way of life; the character of that life has changed and extended since it was adopted; but it did impose certain restraints on the exercise of government power which have prevented democracy from destroying itself. The progress of America has been due to the retention of the spirit of liberty and individual initiative, kept alive by the freedom of the different localities and the freedom of the individual.

Smith's approach in this debate was direct; his language was personal, revealing the characteristic of making things understandable. His speech was again full of the light touch, with references to Charles Taft (the Senator's uncle) and William Howard Taft. He closed with a poem of Thomas Hardy. In his speech, he reviewed the provisions of the Constitution for the organization and functions of the various parts of the government. He mentioned the Bill of Rights which "declare what our Government will not do." The following expressed the essence of Smith's point of view on the Constitution:

Then there's the third part, which isn't in the Constitution at all, but which makes what's written there live and grow.... The historic miracle of turning that legal mechanism into this living organism which we love, that is the inner story of our Constitution's life.

The second debate revealed a definite clash of opinion over the nature of the Constitution. Smith's "historic miracle" which was responsible for making the Constitution live and grow, would be denied by Taft. The latter saw the Constitution as a written document which should be followed literally; the former regarded it only as a guide, depending on men's thinking to make it live and grow.

Third Debate: Congress --- Showmanship and Statesmanship.

Representative Smith, who opened this debate, developed the idea that Congress "is and has been both frivolous and serious." He came to the chief services performed by Congress: "to inform the public mind
through public debate, to allay private aggressions through public compromise, and to adjust collective tensions through public compromise."

Taft thought the subject itself was frivolous and stated bluntly, "I did not have anything to do with choosing the subject, and frankly, I doubt whether Congress has very much of either." To Taft, the most important qualities of Congress were far different from showmanship; these qualities were "common sense and hard work." He compared Congress to a jury passing on one proposal after another, prepared by other men and other groups in and out of Congress. The essential weakness of Congress, according to Taft, was that it considered measure after measure "on its own merits, without much attention to the question whether it fits into a larger program."

This debate was probably the least satisfactory of any in the series. There was no real clash of opinion, or major issues of contention. Both men shied away from considering Congress in its relations with the President during the New Deal. This point received some attention in the fourth debate.

**Fourth Debate: The Executive --- Tradition or Initiative?**

Senator Taft opened the fourth debate by quoting the powers granted to the President in the Constitution. He summarized by saying, "The powers of the President are granted in such general terms that undoubtedly any President has a wide possible range of policy." Next, he offered his opinion that "the American people have approved the policy of initiative pursued to a greater or less extent by every President." Next, he stated his major criticism of Roosevelt as President:
A combination of too much initiative and too little administration may be a good deal worse even than a simple following of tradition. That, frankly, has been one of the main reasons for the growing criticisms of the President. He proposes scheme after scheme intended for the ultimate benefit of the people but he has no interest in the manner in which each scheme is worked out, no concern to see that it fits in with other schemes carried out by other departments.

The Senator made his criticism more specific by citing examples of poor administration of relief and unemployment, credit and banking, the Wagner Labor Relations Act, farm policies, and housing. He called for improved administration in these fields and a reorganization of some government departments. He concluded with a tribute to Roosevelt for his suggestions of methods of dealing with the serious problems faced by the nation but added, "He is not interested in performing the essential constitutional duty of seeing that the laws are properly executed."

After hearing Taft's speech, Representative Smith summed up his reaction with a question, "Why do the Republicans chronically minimize Presidential power, while maximizing the power of business executives?" Next, he put Lincoln on the side of the Democrats, saying, "Lincoln's attitude -- the exception which proves the rule -- was the traditional Democratic one, the wide use of executive power for popular ends." He summed up his side with the statement, "The Republican view is that whatever is not allowed is forbidden; we Democrats believe that whatever is not forbidden is allowed when it is needed."

Taft's position in this debate was the more hard-hitting. Smith countered in a general way to the Senator's specific attacks on Roosevelt's policies; he avoided defending the Administration's actions.
This debate was the most interesting so far because both speakers referred to contemporary problems and policies to support their stands.

**Fifth Debate: The Courts --- Umpire or Guide?**

Opening the debate, Smith traced the development of the Court's growth from a traditional umpire to an American guide, "negative in nature but conclusive in authority." To him, the Court had two basic functions: (1) to protect individuals under the Bill of Rights from both state and federal encroachment, and (2) to cooperate at the task of making the Constitution adequate for governing a growing nation.

Smith avoided any mention of the controversy over Roosevelt's "Court-packing" proposal. He did state that "the Court's social distance from the people puts it at a disadvantage as an agency of advance." Further, he asserted his belief that, "Having no direct access to or from the people, it, like the Delphic Oracle, sometimes goes astray." He favored cooperation of the Court with Congress and the President as a method of obtaining close contact with the people.

In his speech, Taft cited the quality of the courts as the chief foundation of democracy. He defended the method of constitutional amendment as a basis for preventing the Court from doing things which the people don't approve.

He got right into the controversy over the Court, "The attacks on the Court arise from the intense prejudice of the New Deal against the Court because it found that some of their measures violated the fundamental principles of the Constitution." He carried his condemnation further by saying:
In fact, the whole trouble with the New Dealers is that they believe that whatever they desire the Court should hold to be constitutional. They do not care what happens to the fundamental principles on which this nation was founded.

This debate featured Taft's strongest attack yet on the New Dealers. He firmly believed that the Supreme Court was the essential check on the President and Congress which might be stampeded into hasty action in emergencies. An independent Court would prevent any harm to the traditional freedoms in such situations. He resented any efforts to tamper with the Court.

This section of debates on the nature and functions of government was completed with the sixth debate, "The States — Sovereign or Subsidiary?" It will be analyzed in detail later in this chapter. In brief summary of this section, it must be said that the first five debates produced a significant clash of opinion.

T.V. Smith believed that the government should provide equal opportunities for all, that the Constitution was a flexible, living document which could be adapted according to changing times. Congress, aside from serving as a public forum to inform the people, should serve as an agency of evolving compromises from among differing viewpoints as it devised the policies for the nation. In his thinking, the office of President should be a strong one; the President should exercise considerable initiative in dealing with the problems of his time. Finally, the Supreme Court should cooperate with Congress and the President rather than being an agency apart from them. His views coincided with those espoused by strong Democrats in the country.

Robert A. Taft held the opposite on almost every item mentioned
above. The chief function of government should be to insure that liberties were not impaired. The Constitution and its chief interpreter, the Supreme Court, presented and defended the liberties of the people. He rejected any thought that either of these were to be changed according to the dictates of the party in power. He believed that Congress should act as a mediating body — one which would consider legislation for the good of the country with an over-all view in mind. He favored considerable initiative for the President but criticized FDR for poor administration of the policies which had been adopted. Finally, it should be noted that Taft's speeches contained many indictments of the Roosevelt administration. These and other speeches earned for him the role as one of the chief critics of the New Deal.

III. DEBATES ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE GOVERNMENT

The remaining debates in the series contested the major problems of Roosevelt's administration: unemployment and relief, social security, labor-management relations, foreign policy, agriculture, and recovery. As might be expected, Smith defended Roosevelt's policies in these areas. Taft attacked the philosophy and administration of New Deal measures designed to deal with them.

Seventh Debate: Unemployment and Relief --- Federal or Local?

T.V. Smith chastized the Republicans for their refusal to recognize the seriousness of the problems of the "new poor." The Republicans, he charged, would give less relief than the Works Progress Administration but at a proportionately greater cost. He cited the ten years' experience with relief under both Hoover and Roosevelt. From it, he pointed
out three lessons that had been learned: (1) the Federal Government must take the major responsibility; the states could not pay for relief even if they would and should; (2) work relief is better than direct relief because it spends to create wealth as well as to relieve wretched conditions; and (3) cheapness is not economy and cannot be made so by any talk about the budget. Thus, he anticipated Taft’s arguments as he defended the basis and method of Roosevelt’s relief policy.

Taft’s primary concerns were with cost and administration. His view was that "Relief is an age-old problem. The responsibility has always been recognized as a strictly local responsibility." He explained that the Federal Government was called in, not because relief was primarily a federal problem, but because the state and local governments were unable to meet the tremendous costs. His solution was to return the administration of relief to the state and local governments. "The local people should determine how much work relief is really advantageous." His conclusion was,

The independence of the people and the permanence of democracy depend on the administration of local affairs by local governments. In the field of relief it should be more efficient; should provide more value for the money paid out; get relief to the people who really need it, and get it to them without politics or favoritism.

Here Taft was not opposed to relief for the unemployed. But he wanted the Federal Government to turn the money over to state and local governments which would administer the relief program. He feared the growing bureaucracy under a federally-controlled relief program.

Eighth Debate: Social Security --- Why and How Much?

Because thousands lost their savings and millions were thrown
out of work, the people turned to social security plans. These were not needed previously because it was felt that the economic system would enable every man to provide for himself and his family adequately. Conceding that some form of social security was necessary, Taft then gave his solution: reliance should be made on state pension, with assistance from the Federal Government only in financing. He continued again his arguments that the states could provide social security more effectively and with less danger to individual freedoms.

In this debate, Smith made a more direct attack on Taft, trying to ridicule his position:

I clearly got the impression tonight --- didn't you --- that the Senator doesn't want the Government in all this expensive business of security.... He wants the Government out, but he wants what cannot be had without the Government's being fully in.

He further defended the whole idea of social security, maintaining that "social security seems not only an American ideal but the American ideal." His attack on Taft was carried further when he said, "Mr. Taft, a successful lawyer and businessman, can provide this security personally. But the great majority of our citizens cannot." The more direct personal attack by Smith was the first time this technique had been introduced in the debates. It served to sharpen the differences between the two men and probably added interest to the debates. 

Ninth Debate: The Wagner Labor Relations Act --- Sit Down or Get Up?

Smith strongly defended the Wagner Labor Law because it forced management to recognize the collective bargaining rights of labor. He lauded the National Labor Relations Board as a splendid example of what he called the New Federalism, "the doctrine of the coordination, rather
than the separation of governmental powers, and the providing of new forms to meet new demands for control." He concluded by saying that the Wagner Act represented the greatest extension of democracy since manhood suffrage.

Taft gave credit to Senator Wagner for developing "this idea of making collective bargaining more effective than it ever was before." He doubted that the Wagner Act was the panacea which Representative Smith had described. He pointed out that "the position of the average workman had improved 300% in a hundred years without any Wagner Act."

His criticism of it was:

I think the basic injustice is the bias and prejudice of the present Board.... They do not regard themselves as judges, but as men with a mission to organize all employees in the U.S., whether they wish to be organized or not.

His solution was to change the method of administration of the Act so that employer and employee alike could be certain of impartial treatment. Taft's views were not so much opposed to the Wagner Act per se but to the administration of the Act. Attacking the administration of a law was a favorite Taft tactic when he didn't oppose the measure itself. But, in doing this, Taft was able to escape the charge of "me-too" which was applied to other Republicans.

Tenth Debate: Foreign Relations --- Congress or the President?

In his opening speech, Taft granted that the President has the predominant power over foreign relations. His criticism of Roosevelt's foreign policy was, "The President's position seems to me much too war-like." Taft asserted his belief which was to haunt him in a few years, "Nor do I believe we face any danger from Germany or Italy. We can
defend our position in North America and the Caribbean against the world if we have to, and that very fact means that we will never have to do so." His final caution was that the President should be careful about promising support in war, which he cannot give without action of Congress. Taft believed that Congress accurately reflected the "determination of the American people that they shall not become involved in European war."

Attacks on Taft's credibility in foreign affairs was the feature of Smith's speech. His comeback to the Senator's remarks was, "I could not escape the impression from the Senator's speech that because he's secure he thinks everybody's secure, and therefore, that anybody who talks of war is 'war-like, trying to create war'." Later, his remarks were more hard-hitting, "The trouble with Senator Taft is that he doesn't know what he's talking about. I'm convinced that though he's a Senator he knows as little about foreign affairs as I admit that I know." Smith then built up President Roosevelt: "The President knows what there is to be known; and yet he must tell little that he knows, lest indiscretion further inflame the world." Smith favored neutrality -- not a neutrality of isolation but of self-defense. He called the Administration's policy one of "a strenuous struggle for peace through every peaceful means that's possible."

In view of the seriousness of the European situation in early 1939, Taft perhaps over-looked some necessities of the times. Smith's defense of Roosevelt was one of the strongest he had made. This coupled with his attack on Taft enabled him to seize the offensive after being
on the defensive throughout the debates.

Eleventh Debate: The American Farmer --- Citizen or Peasant?

"The American farmer is a citizen at last," was the keynote of Smith's approach to the farm problem. In a talk filled with generalities, he stated that "full citizenship" for the farmer was one of the proudest achievements of the Democratic Party. This was in direct contrast to what the Republicans had done for the farmer, according to Smith. His justification for this conclusion was:

All through the decade of the twenties, while Republican administrations heeded the voice of big business, the American farmer was indeed being rapidly turned into an American peasant. Many thousands of country banks were closing their doors while thousands of farmers were losing their farms.

The Democratic administration had brought "a new day for the farmer, a day of democratic responsibilities and rewards that go with self government."

In the face of these criticisms by Smith, Taft defended Republican efforts to promote the welfare of farmers. He pointed out that from 1924 to 1929, the gross income from farm production was between 11 and 12 billion dollars annually, whereas after six years of New Deal "nursing" it was only $8,400,000,000 in 1938.

Taft asserted his belief that the farmers in Ohio would prefer no program at all to the present New Deal policy. "They deeply resent the orders from the Government to restrict their acreage," he claimed. His criticism of the present farm policy was that it rested "on a basis of regimentation and bureaucracy, enforced by hundreds of thousands of Governmental agencies. It is as far away from democracy as anything
which exists in the United States today." His solution was to secure the American market for the American farmer and build up that market.

It should be noted here that those debates which Smith opened were generally poorer in quality. Because of Smith's tendency to talk in generalities, Taft seldom offered a specific, point-by-point refutation. When Taft opened a debate, his speech was packed with facts and figures to support specific arguments. Smith generally replied to these, enabling a listener to recognize the issues more easily.

Twelfth Debate: The Path to Recovery — Thrift or Spending?

Taft began with the terse statement, "The Roosevelt administration has adopted the theory that this nation can spend itself into prosperity." He saw that "to some extent the American people themselves were swept away by this philosophy." His reaction to this spending theory was:

If any theory was ever completely disproved by results, this one has been disproved. We have spent twice as much money in the last six years as in any other six previous years.... And yet after all that spending and borrowing we fell into another depression in 1937, from which we have not recovered. To cure that depression, the New Deal has found but one panacea --- to spend still more money.

It was his assertion that spending tends to deter recovery. Lack of financial restraint encourages the Government into all kinds of activities where private enterprise can no longer operate in competition. It justifies vast Government bureaus to regulate every industry, regulations which nearly always discourage individuals from going into that kind of business. It leads to increased taxation, which makes profitable operation in private industry almost impossible. These were Taft's closely reasoned conclusions on the spending-for-recovery theory.
His major concern again was with the cost of the recovery measures. He offered no specific solution of his own but called for an adjustment of taxes "to interfere less with the industrious businessman and the industrious workman." If the President wouldn't recommend tax revision, Taft favored the formation of a committee in Congress to accomplish it.

Smith commented, "That was a very sobering picture which the Senator has just painted for you of our national predicament. You note, however, that he knows the cure --- just get the right President, or failing that, a congressional committee." He placed the blame on the Republicans for causing the depression in the first place:

Recall how it was in '32. Rebellion on the farms was ugly. Insolvency in the banks was terrifying. Prospects of starvation stalked the city streets. Fear was the steady food of more millions than it takes to make a majority of our fellow-citizens. We Democrats didn't make that situation; we found it full blown and not disposed to wait on our convenience.

Smith believed that the spending had, by and large, relieved the people's fears but it had not yet fulfilled their hopes. It had not yet brought back a sufficient national income to balance the budget and begin paying off the debt. His point was, "Indeed, it has not yet brought us to where we dare safely stop the spending itself."

Smith conceded that neither party knew how to create prosperity but surely it would come. Then, the budget could be balanced and the debt paid off. "To pay the debt out of a proper national income will not be hard; to carry it meantime is easy," was his promise.

Taft never better typified the conservative viewpoint than in this debate. His admonishments --- balance the budget, stop pump-priming, and cut taxes to encourage private enterprise --- contributed to the feeling that he was a classic conservative.
On the other hand, Smith embraced fully the popular New Deal idea that spending would lead to prosperity. Whether he really believed this or whether he was just over-simplifying economics in his speech is difficult to ascertain. He made it sound too easy.

In summary of the debates on the problems faced by the United States in 1939, it is apparent that they revealed a head-on clash between Republican and Democratic viewpoints of the time.

Senator Taft was concerned primarily with cost and efficient administration of relief, social security, and the Wagner Labor Act. He was not opposed to any of these policies in themselves but he disagreed with the expanding federal activities regarding them. He flatly opposed the aid to farmers program. He wanted strict non-intervention in European affairs. His view on recovery was that the Federal Government should insure opportunities for private enterprise rather than embark on excessive pump-priming projects.

The opposite views, held by Democratic Representative Smith, were embodied in his phrase, "New Federalism," whereby the government should take an increasing part in the economic system to compensate for the difficulties in business and industry.

IV. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF TWO DEBATES

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the debaters in supporting their respective points of view, two debates were selected for detailed analysis. Both debates were representative of the diverse viewpoints of the two men. A good clash of opinion was presented in them and the issues were clear cut.
Sixth Debate: The States — Sovereign or Subsidiary?

Senator Taft's Speech.

Senator Taft began his speech by quoting the tenth amendment, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people;" Using this as his "text," he developed the central idea of his speech: the sovereignty of the states is still essential to democratic government even though changing conditions have caused the Federal Government to move into areas formerly reserved for the states.

Main points. To develop and support his central idea, the Senator used five main points: (1) state sovereignty prevents encroachment by the federal government on local self-government; (2) local self-government is still the greatest safeguard against the growth of an autocratic government; (3) centralized government is not more efficient; (4) no one in Washington can make laws which will fit local conditions due to the widely varying conditions throughout the country; and (5) as the Federal Government expands its activities, the tax burden increases in proportion to the total income.

The first two main arguments above state the advantages of state and local self-government. The last three present the problems inherent in a strong centralized government. Thus, he supported his central idea with both direct and refutatory main points.

Organization. Senator Taft used lengthy introductory material before coming to his thesis. After quoting the tenth amendment, he was careful to point out that before the adoption of the Constitution, the states were sovereign, and it was intended by those drafting the Con-
stitution that the states should remain sovereign. Then from the Pre-
amble, he noted that the people hold the final authority. This set the
foundation for his arguments.

The body of the speech began with a chronological exposition of
the emerging American government in the colonies. The colonists moved
from a subordinate status to England, to their own individual independ-
ence, and gradually to unified action in national affairs. Corollary
to this historical development, the Senator pointed up the growing com-
plexities of American life. With this background, he presented his five
main points in order.

The conclusion made a strong re-emphasis of his main points
although they were restated and reduced to three in number: (1) local
self-government is the key to democracy; (2) a big national government
would soon be completely beyond the control of the people; and (3) al-
though the Federal Government will expand its powers in the future,
Congress and the courts must be determined to preserve local self-gov-
ernment and the sovereignty of states as bulwarks of the republic.

The organization of the speech must be rated as satisfactory.
The chronological development of his basic premises and the method of
contrast used to support the central idea made the speech easy to
follow. The Senator might have facilitated listening by pointing up
his main points more than he did. But over-all the speech appeared as
unified in its entirety.

Proof. Taft's logical proof relied on cause and effect reasoning
with his own experience as the source of the data. The chronological
development of the origin and growth of the American government contained conclusions generally accepted; no proof for these statements was needed.

To support his contention that state sovereignty prevents encroachment on local government and that local government is the greatest safeguard against the growth of an autocratic state, he used four sub-points: (1) direction by Washington bureaucrats would not consider the wishes of the local area; no amplification was given for this point; (2) people in different states prefer different ways of doing things; to support this, he offered evidence of differing methods of selection of officials, differing lengths of governors' terms, Nebraska's unicameral legislature, differences in state university systems, tax systems, and prison reforms; (3) local self-government permits experimentation in city government administration, street lighting and cleaning, hospital administration, and park development. He reasoned that these experiments have led to a steady improvement in municipal administration, "far healthier than one directed from Washington under a great Federal bureaucracy"; and (4) the people want to have a voice in the administration of their schools and in determining the kind of education their children should have. He claimed that this would be more desirable than to permit a single, national system of education to be forced on local districts.

Hence, he used as proof the citation of many different ways of doing things on a local level. He reasoned that these differences permitted experiments which resulted in improvements. Throughout, he contrasted this with the undesirability of having local matters dictated
by "Washington bureaucrats." His careful and detailed exposition made a strong case for state sovereignty. But he failed to clinch the major point that local experiments would be prohibited by a centralized government. He assumed that a centralized system would require a single, uniform standard for the nation. This ignores the likelihood that local differences would still be permitted in many things.

To support his third main point, centralized government is not more efficient, he used his own experiences. Chiefly this was an ethical approach to proof because he cited how he favored a strong government when he started out in politics but grew more distrustful of strong government as he became more experienced. This will be considered further under ethical proof.

His fourth point, no one in Washington can make laws which will fit local conditions due to the widely-varying conditions throughout the country, was supported by hypothetical illustrations. He mentioned that a law might fit conditions in New England but it might be unsuitable in Iowa or California. His failure to cite specific cases of such laws weakened the proof for this supporting contention.

The fifth main point of the speech, that as the federal government expands its activities, the tax burden increases in proportion to the total income, was supported by the fact that whereas individuals used to pay five per cent of their incomes to the government, this had been raised to twenty per cent. In addition to the increased taxes, Taft stated that there is a tendency for the Federal Government to exercise more control when it provides the money to cities and school districts.

How effective was his use of logical materials? The Senator
revealed a careful analysis of the problem of federal versus state sovereignty. The arguments he chose to support his central idea that the sovereignty of states is essential to democratic government were significant. The proof for them consisted of generalizations from his experiences coupled with causal reasoning. Much of the development was in the form of careful, clear explanation. His citation of many and varied specific instances contributed to the logical adequacy. The major weakness was that Taft did not offer enough proof for his assertion that a strong central government would prevent local experiments in local matters. Those in favor of a strong central government would not necessarily rule out local experiments in education, city administration, etc. Taft failed to make his position cogent on this argument.

The Senator's speech was chiefly logical in its appeal. His use of emotional proof was limited. The chief motive appeals were negative. There were only two positive appeals: to preserve the structure of government as set up by the founders and to preserve local control over the kind of education children should receive. These were made several times in the speech. But for the most part, he used negative appeals: preserve local and state sovereignty less activities be run by Washington bureaucrats; heavier tax burdens will come with increased governmental activities; and with the increase of the central government's power, the people will be reduced to the right of deciding who will be their dictator for the next four years. Taft did not use these strongly; his appeals were subdued, matter-of-fact, not fully developed. Implicit throughout his speech was an appeal to logic, to reason. He
was implying that anyone who would study the Constitution and the history of the United States would be led to his thesis — that state sovereignty was vital for the survival of democratic government. An extensive and powerful use of emotional appeals did not appear here.

The Senator used ethical proof extensively in only one place in the speech. This was to support his point that a centralized government is not necessarily an efficient government. He supported this with his own experience:

When I started out in politics I was strong for central government, on the theory that it would produce greater efficiency. The longer I have been in politics, the more I have come to doubt the premise of this conclusion. I doubt if centralized government is more efficient.... I doubt whether efficiency is as important as the activity approved by the people who are being governed.

The effectiveness of this support would rest on the listeners' acceptance of Senator Taft as a reasonable man, as one who would change his mind according to the dictates of experience.

On an over-all basis, Taft enhanced his own credibility by resting authority on the Constitution and by closely patterning his arguments on the lessons of history. His approach was strong for states' rights but it was not violently partisan. He did not castigate the Democrats or praise the Republicans. He gave the impression of a man advocating what he sincerely believed after study and reflection.

In summary of his use of proof, Taft's chief reliance was on the logical. This was satisfactory except in one place where he failed to convince that a centralized government would lead to a uniformity of local matters. Emotional appeals were limited and ethical appeal, although limited also, was fairly effective.
Style. The Senator's speech as far as word choice was concerned was a model of simplicity and clarity. The language was straight-forward and well adapted to the average listener. He made little use of colorful words or well-turned phrases. His favorite loaded term, probably over-used, was "Washington bureaucrat." This plain style contrasted greatly with T.V. Smith's, as shall be seen later.

Representative Smith's Speech.

T.V. Smith opened with his reaction to Taft's arguments: "Do you understand the Senator's speech as I do --- that sin is a bad thing, especially Democratic sin; but that anybody can have all the sovereignty he wants, especially if Republicans dispense it?"

He then tried to extend Taft's point of view to an absurdity:

He seems particularly interested in local independence. He doesn't seem to have reached the limit of localization. He may yet reach the logical limit of precinct sovereignty before his day is done. I assure you that the Senator is still almost youngish in years.

The thesis of Smith's speech was that the time had come to re-define the position of the states --- the states and the federal government should apportion their duties on the basis of which is better able to discharge them.

Main points. Smith's speech clearly fell into three divisions, each built around a main point. The three main points were: (1) the Democratic position on the place of the states was identical with Hamilton's; (2) the Democrats want to help the states save their solvency and dignity; and (3) states are neither sovereign nor subsidiary.

Organization. His introduction was adapted to Taft's remarks,
as noted earlier. Smith then stated his central idea —- the position of the states should be redefined —- and previewed the main points he would cover. This was done quickly and he moved rapidly into the first point. The body of the speech contained the development of the main points and the conclusion was a capsule summary of the entire speech and Smith's philosophy. The easily discernible main points made the speech easy to follow. All of Smith's speeches followed this skeletal organizational pattern. The development within each main point was not as clear cut, however, and often tended to be rambling and repetitious.

**Proof.** Smith's speech was more expository than argumentative in its development. In his first main point he supported the idea that the Democratic Party of 1939 held essentially the same on federal-state relations as did Alexander Hamilton. As proof, he cited Hamilton's proposal to assume the debt burden of the thirteen states and compared this to the Democrats' efforts to save the solvency of the states. Further, he asserted that by controlling interstate commerce the Democrats "have raised a friendly ceiling over the states and laid a solid floor under state standards of industrial decency." Thus, the Democrats were acting to protect the states against national monopolies. By equating the result of the Democrats' policies with those of Alexander Hamilton, Smith sought to insure their acceptability. But the logic of his analogy was open to question.

His next main point was phrased in his typical style, "We Democrats love the states, love them too much not to help save their solvency and decency." Here he cited the work done by state governments
and the fact that many Congressmen and federal judges had served their apprenticeship in state offices. He mentioned his work as Chairman of the Council of State Governments of America, an agency devoted to insure cooperation in federal-state relations. The introduction of this point tended to increase Smith's stature on this subject. He mentioned how the Federal Government was cooperating with the Council "to prevent, if possible, extension of its own power."

The third and final main point was that the states were neither fully sovereign nor subsidiary. He pleaded for avoidance of terms such as "states'rights" and "federal encroachment." He called for an apportionment of duties between state and federal governments on the basis of which was best able to discharge them. Here, Smith talked only in general terms; this was one of his major weaknesses in the debates. There was no doubt that he favored federal control over many matters formerly reserved to the states. But he did not openly state this position; rather he tried to justify his conclusion by diluting the impact of what he was arguing.

Although he was capable of using emotional proof well, Smith avoided using motive appeals in this debate. This may be accounted for by the fact that he was not strongly advocating a proposal; his approach was expository and did not call for much use of motive appeals to persuade the audience.

Style. T.V. Smith's style as a speaker provides much opportunity for study. But the purpose here is to contrast it with Taft's. The difference between the two men in their use of language was marked. Taft's
serious, straight-forward, plain style had none of Smith's embellishments. The latter's word choice was ornate at times. He often quoted poetry and told stories to add interest. In all, his style had a folksy, homey character to it although at times this was over-done.

Representative of Smith's style was this statement of his central idea:

It is easy to speak the states fair; any politician can do it on demand. But the time has come, dropping wishy-washy amiability, to re-define the position of the states and to pledge all patriots to their support. On nothing more than on this showing does the present Democratic Administration, in my opinion, deserve well of the states and the nation.

In another place, he explained:

Neither fully sovereign nor wholly subsidiary, the states in relation to the nation present, as Woodrow Wilson remarked, not so much a problem of sovereignty as "a question of vitality." In a living thing, can the hand say to the body, I have no need of thee; or the body to the hand, I have no need of thee? Amputated, the hand is but clay; handless, the arm is but a stump.

Compared to the above examples, Taft's style lacked a personal directness to the listener. This gave rise to charges that Taft's speeches were "dull, prosy, and boring." Yet, the clarity of his expression should not be over-looked.

This debate on the role of the states in the governmental system brought out well the contrasts in the two speakers. Taft was serious in presenting his case; Smith used humor and the light touch. Taft's position, representing the traditional Republican viewpoint, was carefully thought out and supported with concrete examples; Smith tended to talk in more general terms about federal-state relations. Both men used their experiences to enhance their ethos; neither relied on emotional
proof to any great extent although Taft attempted to utilize it in his
speech. It was unfortunate that the format of the series did not permit
rebuttal speeches, for these would have intensified the clash on the
issues. In concluding, it should be noted that Taft was more effective
in defending his view because he talked more in specifics. But Smith's
view was the one that became increasingly popular under the Roosevelt
administration.

Thirteenth Debate: Forward America --- Which Way and What Speed?
The concluding debate in the series gave each man a chance to
present his thinking regarding the course the United States should take
in the future. In order to present the views of each speaker clearly,
their arguments will be presented in outline form. Comments will follow
each section of the outline.

Smith opened the debate by crediting Senator Taft for being an
articulate conservative and for being honest and courageous. In his
speech, Taft thanked Smith for the kind words and complimented him for
his spirit of tolerance and friendship. Then Taft said that if Con­
grressman Smith, with all his ability, was unable to find a logical
and consistent defense of the New Deal, "certainly it is not his fault
but that of the New Deal."

Following, in outline form, is the development of each man's
basic premise:

**T.V. Smith**

I. We live in a highly organized
world, and few of us like the way
organizations cramp our individ­
ual style.

**Robert A. Taft**

I. We have been going forward dur­
ing the last 150 years toward a
goal which the Pilgrims establish­
ed in 1620.
A. "Organization-itis" limits our freedom, hurts our dignity, and results in a loss of individuality.

B. This hits me hard as one born in a log cabin where self-help was the only help.

C. It hits me hard as a Democrat whose Party distrusts organization.

Smith's development of his basic premise followed an often-used technique of his; he pointed out that a situation exists, that it is undesirable in some respects, and that the Democrats were against it. Taft made no reference to this premise; he was concerned again with the lessons of history. His reference to "financial feudalism" was a comeback to Smith's charge that the Republicans were a Party of Big Business which cared little for the common man. Of course, both men made their respective points as a foundation for their arguments which followed:

T.V. Smith

II. Under Republican influence America was so one-sidedly organized by 1932 that the old free enterprise system called capitalism had actually become financial feudalism.

A. These conservatives were honest in their aristocratic belief that a moral receivership is better than democracy for the American people.

B. They believed that wise and good men at the top would make whatever welfare is possible seep through to the people.

Robert A. Taft

II. Men were more free in 1932, before the New Deal, than they were in any other country in the world.

A. The average workman had a standard of living three times higher than it was in 1820.

B. The New Deal has gone farther and farther into the forest of Government regulation until, in complete darkness, they are moving back in the direction of the Middle Ages.

1. Many New Dealers have no
C. When the Democrats came to power in 1933 we found a vast corporate interest over-organized against the American people.

1. The farmers and laborers had to organize to protect their interests.

2. And so Organization-itis spreads from this single Republican source of group selfishness and rages throughout the body politic.

Concern for individual freedom.

2. They are collectivists who who believe in planned economy.

C. T.V. Smith tonight states the philosophy which dictates this backward policy.

1. He says the way to get less regimentation is to suffer more government regulation.

2. He argues that we have substituted political regulation for economic regimentation, but admits that this policy leads to the corporate state of Mussolini.

The development of Smith's first main point above shows how he capitalized on his first premise. It was the Republicans, in his view, who had permitted an over-organization in some aspects of the economy. To counter the undesirable results of this, the Democrats had brought about the organization of the "little man" to protect his rights against the financial interests. He was using a common argument against the Republicans: they were a Party of Big Business. In a sense, this was an emotional argument somewhat toned down; it appeared in the speech as a common-sense conclusion. Taft must have considered this charge a significant one, for in the last part of his speech, he made a direct refutation of it. This will be considered later.

Taft of course denied that the Republicans were at fault. It was the Democrats, with their obsession for planning and their many government regulations, who had been responsible for thwarting the development of the economy and individual rights. He used a rare device for
him, a figurative analogy, "They have wandered farther and farther into the forest of government regulation until, in complete darkness, they are moving back in the direction of the Middle Ages." He was effective in reducing Smith's position to an absurdity when he summed up the latter's position as, "The way to get less regimentation is to suffer more government regulation," and that the Democrats "substituted political regulation for economic regimentation" while admitting that this leads to fascism. In the next main point, each man stated his essential thesis:

**T.V. Smith**

III. The choice in the future depends on which party can best hold the disease in check and go forward to a cure.

A. The Democratic Party will keep the nation balanced meantime by doing its duty toward the unemployed.

B. The Republicans cannot renounce their allegiance to Organization-itis --- they would return to financial feudalism with labor and agriculture knuckling under.

C. The only road of safety is to keep these organized pressures equal until their fierce competition can be subdued together.

1. Thus, the Democrats believe that more government is required to get more freedom for the most people.

2. To deal with economic mon-

**Robert A. Taft**

III. It is the Republican Party which today looks forward.

A. Instead of throwing away all past experience and embarking on uncharted seas, we would keep the good things, encourage the principles which produced them, and correct the abuses.

B. We have heard a great deal about the depression of 1933 and the terrific condition left by the Republicans.

1. But the depression of 1933 was world-wide while the one of 1937 was specially caused by the New Deal.

C. The Republicans do not wish the many well through the assured welfare of the few, as Smith asserts.

1. No one tried to assure the welfare of any business until the New Deal through the NRA.
opologies there is required a monopoly of the legal force of the whole country.

D. New Federalism is the philosophy of the Democrats.

1. Where government is required, it ought to be made efficient through coordinating powers long left inefficient by separation.

2. The Democrats' "seepage theory of welfare" of putting men to work in government projects to create new purchasing power doesn't work out.

D. The theory of dishing out government funds, even though necessary, to produce prosperity has failed completely and has failed to restore the material wealth enjoyed in the twenties.

Smith's thesis, then, was that the choice for the future depends on which party can hold the "Organization-itis" disease in check while going forward to a permanent cure. The Democrats were better able to do this, he said, because the Republicans were too closely allied with business interests to renounce their "financial feudalism."

Taft's thesis was the direct statement that the Republican Party was the one which looked forward to the future. He asserted that it would retain those features which had worked out well in the past and correct the failures rather than going off on "uncharted seas."

Throughout his speech, Taft refuted Smith's points, indicating that much of his speech was prepared on the spur of the moment. In refutation, Taft stated the specific point he wanted to refute and then offered a contradictory argument or challenged the validity of Smith's point. In the last part of his speech, Taft mentioned the abuses of the twenties which needed to be corrected. This was in obvious reference to Smith's attacks on Republican policies of the pre-New Deal era. The abuses mentioned by Taft were: too many people were rich beyond what they deserved; the distribution of income was not sufficient for a
decent living of the poorer groups; labor and farmers were probably at a disadvantage in dealing with employers and consumers. Thus, he was admitting that Smith's charges against previous Republican administrations were valid in the above instances. For each of the abuses, he presented what could have been done to remedy them; he gave the New Deal credit in some instances and criticized it in others for the remedies it had proposed.

Looking at this debate in its entirety, it is apparent that both speakers made significant use of the main arguments against the opposition. There was considerably more "name-calling" and forceful assertions than in most of the previous debates. Once again, Taft was more partisan in his attack; Smith took a milder approach in developing his thesis. Smith stated that the Republicans were honest in their belief that their policies were best for the country but experience had proved them wrong. Taft likened the New Deal planners to collectivists and communists; he found little honesty or validity in their position.

Neither had a clear-cut advantage in persuasion in this debate. Smith in effect was saying, "The Republican record has been bad --- surely the Democrats could do no worse." Taft was pleading for less government regulation in all areas of the economy but he failed to prove his case against increased regulation in light of the exigencies of the times.

Even when presenting constructive arguments, Taft worked in a condemnation of the Democrats. It was note-worthy that he used less statistics and factual data in this debate and relied more on his own interpretations of the New Deal record.
IV. CONCLUSION

These debates certainly accomplished their purpose of demonstrating the differences between the Republicans and the Democrats over the policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The debates produced little agreement as was hoped in the preface of the book which contained the texts of the speeches. At the outset, it appeared that perhaps Taft had made a mistake by agreeing to participate. This was believed because T.V. Smith was more experienced in public debate and because the Republicans were generally on the defensive in 1939. In choosing to participate, Taft would be facing an accomplished opponent and he would be defending a minority viewpoint.

But the results were entirely in Taft's favor. One writer stated that as the debates proceeded, it "appeared that Smith was not making the expected mincemeat of Taft. Smith had the speed, charm, agility, and fancy footwork. But Taft, with his persistent pounding, platitudinous but common-sense style, was getting in a lot of body blows." ¹ Time magazine noted that Taft was considered inept at speech-making but he had become something of a "phenomenon of the politico-radio world because of his series ... with witty Congressman T.V. Smith. He speaks a homely common sense with a sincerity that makes people listen to him anyway." ²

¹ Beverly Smith, "Bob and Martha Take The Stump," American, CXXXII (September, 1939), 141.
² "Presidential Timbre," Time, XXXIII (June 19, 1939), 54.
A Gallup poll was conducted after the series had finished. Of those who had definite opinions, 66% thought that Taft had the better arguments while 34% favored Smith's viewpoints. One out of three people questioned in this poll couldn't decide which speaker had the better arguments. This may be explained in part by the fact that although Smith was upholding the more popular viewpoint, he talked in generalities so much that Taft's unrelenting criticisms nullified Smith's initial advantage.

Senator Taft's speeches were carefully thought out; he analyzed each problem fully and selected the significant arguments to support his stand. His arguments followed logically from his premises; his use of emotional appeals was not particularly effective when he attempted them. His ethical appeal was that of a strong partisan, a member of the minority who opposed the changes in government brought about by the Party in power.

Aside from the clash of ideas and opinions, the debates revealed a great contrast in style. Smith used humor, quoted poetry, developed points through analogies, and generally had a personal touch in his speeches. Taft's style was more serious, more matter-of-fact, almost devoid of the rhetorical devices used by his opponent.

The debates were important in Taft's early career. They gave him a nation-wide sounding board and he did not miss the opportunity to make his stand clear on the issues of the time.

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"Socialized medicine" was one of the most controversial domestic issues of the Truman Administration. Truman wrote that after he became President in 1945, "As soon as I could direct my attention to the most pressing domestic matters, I proposed a national health program." The President's recommendations for compulsory medical insurance, embodied in the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill, were strongly opposed by Republicans in Congress and by many lobbying groups, led by the American Medical Association.

Senator Taft vehemently opposed compulsory medical insurance throughout his career. When the issue came to a head with the introduction of the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill in 1945, he sponsored a voluntary health care measure in opposition to it. Since neither bill was ever reported out of committee, there was no Senate debate from which to select speeches for analysis.

This chapter will analyze three speeches. The first was delivered before the Ohio State Medical Association in Cincinnati on May 16, 1940. The second was before the American Medical Association in Los Angeles on December 5, 1951. Both of these opposed compulsory medical insurance.


2. This was verified by checking all issues of Congressional Quarterly from 1945 to 1953.
The third speech was selected for analysis here because it represented Taft's thinking on the role of government in welfare. Titled "The Individual and His Government," it was delivered before the annual meeting of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in Washington, D.C., on May 1, 1950.

Since this chapter and the two following represent the essence of the original work of this dissertation --- the criticism of speeches not previously subjected to rhetorical analysis --- the methodology will be presented as a foundation for the criticism.

It was explained in Chapter I that the standard of criticism to be used in this study considers both the quality and the effects of the speech. That is, the basic evaluative judgment, or standard, is based on two questions, "Was it a good speech?" and "Did the speech achieve its purpose?" Neither question alone constitutes a satisfactory standard for criticism. A speech is "good" when it reveals the speaker's skill in using the accepted principles of speech composition --- proof, organization, style, and delivery. A good speech, however, may not achieve its desired response or effects. Conversely, an "effective" speech may be judged inferior in some aspect of composition. Judging the effects of a speech involves a determination of whether it accomplished its purpose. Judging the quality of a speech involves an assessment of the use of the constituents of rhetoric.

The ancient rhetoricians listed the constituents of rhetoric

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1. Texts of the three speeches were made available by Miss Blanche O'Berg, the late Senator's secretary.
as invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory. Since few speakers now speak from memory, modern critics are concerned with the first four constituents listed above. Each of these will be explained in the appropriate sections of this chapter.

I. THE SPEAKING SITUATIONS

Thonssen and Baird emphasize, as do most rhetorical critics, that a speaking situation is the interaction of a speaker developing a chosen subject before a particular audience on a definite occasion. They wrote, "But most basic is the critic's evaluation of the speaker's ability to adjust his argument to the four factors of rhetoric as developed by the ancients: himself, his audience, his subject, and the occasion." ¹

Of the three audiences addressed by Taft in speeches on medical care, two were medical associations. The third was the United States Chamber of Commerce. An understanding of these audiences is essential to the criticism of the speeches.

Meeting in Cincinnati on May 16, 1940, the Ohio State Medical Association invited the state's newest Senator to address them. The factors which had a bearing on this speaking situation were as follows. Except for providing medical care for the indigent, the New Deal had taken no major steps in the health field. The basic work of caring for the needy had been done by city and state public hospitals and by char-

itable organizations. There was growing sentiment in Congress, however, for a more extensive governmental health program. The forerunner of the health measures was the Wagner bill which provided extensive federal participation. The author was the same Senator Robert F. Wagner who later joined with Taft in sponsoring housing legislation. Taft strongly opposed the Wagner health bill which he called "socialized medicine."

Further, the Roosevelt Administration had created an Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities of the government. Taft characterized this as "a typical New Deal set-up, created to justify and publicize a preconceived plan for extending federal control over the whole problem of health."

The medical associations had always opposed any attempts to establish a federal medical care system. The discussions of the Wagner bill accentuated the controversy over the government's role in health. This was the background as Taft spoke in Cincinnati in 1940. He was addressing a group whose views on medical care were the same as his.

Almost twelve years elapsed between Taft's speech to the Ohio State Medical Association and his American Medical Association speech, the second one selected for analysis in this chapter. World War II had interrupted action on federal medical care plans. But with the end of the war, the new President Truman recommended a comprehensive policy of health insurance. His proposal was embodied in the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill. When this bill was first considered by the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, Senator Taft vehemently opposed it.

When the Committee held hearings on the bill in 1946, Taft and
Senator James Murray, Chairman of the Committee and co-sponsor of the bill, clashed loudly. In his opening statement, Murray asked for abstinence from the use of such terms as "socialistic and communistic" in reference to the controversial bill. Taft interrupted, "I consider it socialistic. It is in my mind the most socialistic measure ever considered by Congress." Taft insisted on making a statement and proceeded to do so, with Murray shouting back at him. Finally, Murray exploded, "I don't propose to let you bluff me on a grand-stand play. You have so much gall and nerve you won't let anybody complete a statement." He called Taft "impolite, sarcastic, insulting, very impertinent and very unfair." Meanwhile, Taft continued to talk of his own ideas on a health program. Murray finally said to Taft, "Shut your mouth up and get out of here. You're so self-opinionated; think you're so important that you can come into any committee and disrupt it." Taft then walked out of the committee hearing for the rest of that session.¹

Taft objected to the provision of the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill which would extend the social security system to include insurance against the costs of medical care. It was a compulsory health insurance measure which was strongly endorsed by President Truman. To counter the compulsory health bill, Taft became the principal sponsor of a voluntary bill in 1946. The Taft-Smith-Ball bill would coordinate the health functions of the Federal Government and provide $230 million a year in the form of a federal grant to the states to enable them to provide

medical care for those unable to pay for it. 1

Because neither health bill was ever reported out of committee, there was no Senate debate. Taft frequently attacked the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill in his campaign speeches in 1948 and 1950. Typical were his remarks to an Akron audience on April 30, 1948, when he was campaigning against Harold Stassen in the Ohio Presidential primary, "I am opposed to socialized medicine, and even more to the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill." He outlined four main arguments against it: the present system had worked well, the federalization of medicine was undesirable, the government's function should be limited to helping those who could not pay for medical services, and health functions should be left to state and local jurisdictions rather than to a federal bureau. 2

Thus, when the American Medical Association invited Taft to speak, they were aware of his opposition to compulsory health measures. The Association had been one of the leading groups to oppose the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill. It had endorsed the Taft-Smith-Ball voluntary health bill. When Taft spoke to the medical convention in December, 1951, he was an avowed candidate for the Presidency in 1952. He had not yet begun an intensive campaign, however, at the time he addressed the medical convention in Los Angeles. His speech was nationally broadcast through the facilities of the American Broadcasting Company, which meant that it was geared to a nation-wide audience rather than strictly to the medical profession.

The third speaking situation was Taft's address before the annual meeting of the United States Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C., on May 1, 1950. The other principal speaker at this meeting was Harold E. Stassen, a perennial candidate for President. It was reported that "Each drew bursts of applause whenever he scored a particularly sharp blow at New Deal or Fair Deal policies." 1

The Chamber of Commerce, a businessmen's organization, has been labeled a "conservative" organization. Its policies have been aligned with those of the Republican Party since 1933. Thus, Taft was facing a friendly audience on this occasion when he talked on "The Individual and His Government."

Hence, in all three occasions of the speeches to be analyzed in this chapter, Senator Taft was addressing audiences whose views were similar to his. This fact should be important in noting his audience adaptation.

II. INVENTION

Of the five canons of rhetoric --- invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and delivery --- Aristotle gave more attention to invention than to any other. As Thonssen and Baird wrote, "This is done on the ground, and perhaps properly, that the content is the most important part of a speech." 2 They said further, "Invention involves the attempt on the part of the orator, as Cicero says, 'to find out what he

should say ....' It is an investigative undertaking, embracing a survey and forecast of the subject and a search for the arguments suitable to the given rhetorical effort." The authors concluded their explanation of invention, "We may say in general that the concept of invention includes the entire investigative undertaking, the ideas of the status, and the modes of persuasion --- logical, emotional, and ethical --- in all of their complex interrelations." 1

This section of the chapter will evaluate Taft's invention in his speech-making. It will be concerned with the purposes of the three speeches and with the three forms of proof.

Logical, emotional, and ethical proof are the three main factors discussed by Thonssen and Baird under invention. The analysis here will following their concept closely.

The Ohio State Medical Association Speech.

In this speech, given in Cincinnati on May 16, 1940, Senator Taft discussed the various proposals for extending the Federal Government's medical care activities. He gave his reactions to the Wagner bill and indicated what he thought the proper role of the Federal Government should be. His purpose was to convince the audience that the acceptance of his views would result in a "free and healthy" America. Both the speaker and audience in this situation were opposed to compulsory health insurance; Taft sought to gain acceptance of his "general principles" of federal aid in the area of medical care.

Logical proof. Discussing the integrity of ideas (logical proof),

1. Ibid.
Thonssen and Baird stated, "The integrity of ideas can be judged through three principal means: determination (1) of the intellectual resources of the speaker, (2) of the severity and strictness of the argumentative development, and (3) of the *truth* of the idea in functional existence." 1

It was developed in Chapter IV that Taft's intellect was widely respected. His speeches revealed careful analyses of problems; even his opponents admired his thinking ability if not his conclusions. The validity of his argumentative development --- evidence and reasoning --- in this speech will be the major concern of this section.

Under his first main point, "There is no question which concerns the medical profession more today than that of medical aid for the needy and the extent to which government shall enter into the field," Taft discussed existing medical care programs. He reviewed federal and state provisions for medical services; he mentioned the free medical care provided the needy by private charities and private hospitals. He conceded that health work had not been very systematically organised to reach all citizens. But he asserted, "Few persons who are really sick have been unable to obtain proper medical care." He then stated that the nation's health record was not exceeded by that of any other nation. He developed these points as a foundation for criticism of the Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities. He stated, "Its reports exaggerate the need, and try to present a picture of neglect and medical inefficiency, which is very far indeed from the truth." He accused the committee of trying to foster a feder-

ally-controlled health program. Taft believed that the cause of any inadequacies were "social," arising more from low incomes of millions of families than from faults of the medical profession.

Undoubtedly, most of his assertions would have been accepted by his particular audience. His logical proof was generally adequate when it was introduced. He might have been challenged on the point that the United States has the best health record in the world; even if this were true, there still might be room for improvement in making medical care available to all citizens.

He agreed that some governmental activity was inevitable in the health field. His point was, "The program must be undertaken with care and with economy." He briefly mentioned the increasing governmental expenditures and expressed the view that these must be curtailed wherever possible.

His second main point raised the question, "What principles should govern the increased government aid?" He was concerned here with the family which suddenly found its income cut off by illness of the wage-earner and similar emergencies which would put the family in financial difficulties. In order to avoid such things, some form of health insurance was necessary. He believed that voluntary insurance plans should be the solution, although he claimed to be no "expert on this subject." But he was strongly opposed to any compulsory health insurance. This second point set the stage for the third. It should be said here that the Senator rambled considerably in developing the advantages of voluntary health insurance. This second point was not clearly
developed or adequate in proof.

The third point, "The socialization of the medical profession is a danger which must and can be avoided in any extension of medical aid to the needy," was the most significant one in the speech. His chain of reasoning to prove this point was: compulsory health insurance will result in most doctors being paid by the government; once a profession is paid with government money, it takes its orders from the government; the medical profession would lose its independence and this would affect the new flow of ideas and research. Further, he extended the scope of the government's power to all professions to demonstrate its undesirability. He ended with, "The world becomes a great bureaucracy, and a progressive democracy dies through hardening of its arteries."

Here again, his arguments likely were accepted by his audience. But the validity of the proof was open to question. Most of his conclusions were unsupported assertions. He used loaded terms and emotional appeals to establish them. He referred to the government's "influences of power and propaganda," and "socialization." He failed to establish that medical research would be stifled under a federal medical program or that patients would not be able to freely choose their doctors. Taft used these as motive appeals to the medical profession to keep the "free and voluntary" status which they enjoyed.

The Senator in his final main point discussed the proper role of the Federal Government in the medical field. He first mentioned that until ten years ago the Federal Government left matters of health and relief to the states. But it moved in to these areas when the states
became unable to support them financially. Taft's thinking on this matter was, "Each state should be encouraged to work out its own problem in its own way, the Federal Government merely providing funds to supplement state funds and encourage an orderly and comprehensive plan."

Taft objected to proposals of the Roosevelt Administration on the medical care issue. First, he charged, "There is not the slightest conception of the necessity for economy." He was concerned about the four billion dollar deficit of the current fiscal year. Then, he lashed out again at "socialized medicine," saying that if all health control is centered in Washington, "the whole nation may be suddenly subjected to experiments proposed by any group of cranks who may obtain the ear of the Executive or Congress."

The Senator followed with a consideration of the Wagner health bill. He said, "The bill is typical of New Deal technique. Whenever an abuse occurs or a need arises in any field, the only solution which the New Deal offers is a complete regulation and supervision of every detail of that field by the Federal Government." He maintained that it would be more sensible to design a bill to meet a demonstrated, specific need. In sum total, he considered the Wagner bill an attempt by the Administration to gain control over medical care and to encourage a compulsory health insurance program.

Taft gave an example of a recommended step "which I think is sound, which illustrates the manner in which the Federal Government should proceed." This was the Senate Committee on Education and Labor's proposal that the Federal Government should assist the states in build-
ing small hospitals in rural areas where there were no hospitals. The soundness of this proposal was stated by Taft: it did not involve a considerable expenditure of money, it would not compete with existing private facilities, and it retained complete local control over the hospitals. He asserted that the Wagner bill observed none of these principles.

This analysis of the proof offered in the Ohio State Medical Association speech reveals that Taft subordinated the logical to the other forms of proof. He offered little evidence to support his points, depending more on ethical and emotional appeals. This was unusual for Taft; it might be explained by the fact that the audience was sympathetic to his views. He did not need to give a logical demonstration of the validity of his arguments. The speech revealed a careful analysis of the problems in the medical field which contributed to its logical adequacy. He used cause and effect reasoning to a considerable extent; his own experience was the source of the data.

**Ethical proof.** Thonssen and Baird's analysis of ethos follows the Aristotelian pattern closely. They point out that the character of the speaker is an important factor in persuasion. The three constituents of ethical proof were listed as character, sagacity, and good will. The question here is, "To what extent did Taft exhibit these characteristics in the Ohio State Medical Association speech?"

Taft enhanced the probity of his character in this speech by identifying himself closely with the interests of the medical profession.

1. Ibid., 38h-6.
He wanted the medical profession to remain free from governmental control. At the same time, he warned that some governmental aid was necessary in order to assure all citizens adequate medical care. The main purpose of his speech was to show how aid could be given without infringing on the medical profession. Taft was able to create the impression that he was being honest and sincere in advocating his position.

Senator Taft established the impression of sagacity in several ways in this speech. First, he was intellectually honest. Even though he had some harsh words for the New Dealers, he treated the over-all problem in a responsible way. He did not distort facts; his conclusions were common sense ones. Second, his general recommendations concerning the government's role in medical care were revealing of his carefully-thought-out philosophy. He showed familiarity with the problems of the medical profession.

Finally, the Senator revealed his good will through his deep concern with the doctors' problems. Even though he said in one place in the speech that "he was not an expert on this problem," he showed that he had the medical profession's interests at heart. His strong partisanship, his vigorous attack of compulsory medical care certainly enhanced his stature with this audience. In all, his strong ethical appeal may have off-set the logical inadequacies of the speech.

Emotional proof. "Briefly, then, pathetic proof includes all those materials and devices calculated to put the audience in a frame of mind suitable for the reception of the speaker's ideas." This was Thonssen and Baird's conclusion of their discussion of pathetic, or
emotional, proof. They presented two main factors of emotional proof: audience adaptation and motive appeals. 1 They pointed out that the distinction between emotional and ethical proof is not always clear; in some cases the difference may be non-existent. Their concluding statement was, "Despite the apparent indivisibility of appeal, this difference seems to stand out: Ethos refers chiefly to what the speaker chooses to do; Pathos, to what the reaction has done to the listeners." 2 Keeping these concepts in mind, how effective as a speaker was Taft in adapting to his audience and in using motive appeals?

It has already been indicated how Taft adapted to this audience through the selection of his subject and the arguments he developed. The fundamental question, then, is "Did the speaker make specific adaptations to this audience which likely would not have been made before another type of audience?" A careful examination of the text of the speech reveals that the Senator made no such adaptations. All of his remarks could have been made before any audience interested in the problem he discussed. His audience adaptation, then, was chiefly in the selection of the subject. This does not impair the quality of the speech, but it does support the commonly-held view that Taft did not make specific adaptations to his audiences.

How effective were his motive appeals? His strong feelings against compulsory medical insurance were reflected throughout the speech. Taft's appeals were to preserve the free and independent status of the medical profession and to curb the "creeping socialism" of the New Deal.

1. Ibid., 358-62. 2. Ibid., 386.
Both of these appeals were wisely chosen for this audience. His appeal
to curb New Deal activities in medicine was the stronger of the two.
Taft accused the New Deal of exaggeration of the need for more medical
services "which is very far indeed from the truth." He referred to the
government's "influences of power and propaganda," the undesirability of
a great bureaucracy which the New Dealers were building, the wasteful-
ness and inefficiency of the Roosevelt administrators, and "the experi-
ments proposed by any group of cranks who may obtain the ear of the
Executive or Congress." These appeals were integrated throughout the
speech; they probably aroused a favorable response on the part of the
audience.

The emotional and ethical appeals were the strongest in the Ohio
Medical Association speech. Taft subordinated the logical to them. In
view of the fact that his audience was sympathetic, this may have been
a wise decision on Taft's part in planning this speech.

The *American Medical Association* Speech.

The announced title of this speech was "Liberty Against Social-
ism." Taft used the occasion of his address before the American Med-
ical Association on December 5, 1951, to present his views on the
Republican-Democratic controversy over the proper functions of the
Federal Government. He used the Democrats' support of compulsory health
insurance to illustrate his theme: The Democrats were leading the country
to socialism while the Republicans would return to the traditional
American liberties. His central idea was, "If we can preserve liberty
in all its essentials, there is no limit to the future of the American
people." The speech was broadcast nationally on radio. The fact that Taft was an avowed candidate for the Presidency in 1952 may have been responsible for the decision to broadcast the speech.

**Logical proof.** As in the case of the Ohio State Medical Association speech, Taft relied more on emotional appeals and less on logical in this speech. Introductory to his arguments, Taft defined his concept of liberty. He said that when he spoke of liberty, he meant more than free enterprise. His concept was:

> Liberty means your right and the right of every man to live your own life and think your own thoughts, to have those thoughts taught by others if you can find men who believe in them. Liberty is your right to spend the proceeds of your labor in such a way as you want to spend them with only a reasonable deduction for the necessary costs of government. It means liberty of local self-government; the right of every community to decide on its local institutions, how its children shall be educated, what local services shall be rendered and how, the form of local government, all without direction by some federal bureau in Washington; the right of states to run their own affairs. Liberty includes your right to choose your own occupation and run your own professional activities or business or farm as you see fit to run it, except for such control as may be necessary to assure a similar freedom to others.

This set the foundation for his following point, the forces which threatened these liberties. It was clear from the above enumeration that Taft stood for a limited national government; his concept of liberty clearly put him in the states' rights camp. He concluded his discussion of liberty by pointing out that there had been a constant improvement in ideas and research in every field of intellectual activity, in science, in welfare, and in knowledge.

As his first main point, the Senator asserted, "This liberty is threatened today by what is roughly called socialism." He defined socialism as "the growing power of government in the affairs of all you
individuals, and its increased activity in many fields where it has never before been involved." He illustrated the threat to liberty by the proposal for compulsory medical insurance (the Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill). It planned to collect six or seven billion dollars a year and set up a vast bureau to employ nearly all the doctors in the country to furnish "free" medical care. He concluded, "The program would destroy the independence of the medical profession."

He further stated that socialized medicine was only the first step of the Truman administrators. They eventually wanted a complete welfare program to care for people from birth to death. He characterized socialism as "a beautiful blueprint, but it utterly destroys the incentive of manufacturers or workmen. In its efforts for equality, it reduces everyone to the dead level of mediocrity. New ideas are discouraged." His proof here was general; his failure to mention specific cases impaired the logic of the argument. He added the point that vast government programs depend on tremendous taxation of the people. This in itself, Taft maintained, was a violation of liberty. To support his second point, he depended on logical explanations and emotional appeals. As noted, he talked mostly in general terms; this was a detriment to cogency.

To develop his second main point, he stated his concept of the proper functions of government, relating them to medical care programs. First, the government should maintain "a limited liberty for all in our complicated modern life." Here, he was referring to the necessary regulations for highway and air traffic, radio and television, etc. Second, there should be some government regulation over business and
collective bargaining. Third, the government should relieve hardship and distress where private charity cannot do it. He qualified the government's role by stating that state and local control over such activities should be preserved and that the government's contribution should maintain basic minimum standards as far as costs were concerned. Of course, he was limiting his discussion to domestic affairs of the government. He then reviewed the Truman philosophy of government, "The New Deal and Fair Deal rulers of this country have been inspired by the philosophy that only the government can solve the problems of the people." He criticized the Administration for its attempts at a planned economy, for creating new government boards "with all the power and money they want."

The development of this point exemplified the things Robert A. Taft stood for. Again, he tended to talk in generalities. His criticism of the Democrats was hard-hitting even though it might have been better supported. He relied more on emotional appeals than logical proof in this talk.

Emotional proof. The emotional appeals were similar to those used in the Ohio State Medical Association speech. Taft sought to gain acceptance of his position by urging that the traditional American liberties be preserved. He condemned the Truman Administration for its attempts to increase the government's power at the expense of individual liberty. His appeals were for an independent medical profession, for individual initiative in all areas of life, and against a strong national government. These likely would have been effective to those who agreed with his point of view. His strong partisanship on this matter may have
alienated those who favored expanded powers for the Federal Government. He carried a strong attack against the Democratic Administration through his emotional appeals.

Taft's adaptation to his audience was complicated by the fact that there were two audiences in this speaking situation. The immediate audience was the American Medical Association which was sympathetic to his point of view. The ultimate audience was the radio listeners, a cross section of America. His technique of illustrating his attack on growing government power by referring to socialized medicine was appropriate to his immediate audience. This was a subject they were highly interested in — his use of it to illustrate his own philosophy was a wise decision on the Senator's part. The fact that he emphasized the role of the government in all areas of welfare was appropriate to the larger audience. The fact that he talked about current problems showed that he considered the audience in preparing this speech.

Ethical proof. By 1951, Senator Taft was well known to the American people. His views, his philosophy of government had been made clear by his intensive political campaigning and his leadership of the Republican Party. Taft's ethical stature on this occasion was one of a strong defender of the traditional American way of life. His arguments represented the essence of his philosophy on the role of the government. This was a partisan speech — he castigated the Democrats and praised the Republicans. He showed that he was a man of good will in doing this, for he had the interests of the people at heart. That Taft was sincere could not have been doubted. Even though some may have disagreed with his views, they probably respected his forthright statements.
The Chamber of Commerce Speech.

Taft's purpose was to stimulate the audience. He explained, "Today we see a dangerous attack upon the freedom and dignity of the individual. I believe the dangers of the modern trend are so great that the time certainly has come when we must arouse people to the importance of retaining those characteristics of themselves, of the nation, of our great American system, which have succeeded today as no other system in the world has ever succeeded." He used this occasion to inspire the Chamber of Commerce members from all over the nation to a greater effort in preserving individual liberties. Although the speech dealt with more than medical care, it is included here because it was representative of Taft's thinking on welfare issues.

Logical proof. Even though the purpose of the speech was stimulating, Taft relied mostly on logical materials to develop his ideas. The speech was more expository than persuasive. He presented three main ideas: Liberty is threatened by forces which would destroy the basis of the system; The tendency of individuals to look to the government for all sorts of guarantees is a more insidious threat; and These trends must be stopped.

In developing the first point, Taft referred to the efforts of some to socialize business. His reasoning was:

I. We have even in Congress two bills --- the Murray bill and the Spence bill which propose to give the government the right to go into any business it wants to go into.

A. That means, of course, gradually, that every individual becomes an employee of the Federal Government.
B. Certainly, then, his liberty and his power of self-expression, to a great extent, are subordinated to the interest and the direction of the all-powerful state.

C. We have a direct movement to regulate every business operation in detail, as in the Spence Bill, to fix prices and fix wages and ration commodities, to bring the state right down to every individual business in the United States and tell the men how they must run those businesses, to tell every family what they shall eat, when they get up in the morning, and when they shall go to bed at night.

This was typical of Taft's method of developing his ideas in this speech. He did not offer logical proof as such, but drew his own conclusions on the effects of the bills to regulate business. His extending the arguments as in Point C above was an attempt to arouse emotions against the bills. He continued in the same pattern, mentioning the proposals for Universal Military Training, control of agriculture, and free medical service as examples of undesirable functions of the Federal Government. He used cause and effect reasoning with his own experiences and observations as sources for his evidence.

His second main point presented "a more insidious threat to individual freedom." This threat was "the tendency right among our own people to look to the government for assistance, to look to the government for guarantees, to look to the government for all of these free services which any particular group thinks that group ought to have." He believed that no group was "willing to stand on its own feet and simply fight out its own battle." This point was developed by mentioning the efforts of various groups to obtain "government protection." He first criticized the businessmen who admit that competition is a good thing but who would like to be protected against "unfair competition."
He also criticized them for wanting their profits guaranteed by the government, for limiting production in order to keep prices and profits high, and for clamoring for protection for the home market against foreign importations "long before they are hurt." Since he was speaking before businessmen, Taft's points may have stepped on some toes. But he would not be concerned about this — another example of his forthrightness. The Senator did not offer any proof that a significant number of businessmen were guilty of the charges he made. He depended on citing general trends to gain acceptance of his points.

He presented the opposition to public housing programs by home builders and real estate men as another example. They wanted the government to guarantee their profits while opposing efforts to provide housing for the poor through government aid. Senator Taft criticized the farmers for demanding guarantees of parity. He concluded, "If you undertake to guarantee a man what he shall have, you have to, in the end, have an all-powerful government."

This led to his third point that these trends must be stopped if liberty is to be preserved. He used the case of Russia to illustrate his argument, "Of course Russia can guarantee the right to work because they can put the man to work anywhere they want to put him." He concluded, "You cannot possibly undertake in any field to give the government power to guarantee the individual even what he is entitled to, without giving the government complete power over his entire life and over the entire field in which that operation is."

The Senator's appeal was to logic rather than emotion in this speech, although emotional overtones were present in several of his points.
Emotional proof. As noted previously, this was not an emotional speech even though the speaker's purpose was to stimulate. The motives to which the Senator directed his appeals were largely the preservation of traditional American liberties. Typical of his appeals was this one:

This whole nation was founded not only for the liberty of the nation, but it was founded to establish the liberty of the individual, and for a hundred and sixty years our success has been based on the fact that we have maintained the liberty of the individual, the liberty of the individual to live his own life and think his own thoughts and speak his own thoughts, the liberty of the press, the liberty of the individual to go out and choose his own occupation, the liberty of the individual to start and run his own business as he thinks it ought to be run.

It can be seen that this enumeration is not highly emotional; it is rather an explanation or a definition of his concept of liberty. The speaker does not play on emotions in a direct and strong way.

In only one place in the speech was emotion used to a considerable extent. That was when Taft quoted from the Russian constitution the provision guaranteeing the right to work. He concluded his appeal, "Of course Russia can guarantee the right to work because they can put the man to work anywhere they want to put him. If they cannot find a job for him in Russia, they can find one for him in Siberia, and they do." By implication, the Senator was appealing to emotion to prevent such a thing from happening in the United States. In all, this speech was lacking in the constituents of pathos.

Ethical proof. Taft's emphasis of the efforts of business groups to obtain protection from the government for their profits was probably the chief ethical factor in this speaking situation. Speaking before the Chamber of Commerce, an organization of businessmen, Taft criticized
the business interests more than any other group. This not only was revealing of his audience adaptation but also illustrative of his candor. Other speakers likely would have emphasized other groups and played down the criticism of businessmen. But Taft chose to direct his remarks to the audience addressed. The effects of this can only be speculated upon. Some may have respected him for his straight-forward criticisms. Others may have been alienated by his remarks.

He did attempt to show that he had the best interests of the nation at heart, which may have increased his ethical stature. He was appealing for all groups to stop demanding protection from the government when the need for such protection did not exist. His argument was that as the government extended protection and guarantees to various groups, it also extended its control over them. If this trend continued, the United States would become a socialistic state. Taft's over-all position may have compensated for any offending he may have done to businessmen.

Summary.

This study of Taft's invention in three speeches on medical care revealed the following:

(1) He carefully analyzed the problems to discover the most significant arguments. His speeches revealed that he was fully informed on the subjects.

(2) His logical proof was subordinated to ethical and emotional proofs in the two speeches before medical conventions. Since his audiences were as much opposed to compulsory medical care as he was, he did not
need to convince them on his basic position. The proof that he offered was based on his own experiences and specific instances. He used cause and effect reasoning to arrive at his conclusions. Taft used few statistics, testimony, or illustrations. Although his logical proof was probably acceptable to the audiences addressed, some of his conclusions did not meet the tests of logical adequacy. In the Chamber of Commerce speech, Taft relied mostly on logical materials. He used explanations a great deal in this speech.

Kleckner, who analyzed eight of Taft's speeches on labor problems, concluded that Taft was primarily a logical speaker. Kleckner wrote, "More often than not, Taft's logic is sound, but it is not entirely without fallacy, and his basic postulates can be questioned." 1 The analysis of the three Taft speeches on medical care largely agrees with Kleckner's conclusion.

(3) Senator Taft's speeches against compulsory medical insurance revealed that he was capable of arousing emotions in his audiences. His condemnations of the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations were hard-hitting. His appeals were to avoid creeping socialism, to prevent dictation from government bureaucracy, and to retain a free and independent medical profession. The Senator's emotional materials were not fully developed, however, to the extent of greatly arousing his audiences.

This conclusion agrees with Kleckner's, "Senator Taft is not an emotional speaker, and he does not 'sugar-coat' a message. He does use emotional proof, but it is the kind which appeals to motives and attitudes." 2

After studying emotional proof in Taft's political speeches, Rapp concluded, "Despite a popular impression to the contrary, Taft made many motive appeals, chiefly to tradition, duty, responsibility, desire for security, and fear. Most were confined to loaded words and phrases, but some were extended." 1 Again, the analysis of the speeches in this chapter supports this finding.

Senator Taft's audience adaptation was of a general nature in the speeches on medical care. He showed consideration of the audience in the choice and development of subject matter. But his points could just as well have been made before any group interested in the subject. In the Chamber of Commerce speech, he revealed his forthrightness by spending a great deal of time criticizing businessmen for demanding government protection.

(1) Both of the previous dissertations emphasized Taft's ethical stature as a leading factor in his persuasiveness. Rapp concluded, "He made frequent use of ethical proof, often relying on his position and reputation for integrity to support his statements and neglecting to cite the sources of his evidence." 2 No disagreement can be offered on the basis of the speeches analyzed in this chapter. Taft's ethos was a major factor in his speaking. He enhanced the probity of his character by his forthrightness and by his responsibility in dealing with the issues. He established the impression of sagacity through his intellectual honesty and through his articulate criticism of the Democrats. His good will was revealed through his deep concern with the problems faced

by those in his audiences. These tentative conclusions on Taft's invention will be subjected to further testing in succeeding chapters.

III. ARRANGEMENT

"Believing that good organization is essential in a speech, the classical rhetoricians designated it the second part of rhetoric. They called it dispositio, and in the broad sense it dealt with the selection, orderly arrangement, and proportion of the parts of an address." 1 Thonssen and Baird further stated, "In its broadest sense, disposition embraces the following matters: the emergence of a central theme, the general method of arrangement adopted for the speech, and the order in which the parts of the discourse are developed." 2

This section will be concerned with evaluating Taft's arrangement of his speech materials with a special consideration of appropriateness to his audiences. Kleckner's study presented the conclusion on arrangement that Taft's "organization is entirely deductive. The overall pattern goes from general to specific." 3 Rapp found that "The organization of his speeches varied. His introductions and conclusions were generally brief and direct." 4

In the three speeches on medical care, Senator Taft used a deductive approach to arrangement. After brief introductory remarks, he made the central idea clear and then developed it in a problem-solution order.

The Ohio State Medical Association Speech.

Taft's purpose was to convince the audience that the acceptance of his views would result in a free and healthy America. Both the speaker and audience in this situation were opposed to compulsory health insurance; Taft sought to gain acceptance of his general principles of federal aid in the area of medical care.

Introduction. Taft began with the sentence, "I appreciate greatly the honor of addressing the Ohio State Medical Association, which for so many years has upheld the standards of the medical profession in the state." He then mentioned that he was happy to address them in Cincinnati since it afforded him the chance to spend a day at home. His remarks had a friendly and personal warmth.

His transition into the body of the speech consisted of a reference to the "outrageous aggression of Hitler in Europe." He followed with, "But we must not let our concern with what is going on in Europe check the efforts to improve the lot of our own people here." Next, he stated the central idea of his speech, "I believe that government should do more to furnish aid to the needy than is now being done. But I also believe that unless it is properly planned, it in the long run may do more harm than good."

Discussion. The Senator covered four topics in the body of his speech. First, he discussed the existing problems in the health field. Second, he raised the question, "What principles should govern the increased government aid?" Third, he warned against the dangers of socialized medicine. Finally, Taft indicated the place of the Federal
Government in providing medical services. The organization of the body of the speech was built around these four topics. It can be seen that it was a form of the problem-solution order. This was a satisfactory method, and the sub-points within each topic-area were well integrated. The structure of the speech gave it a unity and progression of ideas.

**Conclusion.** The conclusion summarized the entire speech in general terms. Taft said:

> The medical profession in the last hundred years, increasingly in the last generation, has worked miracles. Preventive medicine has checked and destroyed epidemics, and lengthened the span of years. Surgery saves thousands of lives annually. The lives of mothers and infants are more secure. Now we are concerned that society shall be able to share these boons with all; that children be freed of physical handicaps; that the usefulness of the middle-aged be prolonged; that old age be made more comfortable. We all desire that pain, the universal enemy, be frustrated; that we achieve a happier, healthier America.

This paragraph summarized the essential features of the problem in medical care which Taft had developed in the first part of his speech. His final paragraph restated his solution:

> But let's do it in the right way. Let's not do it at the cost of the independence of the medical profession, which has given so unselfishly of its time and talents. Let's not do it in a way which will only give the needy the kind of treatment a poor citizen gets from a government bureaucrat in Washington. No human suffering should go unheeded. But let us see to it that self-reliant Americans retain their freedom to cooperate voluntarily in health insurance plans if they want to, and their liberty of choice in the matter of the family doctor. We want an America free as well as healthy. There is no necessary contradiction.

His conclusion accomplished the purposes of re-emphasizing his central idea and summarizing his main points. The fact that his audience was sympathetic to his basic position enabled him to inspire them to deeper thinking on the problems of medical care. The organization of this
speech contributed to the realization of this goal.

The American Medical Association Speech.

Introduction. After expressing his appreciation for being asked to speak, Taft complimented his audience, "The American Medical Association has been one of the leaders in the battle of liberty against socialism." The introductory remarks were brief and hurried. He used the following as a transition to his central theme, "The fundamental problem of the American people is how best to maintain the great progress they have made under liberty, and pursue their destiny to higher spiritual and material goals. That liberty is threatened by Communism from abroad and growing Socialism and government control at home."

The central idea immediately followed, "Liberty has been the key to our progress in the past, and it is the key to our progress in the future." The pattern of the introduction in both medical speeches was essentially the same: a brief reference to the audience, a transition suggesting the problem, and a statement of the central idea.

Discussion. The body of the speech was organized around three main points. First, he defined in detail his concept of liberty. Then, he used the battle over compulsory health insurance to illustrate the forces which threatened that liberty. Finally, by way of a general solution, he listed the proper functions of government in social legislation. Again, the problem-solution pattern was followed in this speech. The sub-points were relevant; there were no digressions into insignificant points. The speech moved rapidly from point to point, yet the organizational pattern facilitated the comprehension of points.
Conclusion. As in the first speech, this one concluded with a summary and re-emphasis of the main ideas. Taft re-stated his central idea, "If we can preserve liberty in all its essentials, there is no limit to the future of the American people." He then repeated what he considered to be the major problem, "But we cannot do it under the leadership of today, or under the creeping philosophy of socialism which has affected even your thinking and mine more than it should." Finally, he summarized his solution,

I am always inspired when I consider again the wisdom of the founders of this nation, and astonished to see their clear analysis of the necessary principles of freedom, and of justice and equality incident to such freedom. May our leaders be inspired by those ideals, and seek progress by applying them to the new conditions of a world which physically has changed, but a world where the principles of human liberty are eternal.

This was the typical pattern of Taft's conclusions to his speeches. The language of the concluding remarks above was more lofty than usual for Taft.

The Chamber of Commerce Speech.

The same pattern of arrangement was followed in the third speech analyzed in this chapter. After complimenting the audience, Taft used a transition which led into his central idea. The central idea was developed by points arranged in a problem-solution order. The conclusion was a summary and re-statement of the central theme.

The Senator's speeches were models of superior organisation. The pattern was easy to follow, the points were inherently related to each other. He did not use a preview of points to be covered; he did not usually summarize one main point before going on to the next. These
omissions did not adversely affect the organization of the speech.

IV. STYLE

After stating, "With the possible exception of invention, no part of rhetoric is more complex than style," 1 Thonssen and Baird wisely advise, "To the critic of public speaking, style should not be regarded as a mysterious quality." It is their belief that style "is not a combination of esoteric elements which are added to a speech, or superimposed upon it, in order to give it literary acceptability." They continue, "According to the broad conception, style or language is important only to the extent that it helps prepare and subsequently open the minds of the hearers to the ideas developed in the speech." 2

Their criteria of style are two: (1) elements that make for clearness, and (2) elements that make for impressiveness. These "are more likely to open listeners' minds to the ideas of the speaker." 3

Senator Taft's style can be characterized as simple and clear but lacking in impressiveness. Although he frequently used complex sentences, the simple words enhanced understanding. His ability to make ideas clear through simple words was well illustrated in the American Medical Association speech when he explained his concept of liberty. Representative sentences were: "Liberty means your right and the right of every man to live your own life and think your own thoughts," and "Liberty includes your right to choose your own occupation and run your

2. Ibid., 429.
3. Ibid., 430.
own professional activities or business or farm as you see fit to run it ...."

Although he frequently defined the terms he used, he also often used short examples to make concepts clear. His economy of words in making points was especially noticeable. To make the point that "socialization of the medical profession is a danger," Taft said:

But if the government undertakes to cover the whole field and extend aid not only to the needy, but also to those quite able to pay for it, there is real danger. Compulsory health insurance for all employees, similar to unemployment insurance, would gradually result in a large proportion of the total payments to doctors coming out of the government fund. In effect, the bulk of the medical profession would be employed by the government. That is socialization of medicine. We might try to guard against it by provisions letting the patient choose his own doctor, but it is not likely that we could long maintain such a restriction.

In the Chamber of Commerce speech, Taft made the point government bureaucracy would be undesirable in the medical field:

We have the proposal that the state undertake to furnish free all medical service and, of course, if they do that, to determine exactly what medical service every one of a hundred and fifty million people shall get, what kind of doctors they shall get, what kind of service they shall get, where they shall get it and when they shall get it, all to be subject again to the direction of a state bureau; depriv­ing the family of its right to determine how they want their medical service and what kind of service they want.

His economy and simplicity of words resulted in clarity of style. The other distinguishing feature was his extensive use of personal pronouns in his speeches. In the Chamber of Commerce speech, Taft used the following personal pronouns the indicated number of times:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
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<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>You</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>He</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of these pronouns tended to make his speeches more direct in their language.
On the other hand, Taft's speeches were usually lacking in impressiveness. His phraseology was not memorable or lofty. His speeches were unadorned with rhetorical devices. He did use loaded words considerably which enlivened the style somewhat.

This was especially true in the two speeches before medical conventions where Taft used stronger words to express his vigorous opposition to compulsory health insurance. In addition to the loaded words of "socialized medicine and government bureaucracy," which were frequently repeated in the speech, the Senator used such terms as the following: "organized propaganda to socialize the whole field of medicine, confiscation of income by taxation, arbitrary and discretionary bureaucratic power, and New Deal cranks." In his strongly partisan speeches, Taft used more loaded words than in other speeches. This resulted in a more lively style than he exhibited otherwise.

While he had a sufficient variety in sentence structure --- form, length, and complexity --- his speeches lacked other elements of impressiveness. The Senator seldom used imagery, repetition, or climax. Tropes and figures of speech were not introduced except in the Ohio State Medical Association speech, when he said that government dictation over the medical system would result in the death of democracy "through hardening of the arteries." The language of the conclusion of this speech was representative of Taft's style. He started building to a climax using parallel phrasing, but the injection of several long sentences impaired the effect. His conclusion was:

But let's do it in the right way. Let's not do it at the cost of the independence of the medical profession, which has given so unselfishly of its time and talents. Let's not do it in a way which
will only give the needy the kind of treatment a poor citizen gets from a government bureaucrat in Washington. No human suffering should go unheeded. But let us see to it that self-reliant Americans retain their freedom to cooperate voluntarily in health insurance plans if they want to, and their liberty of choice in the matter of the family doctor. We want an America free as well as healthy. There is no necessary contradiction.

Thus, Taft's style as a public speaker was characterized by simplicity and clarity. His language was not particularly impressive, however. It exemplified the classical concept of the plain style — "adapted to the stating of facts." His words were not well adapted to moving the feelings or pleasing the audience, the characteristics of the middle or grand style.

This conclusion supports the findings of Kleckner and Rapp.

Kleckner wrote:

Taft's speeches will never be used as models in the teaching of style, for they lack such commonly known stylistic devices as figures of speech, telling phrases, and rhythmical flow of words. His style, however, does include:

Straightforward and unadorned statements.
Strong and positive language.
"If" clauses.
Words in series.
Repétition and restatement.
Complicated sentence structure.
Extensive use of the pronoun I. 1

Rapp concluded, "His style was plain and unornamented.... He used unqualified superlatives, loaded words, parallel constructions, and the first person pronoun extensively." 2

V. DELIVERY

Just as Taft's style was comparatively undistinguished, so was
his delivery.

Writers described Taft's speaking voice: "a flat Ohio voice," 1 "voice as flat as a Midwest prairie," 2 "flat, dry voice," 3 "no thunder and no coziness in his voice," 4 and "a voice like a crow caw." 5

A. Craig Baird, a rhetorical critic, wrote this about Taft's voice, "He speaks rapidly, sometimes tightens his voice, elevates the pitch unnecessarily." 6 Kleckner, who heard Taft speak thirteen times in the 1952 campaign, observed, "The voice definitely lacks variety of volume, pace, and pitch. When the Senator speaks to large groups and feels that he has to project his voice, a strong nasal quality becomes readily apparent." 7

After listening to recordings of excerpts from several of Taft's speeches in the preparation of this dissertation, the writer concluded that Taft's speaking voice was not particularly pleasant. In his effort to project, Taft raised the pitch level too high. His voice lacked variety in pitch, rate, and force, which interfered with the emphasizing of points. The speaking rate seemed extremely rapid.

It would be a reliable conclusion, in view of the evidence above, that Taft's speaking voice did not add measurably to his communicativeness.

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Senator Taft's vigorous bodily action was usually not well integrated in his speaking. From hearing Taft speak twice in Kent, Ohio, and numerous times on television, the writer recalls that the Senator over-used a few basic gestures. This gave animation to the speaker but the repetition in physical action grew monotonous. In one speech at West Bend, Wisconsin, on March 25, 1952, Donald Kleckner counted ninety-two right-hand gestures in Taft's speech of twenty-five minutes. The speaker pounded the lectern 100 times in that speech. At Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Taft used 193 right-hand gestures and pounded the lectern 103 times.¹ These counts indicate the recurring pattern in Taft's physical action. Kleckner characterized Taft's delivery as "simple and undramatic." He noted that the Senator had "a mouth movement which gives the impression of a snarl and impersonal eye contact."²

Rapp concluded that Taft's "delivery left much to be desired. His gestures and bodily movements were frequently described as stiff and awkward."³ On these bases, it would seem accurate to conclude that Taft's bodily communication was not skillfully executed.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study of three of Taft's speeches on welfare issues in medical care revealed that his speeches were consistently well organized. Using a problem-solution order, he made the central idea clear after a brief introduction. The main points in the body of the speech were

¹. Ibid., 225.  ². Ibid., 236.
logically related to each other. The conclusion summarized the main points and re-emphasized the central idea. Taft's speeches were models of organizational efficiency.

The analysis of Taft's invention revealed that he carefully analyzed the problems to discover the significant arguments. His speeches revealed that he was fully informed on the subjects. As logical proof, Taft used causal reasoning based on his own experiences as the data. In the two speeches before medical conventions, logical materials were subordinate to the emotional and ethical. Because of this, some of his conclusions did not meet the tests of logical adequacy.

As revealed in the speeches on medical care, Senator Taft was capable of arousing emotions in his speeches. His emotional appeals were not expanded or fully developed, however. Appealing for a free and independent medical profession, Taft was most effective when condemning government controls and bureaucracy. He used emotional proofs to discredit the Roosevelt and Truman policies on medical care.

The Senator's audience adaptation was always general. He considered the audience in selecting the subject but the arguments could have been made before any audience in precisely the same way. It was characteristic of his candor when he criticized businessmen in his Chamber of Commerce speech.

His ethical appeal was a leading factor in his persuasion. He enhanced the probity of his character by his forthrightness and by his responsible handling of the issues. His articulate criticism of the New and Fair Deals established the impression of sagacity. Taft's good
will toward his audiences was revealed through his concern with the problems they faced. More than this, his concern for individual freedom for all Americans indicated his sincerity. His ethos tended to compensate for logical deficiencies of the speech.

The above factors make for a good speech. On a quality basis, Taft's speeches suffered from his plain style and delivery. His language achieved clarity through his use of simple words. It lacked impressiveness because of his inability to use rhetorical devices. The frequent use of loaded terms was the only exception; they tended to enliven the style. Neither his speaking voice nor his bodily action contributed very much. The quality of Taft's speeches was enhanced by invention and arrangement; it suffered from style and delivery.

Despite weaknesses in style and delivery, Taft was able to accomplish his purposes in the three speaking situations surveyed. The fact that his audiences were sympathetic to his point of view made his job of persuasion an easier one. His ethical and emotional appeals were probably strong enough to get agreement. It cannot be determined to what extent Taft was responsible for defeating compulsory health bills in the Senate. But he should be recognized as one of the most effective speakers against such measures.
CHAPTER VII

SPEECHES ON FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

In 1913, after thirteen years of promotion by non-partisan groups, a bill providing for federal aid to education came up for vote in the Senate. One historian wrote, "It was defeated by one man — Bob Taft." ¹ But in the course of defeating the bill he had studied the problem and saw a real need. He worked with the National Education Association in drafting a new bill. "It is a curious admission for a politician — that the existence of a need was learned in the course of defeating an effort to meet it." ²

The fact that Taft first opposed and then later sponsored legislation providing for federal aid to education provides a rich opportunity for evaluating his speeches on this issue. The purpose of this chapter will be to analyze and evaluate Taft's speeches on federal aid to education. The traditional standards and criteria of criticism of public address will be applied to three speeches: one in the Senate opposing federal aid to education and two supporting it — one in the Senate and one before the American Association of School Administrators convention. This rhetorical analysis will provide not only an evaluation of Taft's speaking effectiveness both

for and against a policy but also an evaluation of his adaptation to different types of audiences.

This chapter will be divided into three sections: (1) the speeches against the Hill-Thomas Educational Finance Bill in 1943, (2) speeches in favor of aid to education in 1947 and 1948, and (3) conclusions on his speaking effectiveness on the issue of aid to education.

I. AGAINST THE HILL-THOMAS BILL.

The introduction in 1942 of the Educational Finance Bill (popularly known as the Hill-Thomas Bill) was the culmination of many years' effort to expand the Federal Government's aid to education. After hearings and some changes the bill was reported to the Senate floor by the Committee on Education and Labor in 1943. Before evaluating Senator Taft's speech against the bill, the status of the issue will be explored.

Status of the Issue.

The Majority Report of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor was filed on June 18, 1943, by Senator Lister Hill, an Alabama Democrat. The report outlined the essential features of the bill and expressed the arguments of the majority of the committee members.

There were two essential features of the bill: (1) a temporary appropriation of $200,000,000 annually for payment of teachers' salaries during emergencies (wartime, depressions, and other circumstances which

1. The materials which follow were taken from appropriate issues of the Congressional Record unless otherwise noted.
cause teacher shortages because of inadequate salaries), and (2) a permanent appropriation of $100,000,000. annually to enable the states to reduce inequalities of educational opportunities. The teachers' salary funds under the first provision would be apportioned to the states on the basis of the number of children and the average daily attendance in public elementary and secondary schools. The funds for equalization of educational opportunities would be apportioned to the states on the basis of the relationship of the number of children 5 to 17 years of age in each state compared to the total income in each state (the percentage of children in each state would be subtracted from 65% of the state's percentage of the national income in order to determine the amount to be received).

The main arguments of the Majority Report in favor of the first provision, i.e., to provide funds to pay teachers' salaries during emergencies, were:

(1) Emergencies in public school finance are not new --- there have been emergencies in the past, there is one now, and there will be others in the future.

(2) The present emergency is caused by inadequate salaries; teachers are leaving the profession to accept higher paying jobs in war industries, private enterprise, and with the Federal Government.

(3) The financial ability of the states to meet the current crisis in the support of education is being rapidly reduced by the necessary expansion in federal taxation.

The main arguments to support the second provision, to equalize educational opportunities among the various states, were:
(1) There are great differences in educational opportunities among the various states. While differences in educational opportunities cannot be expressed in numbers, these differences are reflected by such factors as expenditures per pupil, average teachers' salaries, per pupil value of school property, length of school term, and the ratio of high school enrollments to the number of persons of high school age.

(2) The lack of educational opportunity in some states has resulted in widespread functional illiteracy, as shown by Selective Service rejections.

(3) The inequalities of educational opportunity are not due primarily to differences in interest and effort among the states; chief causes of the inequalities are differences in economic ability on the one hand and in the relative numbers of children to be educated on the other hand.

(4) The distribution of economic resources in the United States makes an equitable distribution of public services supported by state and local taxes a matter of practical impossibility.

(5) There is a need for more funds for Negro schools in the Southern states.

These arguments were supported by impressive and voluminous statistics. Opposed to them were the arguments of the minority of the committee. The minority report, filed by Senator Taft on October 11, 1943, mentioned that the teachers' salary fund was essentially a relief measure but with no time limit on the authorization. The report of the minority offered no disagreement on the point that equalities of educational opportunities differ greatly from state to state. The
main points of the minority report were:

1. Education is a state obligation and not an obligation of the Federal Government.

2. There is no real evidence that states are unable to finance their own educational systems. No state has come before the committee to affirm its inability to deal with educational problems.

3. The assumption that the more money spent on education, the better the education is perhaps open to question.

4. The adoption of the present bill would undoubtedly embark the Federal Government in a gradually increasing expenditure from which it could never be relieved.

5. That federal subsidies to schools can be maintained without ultimately bringing about a nationalization of our educational facilities is open to serious question.

This report was also accompanied by lists of statistics. In addition to Senator Taft, the Minority Report was signed by Senators Joseph H. Ball, Minnesota, and Kenneth S. Wherry, Nebraska, Republicans, and Senator David I. Walsh, Massachusetts, Democrat.

When the Senate began debate on the measure on October 11, 1913, both Senators Hill and Thomas spoke in favor of the bill prior to Taft's speech. Senator Elbert D. Thomas, Democrat of Utah, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor spoke first.

He traced the Federal Government's activities in support of education since the beginning of the United States. In an obvious effort for support of Southern Senators, he pointed out that the bill would not attempt to equalize the salaries of Negro teachers with those of
white teachers. His reason was, "There is no attempt to interfere with State management of such affairs, because they are too complex for us to handle. Objection would be raised if we should attempt to do so." He emphasized that regulation of schools would be left entirely to the states.

Senator Lister Hill, Democrat of Alabama, speaking to the Senate on October 15, developed the point that education is not a state problem alone but also a national problem. Most of his speech was devoted to allaying the fears of some that federal aid would lead to federal control. Apparently the sponsors believed that the major argument against their proposal would be that federal aid would mean federal control.

The status of the problem on federal aid to education prior to Taft's speech can be summarized by listing the specific issues. The Majority and Minority reports of course were prepared as a result of the Education and Labor Committee's hearings and discussions of the bill. Each side therefore had the benefit of knowing the thinking of the other side. On the basis of the majority and minority reports and of the speeches by the co-sponsors, these were the specific issues on the federal aid to education bill:

(1) Is the inequality of educational opportunities a serious problem?

(2) Are a significant number of states unable to raise enough money to finance educational programs?

(3) Is the financing of education a proper concern of the Federal Government?

(4) Can the Federal Government expand its aid to education with-
out increasing its control over education?

Both sides to the controversy were agreed that there are wide variations in equality of educational opportunity among the various states and that if aid is extended, federal control over the schools must not be expanded.

The Taft Speech.

Senator Taft was the first and principal opponent of the Hill-Thomas Bill to speak on the floor of the Senate. His speech was given on October 18. His purpose obviously was to persuade the Senate to defeat the bill. Specifically he spoke to influence the Senate to refer the bill back to the Education and Labor Committee. He made his specific purpose clear near the end of his remarks when he advocated that a Special Committee on Post-War Economic Policy and Planning should be formed to consider all government expenditures for social legislation. His recommendation was that this special committee should consider the matter of federal aid to education and make recommendations to the Senate.

Taft's speech was lengthy; it was interrupted frequently by questions for information and clarification and by statements opposing Taft's views (chiefly by Senators Hill and Thomas). It appeared that Taft had prepared arguments against the bill but digressed to answer the questions. Therefore, a careful analysis of the organization of the speech is difficult. Its organizational pattern was largely determined by the questions. In this analysis, the method of considering Taft's lines of argument will be used; it will approximate the order as presented by Taft. Questions raised during the speech will not be re-
Main arguments. Taft's opening sentences were, "Senate Bill 637 to appropriate funds to subsidize the state systems of primary and secondary school education is somewhat different from any bill on the same subject we have heretofore considered. This bill has two distinct proposals and they are based on entirely different grounds." He then stated that he would consider each proposal separately.

On the first proposal, that of providing $200,000,000. to increase teachers' salaries, Taft's lines of argument were:

1. The bill amounts to placing all teachers on the federal payroll; it would give every teacher approximately a $200. raise without relation to need, and without relation to what they are receiving now.

2. It results in control over the methods by which the states and localities conduct their schools because the bill states that this money can be spent on teachers' salaries only. Even if the states think other educational expenses are more necessary, they must spend the money received under this provision on teachers' salaries.

3. The whole amount of $300,000,000. (for both provisions of the bill) is the kind of expenditure we have up to this time considered a non-war expenditure. We abolished the CCC, NYA, and WPA and we have cut down on every non-essential war activity under the demands of the people of the United States; stepping into this new field will nullify all the savings which have been made.

4. It is hard to see how the money to be appropriated would in any way affect the war. The fact that a boy of seventeen gets perhaps
a little better education, that his teacher gets $2600 instead of $1400
certainly won't affect what kind of soldier he will be in this war.

(5) The subsidy is not defensible on any known ground I can
think of. Education is not a federal function. The subsidy does not
come under the common defense clause. It is true that this money could
be appropriated under the spending power but in the past we have not
subsidized states for activities which are basically state functions.
While it is true that states are more financially limited than the Fed­
eral Government education comes first with them; if states can finance
anything, they can finance education.

(6) In order to equalize teachers' salaries, it would require
an expenditure of a billion dollars rather than $200,000,000.

(7) About 10% of school levies in Ohio are defeated because the
people think their teachers are receiving enough money, and their schools
are adequate --- yet in this bill, Congress says the teachers must get
$200. additional.

(8) The states are not asking for this provision. The in­
dustrial states can take care of their own educational systems; it is
the National Education Association which has asked for this measure.

(9) Even an additional $200. won't keep teachers from going to
defense work.

(10) There is no time limit specified in this temporary pro­
vision. If the bill is passed, the appropriations will go on forever.

His position against the second part of the bill, that of
appropriating $100,000,000 to the poorer states to enable them to
equalize educational opportunities was based on two points:
(1) The cost would eventually become tremendous. It is estimated that expenses for education will need to be doubled after the war. The Federal Government will be asked to finance the greater part of the increase.

(2) Federal control would inevitably accompany the increasing amounts of support. If the federal government will supply up to half of the cost, then surely it will exercise more control.

Then followed his solution: the matter should be referred to a Special Committee on Post-War Economic Policy and Planning which would consider all government expenditures in order to determine how much could be spent by the government on various projects, federal aid to education included. He suggested that perhaps through social security measures and the proper stimulation of industry, the poorer states can be assisted to reach a point where they would not need federal aid for education.

His final sentence was, "I would rather extend Federal aid to other fields than education because I am afraid of the Federal control that ultimately comes from any kind of Federal aid."

In the questioning afterwards, he made it clear that he would eliminate the provision for teachers' salaries from the bill entirely when it went back to the Committee. He also stated that the equalization provision should go only to those states which absolutely need assistance. He believed there would be not more than thirteen or fourteen such states.

When comparing Taft's lines of argument with the Majority Report, it becomes obvious that he prepared his remarks to answer the points of
that report. He had answers for nearly all the main arguments. His goal was to cover all possible points in refuting them.

Taft's positions on the four issues stated earlier were as follows: while inequalities exist in education they are not affecting the war effort seriously enough in order to justify expenditure of money at the time. Since all non-essential government functions had been reduced to save money, the government should not embark on a program of aiding education.

On the second issue, the Senator strongly disputed that a significant number of states were unable to finance proper educational programs. He cited that local school levies were defeated and that no state had declared it was unable to meet the rising educational costs.

Most of his attention was given to the third and fourth issues. He maintained that the Federal Government should not be concerned with this problem because education is a state function. He believed that the costs of this program would gradually increase — as the government spent more money its control would increase.

Logical proof. His tactic of raising all possible objections to the measure adversely affected the logical proof of this speech. It resulted in the presentation of several poorly supported arguments. In these instances, his reasoning was open to question.

To support his position on the first issue, Taft labeled education as a non-war activity and hence money should not be appropriated for it. He drew the analogy that education was in the same class as the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the Works Progress Administration. But these were clearly temporary relief
measures to provide employment. There was no need to continue them after
the war had created many new jobs. Hence, it was not valid to compare
the proposed educational expenditures with these measures. Further, his
view that education was a non-essential expenditure was a short-range
view. The rejections by the selective service because of illiteracy
showed the relationship of education to the war effort. Thus, the basis
for his contention that new educational expenditures were not justif-
ied was fallacious. With the proof for this argument lacking in co-
gency, Taft's position on the issue over whether the inequalities in the
educational system was weakened. All he was able to do was to set up
a diversionary tactic; it did not meet the tests of logical adequacy.

On the second issue, whether the states were actually able to
finance adequate education, the logical proof was extremely weak. To
support his stand that the states could finance the educational systems,
he cited that 10% of the local levies in Ohio were turned down because
the people felt that teachers' salaries were high enough and that their
schools were adequate. Even if the reason he gave for the defeats of
the levies were true, it does not dispute the fact that 90% of the time
the people felt their schools needed more money to operate. Also, this
evidence was for the state of Ohio only. A larger sampling would be
needed to support his generalization.

As further proof on this issue, he stated the fact that none of
the states had appeared before the Committee to request aid from the
Federal Government. This was true; it didn't prove, though, that the
states didn't need aid. The teachers, through the National Educational
Association, had carried the request for Federal Action to the Committee. They were supported by numerous other non-partisan groups.

His final point on this issue was that if the states can finance anything, they can finance education. He mentioned that the states devote one-third of their budgets to education and that the educational expenses are met first of all. Yet the evidence was clear that many states did not have enough money to finance even average schools. Increasing the amount of money for education in these states would mean either cutting other services of the state governments or increasing the taxation rates. Even if the first could be done, it is unlikely that enough money could be raised to meet the needs. If the latter were done by the states, even Taft admitted that the states had about reached the limits of the money they could raise through their allotted forms of taxation. Hence, neither solution would be feasible.

His opponents' argument that the states were unable to raise the necessary money was much stronger than Taft's on this issue.

The third issue, Is the financing of education a proper concern of the Federal Government?, was a very important one to both sides. The proponents of the Hill-Thomas Bill established the fact that the Federal Government had given aid to education in varying forms for many years. Thus, establishing the precedent, their plea for aid in greater amounts rested on the inequalities that existed from state to state in the ability to finance education. They claimed these inequalities were resulting in weakened educational systems and therefore in a weakened United States. All of their preceding arguments pointed to their stand on this issue.
Taft used the familiar point that education is a state function as his basic premise on this issue. He pointed out that there was no basis in the Constitution for giving aid except through the Federal Government's spending power. Then he related this back to his basic premise, concluding with the statement that in the past the government had not subsidized activities which are basically state functions.

Here Taft had the advantage of defending the status quo; the burden of proof was on his opponents. In view of the evidence presented by them, it would be reasonable to conclude that they had sufficiently indicted the old concept of education as an exclusive function of the state governments.

On the fourth and final issue, Taft capitalized on the most commonly-raised objection: that federal aid will lead to federal control of education. Throughout the speech, he had made references to this argument. When talking about the first provision, he pointed out that the money received under it could be used for teachers' salaries only, even if the states feel they have more pressing educational problems. He stated,

But the Federal Government says, "No, this money can be used only for teachers' salaries, regardless of other policies you may wish to pursue." It is of the very essence of the bill, and there results immediately a control over the methods by which the states and localities conduct their schools.

Even though the foregoing was not a particularly strong objection, such remarks throughout the speech set the stage for his stand on the last issue. He believed that federal control would most likely come in the equalization provision of the bill. And again, cost was the expla-
ation. He pointed out that educational expenses will need to be doubled after the war with the Federal Government financing the greater part of the increase. But the monetary demands on the government would be greater than ever at that time; the country will not be able to stand any such a tax burden without forcing socialization upon the country.

This was coupled with his belief that as the federal government increased its aid to schools, it surely would demand more control over how the money was being spent. Then, as additional points to support his mushrooming cost argument, he doubted that $200,000,000 would really make that much difference in teachers' salaries. This was getting at his conclusion that once aid is started the demands to increase it will be ever-expanding.

Against these arguments by Taft, the opponents could only counter with statements in the bill that the Federal Government was to have no control over local education. In effect, all they could say, "There won't be federal control because we don't want any." Their position was the weaker. They were not able to allay the fears of federal control over education.

In summary, Taft's logical proof was relatively weak on all issues except the last, Will federal aid lead to federal control? His evidence for the other points was insufficient and unconvincing. His reasoning from analogy, when used, did not meet the tests of logical validity. He was effective only on the last issue; this is because he was defending the commonly-held view which his opponents were unable to refute satisfactorily.
He must be credited for making specific objections to the provisions of the Hill-Thomas bill. He was not arguing against federal aid to education in general but against this bill in particular. His habit of dealing with specifics was a strength even though some of his arguments were not particularly cogent.

**Emotional proof.** Again in this speech, as in the Smith-Taft debates considered in the fifth chapter, Taft used little emotional proof. That which he used was centered around the last issue, that federal aid would lead to federal control. He appealed to the motive of local control over local affairs, in this case, education. But the emotional connotations of this appeal were not strong; he did not extend the argument much beyond its logical bounds.

In only one other place did he attempt to appeal to emotions. This was in reference to the claims of some that aid to education was justified at this time because it would improve the defense of the country and its allies by producing better soldiers. Taft likened this reasoning to Hitler's program of caring for young men from birth since he needed them for soldiers. He asserted:

> It places the whole character and knowledge of the people in the hands of a federal bureau. That bureau is more than likely to be guided by some small group of men who believe in this method of education or that method of education. It transfers the control from the people of each district to a man or men wholly beyond the control of public opinion.

Thus, he ended by returning to his basic appeal of local control over local matters. In all, the emotional appeals did not lend a stirring or inspiring quality to the speech.

**Ethical proof.** The appeals to enhance his own credibility and
to discredit those of his opponents were frequently resorted to in this speech. These appeals compensated to a considerable extent for his lack of emotional appeals. To establish his point that "if the states can finance anything, they can finance education," he cited his eight years' experience as a state legislator in Ohio. He was seeking to show that he was enough of an expert on state finances to have his conclusion accepted. This ethical proof was helpful to Taft's cause but it did not refute the logical proof offered by his opponents on the point that states were unable to meet the rising costs of education.

He used an ethical appeal at the end of his speech when he said, "I would rather extend federal aid to other fields than education because I am afraid of the federal control that ultimately comes from any kind of federal aid." Here, he was attempting to show that he was a reasonable man on the matter of federal aid — that if needed it should be given in areas other than education.

His condemnation of his opponents' motives was effectively used. He asserted strongly that they realized if aid was once started it would continue in increasing amounts; this "small, first step" was just a technique to get aid started and then expand it. When added to his logical materials on federal aid leads to federal control, this attack was effective in discrediting the ethos of his opponents to a considerable extent.

Organisation. As stated previously, this speech was interrupted frequently — Taft patterned his remarks after the question and objections raised. As a result, the over-all speech was not well organized. There was frequent repetition of arguments. There often was no relation-
ship between succeeding points.

**Style.** There was a surprising lack of strong words in this speech. The words chosen to express his attacks were mild and un-emotional. The language again was simple and clear. The meaning of the words was instantly intelligible. They were not partisan words; this gave the impression of a calm, analytical approach to the arguments. His answers to questions were generally short and terse.

**Effects of this speech.** Most observers gave Taft the credit for the defeat of the Hill-Thomas bill in 1943. As *Newsweek* stated, "It was Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio who almost singlehandedly, in October, 1943, defeated a $300,000,000. program of federal aid to the nation's school systems." ¹

As a result of his speech, Taft succeeded in his specific purpose of getting the bill referred back to committee. He received some major support, however, from Senator William E. Langer of North Dakota. Just before the bill came to a vote, Langer introduced an amendment which would forbid discrimination in the administration of not only the Federal funds but also the state moneys they would supplement. Since this would mean that Southern states would have to spend as much money per pupil on Negro schools as on whites, this amendment would make the entire aid to education bill unacceptable to them. Langer's amendment passed by three votes, 40 to 37. Taft voted for the Langer amendment since he realized that attaching it to the Hill-Thomas bill would

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¹ "Taft and the Schools," *Newsweek*, XXXI (April 12, 1943), 27.
possibly gain enough support from Southern Senators to defeat it.

After the Langer amendment was passed, Taft moved that the bill be referred back to committee. This motion passed by a 53-26 vote. Even Senator Hill of Alabama, its co-sponsor, voted to refer it to committee. Whether the Hill-Thomas bill would have passed the Senate in 1913 without the Langer amendment can only be speculated upon. But Senator Taft was instrumental in getting the bill referred back to the committee. He carried the attack on the floor of the Senate. In the end, he accomplished his desired purpose.

In conclusion, even though the speech was successful in accomplishing its purpose, it left something to be desired from the standpoint of quality. The Senator's approach of raising all possible objections resulted in the presentation of some arguments which did not meet the tests of logical validity. Specifically, his arguments that money for education was a non-essential appropriation and if the states can finance anything, they can finance education, were poorly supported. The weaknesses of these arguments were somewhat compensated for by his strong ethical and logical materials on the point that federal aid leads to federal control. This was the strongest point he raised. Taft's speech against the Hill-Thomas bill was an example of a speech which accomplished its purpose despite some defects in its quality.

II. SPEECHES IN FAVOR OF FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Three years after he strongly opposed a bill providing federal aid to education, Taft joined with seven other Senators in proposing a
bi-partisan bill for federal aid. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., explained Taft's reversal on the issue in this way:

But in the process of licking it, Taft took a square look at the problem. As he studied it harder, he developed a growing certainty that he had been wrong. He realized that many states simply could not support an adequate school program, and he became convinced that the federal government must underwrite the school system so that every child in the United States can be guaranteed an indispensable minimum of education. 1

This section will evaluate two of Taft's speeches in favor of federal aid to education. The first was his speech in the Senate on March 21*, 1918, when he introduced the bill on behalf of the eight sponsors. Although essentially the same bill had been introduced in 1916 and 1917, passing the Senate each time, his 1918 speech was selected for analysis. The second speech to be analyzed here was given by Taft before the American Association of School Administrators convention in 1917. The purpose will be to determine how effectively Taft supported his position compared to the arguments he previously used against aid to education and to note how he adapted his materials to different audiences on the same subject.

**Senate Speech, March 21*, 1918.**

Taft introduced the bill on the floor of the Senate. Other co-sponsors spoke later but Taft was the principal speaker. Just as he obtained the floor, Senator Wherry raised a quorum call which was answered by eighty-eight Senators.

First, he stated his connection with the bill, "My own interest

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in it arose from the fact that I opposed the bill four years ago on various grounds. I would still oppose that bill, because it had none of the safeguards which the present bill contains." He then previewed what he would cover in his speech, "I should like first to state exactly what the bill does, and then I shall try to give the reasons for the bill, and state why I believe it is an absolutely essential policy for the United States Government to adopt." He followed this organizational pattern throughout the speech even though he was interrupted frequently for questions. The analysis here will follow Taft's three-part division of his speech.

Exposition of the provisions of the bill. He very clearly outlined the provisions of the bi-partisan bill, known as Senate Bill 472. Essentially it was an equalization bill. It provided for Federal assistance to the states so that they could provide a minimum of $50. per child per year. He conceded that $50. per year was not adequate but it was an improvement over the then-existing standards of many states. In order to qualify for any federal aid at all, a state must spend at least two per cent of the total personal income of its residents on its school system. If half of this amount does not equal $45. per child, the Federal Government would make up the difference to assure the $50. minimum standard. Every state would receive not less than $5. per child even if they could raise more than the $50. minimum. There was to be complete state and local autonomy in spending the money. As a further incentive for the states to devote more than two per cent of their moneys to education, the bill provided that if the states didn't spend at least two and one half per cent on education, the Federal contribution would be
reduced proportionately.

Hence, this bill differed from the Hill-Thomas bill of 1943 in that it was only an equalization bill. There was no provision to increase teachers' salaries as provided in the bill Taft opposed. And, although the formula for determining the amounts to be received by the states was different, essentially it was based on the states' ability to provide for education.

Taft's exposition of the provisions of the bill was clear and easy to follow. He used examples to illustrate provisions and he introduced a minimum of statistics. In this brief exposition, his ability to make detailed provisions of the law clear was noteworthy.

Reasons why the bill should be enacted. Senator Taft introduced five reasons to show the need for this bill: (1) illiteracy and the lack of education in many areas must be remedied; (2) a significant number of children are attending sub-standard schools; (3) a number of teachers are not qualified to teach by any standards; (4) the necessity for an educated citizenry in a democracy cannot be exaggerated; and (5) some states are unable to finance an adequate educational program within their present means.

How do these reasons compare with those advanced in opposition to the Hill-Thomas bill in 1943? First, it should be noted that the bill Taft was supporting did not provide for a teachers' salary fund; hence, his arguments against that provision of the 1943 bill do not apply here. He argued against the equalization features of the 1943 bill on the basis that education was a non-essential expenditure for
The Federal Government; since the nation was not at war in 1918, this argument would not apply either. He argued further in 1923 that the states were able to finance education if they would make the proper effort. Thus, an analysis of his arguments pro and con on the need for federal aid reveals that he changed his mind on only one point: Are the states able to finance education? Apropos of this last point, Taft admitted in answering a question that he was wrong in saying, "If the states can finance anything, they can finance education because they spend one-third of their money on education," in 1923. In this speech, he said, "Many states were spending more than one-third on education but still they had inadequate education. This is what made me change my mind" on the issue of federal aid to education.

The Senator relied heavily on statistics for proof of his need for federal aid to education. For his first point that illiteracy and the lack of education in many areas must be remedied, he introduced the following figures: two million school-age children did not attend school partly because of the inability to get them to school or the failure to get them to school because of lack of provision for any kind of transportation --- which is largely a question of wealth; ten million adults in 1940 had less than five years of schooling; in World War II, eight per cent of the men who were examined by the Selective Service were rejected for educational deficiencies. He used statistics to show the extent of the problem. In the next two points, he explored the causes of this problem.

For the second point, that a significant number of children were attending sub-standard schools, he cited that more than a million of
them were in schools whose total expenditures per classroom was less
than $500. per year. Then he appealed to common sense, "We can easily
imagine that it is impossible to run much of a classroom on $500. a
year, because it is necessary to have a good teacher, and no good
teacher can be obtained within that figure."

To support his third point, that a number of teachers were not
qualified to teach by any standards, he stated that two million children
were being taught by teachers who had no certificates of any kind. He
then reasoned that low salaries were largely responsible for this
failure to attract qualified teachers. He said, "I think there can be
no question about that. I believe it is generally agreed, and so I
shall not go into the figures which support that statement."

He presented a syllogism to support the fourth point: the nec-
essity for an educated citizenry in a democracy cannot be exaggerated.
He stated as his major premise, "A government depending on the making
of decisions by the people can exist only if the people have some
ability to understand the problems of government which are presented to
them." This was followed by the minor premise, "Unless there is a sat-
sfactory educational system, the people cannot have the necessary
understandings." His conclusion was, "Education lies at the basis of
all republican forms of government." He often used the syllogistic form
in developing ideas. Then he presented a detailed illustration of the
low standard of living in Puerto Rico which he had recently visited. He
believed that the low standard of living was caused primarily by a low
level of education. He asserted that education would be the single most
important factor toward improving economic conditions in the poorer
areas of the United States. He brought in some of his own philosophy to justify the need for federal aid:

When the Declaration of Independence said that all men are created equal, it perhaps made an extreme statement; but I have always felt that what was meant was that all men in the United States are entitled to equality of opportunity. No child can have equality of opportunity, in my opinion, unless to start with he has a basic minimum education. The ordinary child who receives no education is in effect condemned to a life of poverty, a life on the basis of a low standard of living, a life of little interest, and a life which is of little value to the people of the United States.

This is as close as the Senator came to an emotional appeal in this speech. It supplemented his logical materials well on this argument.

The fifth and final point of his need, some states are unable to finance an adequate educational program within their present means, was supported by statistics and explanation. He showed that the states, using every means of taxation to their limits, were raising about twelve billion dollars a year while the Federal Government was raising forty-five billions. The states could not raise more money to support schools because they did not have access to the principal sources of taxation.

This was the proof offered for the five points of his need. No questions were raised and no objections were offered against them. It would seem, then, that he had made a prima facie case of need for federal aid to education. The logical proof was adequate, and he made the most of his ethical status to support the bill. But all of this was a preliminary for what he knew would be the major issue: Should the Federal Government enact a policy of aid to education?

Reasons why the policy should be adopted. From his opposition
to the aid for education bill in 1913, Taft knew the major arguments against the proposal: education is a state function, and its corollary, federal aid to education will lead to federal control. In the speech in 1918, he said, "The problem confronting us and the real objection to this bill, the point which troubled me and troubled others, is in connection with the question of what educational function the Federal Government has, and why the Federal Government is asked to participate in education."

Most of his speech was devoted to answering the two main objections he had raised in 1913. Dealing with the first, that education is a state function, he said that the primary obligation to educate children is in the states and local communities. But he was also convinced that the Federal Government had a secondary obligation. He contended that the responsibility of the Federal Government was "to back up that states, ... where it is necessary to back up the states." Then he repeated his earlier point that the states could not raise enough money through their allotted forms of taxation to finance adequate educational programs.

He was then interrupted by a question concerning the exact role of the Federal Government under the provisions of this bill. Taft made it clear that the Government would only be an auditor to see that the $50. per child was spent in every school. He emphasized that there would be no control over choosing of teachers or textbooks or requiring certain subjects to be taught.

Senator Overton of Louisiana then mentioned the Langer amendment passed in 1913 which would require all money, both state and Federal, to
be spent equally on segregated schools. Overton made the point that
that amendment interfered with state control of education. Taft replied,
"If such an amendment is offered and agreed to, I shall vote against the
entire bill." This was a reversal from his previous stand, when he voted
for the Langer amendment as a parliamentary tactic to defeat the entire
bill.

After these questions, Taft continued with his speech, "The
question presents itself is this: Shall we refuse altogether Federal
aid programs because of the danger that they may be abused?" This was
getting at the major objection against federal aid, that it leads to
federal control. Taft believed that the present bill contained adequate
safeguards. His reasons were: (1) no Federal official was given any
discretionary powers under the provisions of the bill; previous Federal
aid programs in other areas gave such powers which led to control in the
long run; (2) an effective state-aid system which will leave the admin-
istration in the states will avoid concentrating power in the hands of
the Federal Government; (3) the present bill should be passed because
it contains these safeguards; but if it fails, a bill may be forced upon
us in an emergency which would not contain the safeguards.

In justifying Federal action, Taft said that there was no way
it could be avoided:

It may be constitutional, but it is not practical, when people
say, "Here is a serious health situation beyond the power of our
locality," to reply "That is not in our field. You do it." It
might be possible to make a logical argument in that connection.
I tried to make such an argument, for a while, when I first came
to the Senate. It appealed to no one. The people were not satis-
ified. They said, "You have the money; you can help. You can-
not stand behind the Constitution and say you are not going to
do it, when you are the only people who can do it. You must do
it." It may be logic, but I, for one, came to the conclusion that it was not even sound logic.

After Taft had said this, Senator McMahon of Connecticut, asked, "The Senator surrendered. Is that it?" He was implying, of course, that Taft changed his mind on federal aid to education because of public pressure. Taft's reply was:

I will say that I changed my mind. In matters affecting the necessities of life — and I should like to confine it so far as possible to the necessities of life, namely, to relief, to education, to health, and to housing — I do not believe the Federal Government can say it has no interest, and say to the people, "Go your way and do the best you can." I do not believe we should do that. Because of the way wealth is distributed in the United States, I think we have a responsibility to see if we cannot eliminate hardship, poverty, and inequality of opportunity, to the best of our ability. I do not believe we are able to do it without a federal aid system.

McMahon, in his question, may have been implying that Taft changed his mind because of political expediency, that Taft might have realized it would improve his chances in the Presidential race to have sponsored such measures. Taft didn't directly answer whether he surrendered to public demands, saying only, "I changed my mind." The basis for his changed opinion seemed reasonable. Needless to say, Taft's change enhanced his ethical status in this speech; when a strong opponent becomes a staunch advocate of a bill, that in itself is powerful in persuasion.

Concluding the analysis of this speech, it was seen that Taft changed his stand for three basic reasons. First, he realized that some states could not finance an adequate educational program whereas before he was sure they could do so. Second, he believed that the Federal Government had a secondary obligation to provide a basic education if
the states were unable to do so. Third, he was convinced that adequate safeguards against federal control of education were incorporated into the bill.

In contrast to his 1943 speech, this one was excellent from the standpoint of its quality. The logical materials were sound; the arguments were well supported with evidence and reasoning. He capitalized on his ethical status considerably in this speech; it surely must have been a persuasive force on his listeners. Taft even made more use of emotional appeals when he pointed out the undesirable conditions which resulted from the lack of education. Despite some interruptions for questions, the organization of the speech was closely-knit. His language was a little more personal and direct than in previous speeches. He used several illustrations and told of his own experiences which had a bearing on the arguments. Although some of the sentences were rather long, this did not interfere with the meaning of them. In all, it was an excellent speech.

Effects of the speech. As mentioned earlier, Taft was the principal speaker on this bill in 1948, although all of the other seven co-sponsors also spoke on the measure. As a result of their efforts, the bill passed the Senate by a vote of 58-22. Taft was instrumental in securing the vote in favor of the measure. The bill was never passed by the House of Representatives. The excellent Taft speech thus accomplished its purpose of getting the Senate to approve the Educational Finance Bill, but it never became law. The last speech to be analyzed in this chapter was Taft's address to an educator's convention in 1947, about a year before the speech analyzed in this section.
A Sound Basis for Federal Aid to Education.

The title of Taft's speech before the American Association of School Administrators' convention at Atlantic City, New Jersey, was "A Sound Basis for Federal Aid to Education." He made this speech a year after the introduction of the first bi-partisan federal aid bill in 1946. In this section, the chief emphasis will be on determining how Taft adapted his arguments to a non-Senate audience. Before analyzing the speech, an investigation of the speaking situation will be made.

Analysis of the speaking situation. The audience was vitally interested in this subject. The American Association of School Administrators is an affiliate of the National Education Association which had worked since 1930 to get expanded federal aid. Most of the members were undoubtedly aware of Taft's role in the controversy, first as an opponent of federal aid and then as a co-author of an aid bill. Each year, the NEA Journal, as well as other magazines in the field of education, reported the action in Washington regarding federal aid. Thus, Taft was facing an audience which agreed with his point of view.

It would seem that their expectations of Taft's speech would be not only to hear his views but also to learn the "inside" story of the chances for passing the bill.

Taft's purpose. In agreeing to speak to the educators, Taft was aware of their position on the issue of federal aid to education. As one of the co-sponsors of the current bill, his job was not to

1. The text of this speech was supplied by Miss Blanche O'Berg. A copy of it may be found in Appendix B.
convince them that federal aid should be enacted. His controlling purpose was to get acceptance of his particular version of the bill. He made the specific purpose clear in the conclusion of his talk when he said, "The principal danger to the present bill rests in the differences between the advocates of Federal education. I feel very strongly that if all of the advocates would unite behind Senate Bill 472 it could be passed at this session of Congress." To this end, the speech was of the persuasive type.

**Organization.** Taft's opening statements led directly into his speech. He briefly tried to establish rapport with his audience by saying, "It is unnecessary in such a gathering as this to dwell on the importance of education to the United States and to the Federal Government. It lies at the very basis of intelligent self-government." This set the "tone" for his speech and he proceeded right into his first main idea. The body of the speech followed this pattern: he spent considerable time showing the importance of education to a democracy (even though he had said it was unnecessary to dwell on this); then he praised the system of state and local control over education before pointing out the deficiencies in the educational system; he followed with a justification of federal participation in education as long as certain "principles" were adhered to; and finally, he explained how his version of the aid bill would help alleviate the problems of financing education. This organizational pattern was based on a problem-solution order. It followed a climactic order to his purpose: support Senate Bill 472. He used the method of implication in this
speech, i.e., the specific purpose was not made clear until the conclusion of the talk. This was perhaps too long, for it kept the audience waiting for the central idea too long. He might have more effectively presented the provisions of the bill earlier and integrated them with his "principles" of federal aid. Over-all, the speech followed a clear-cut organizational pattern. In organization, it was superior to either of his Senate speeches because their patterns of organization were determined by questions and remarks from the floor. In this speech, Taft showed the ability to organize a speech well.

Main points and proof. Under the first main point, the importance of education to the United States, Taft listed three sub-points: (1) education lies at the basis of all intelligent self-government; (2) education is essential to economic welfare; and (3) education is the only defense of liberty against totalitarianism. Each of these was supported by examples and explanations. Since there would be no disagreement on them, there is no need to evaluate the proof.

His second main point was that this country has done a good job in education. The reasons to justify this conclusion were: (1) the country is fully committed to universal free education, (2) the system is built on state and local control, and (3) the variety of systems throughout the nation has promoted a freedom of thought, and consequently a material progress, greater than that of any other country in the world. He followed by saying that this same localization of education has been ineffective in some respects. But even so, he felt that local control was better than federal control. He used an emotional appeal against federal control:
This same localization of education has made it in some respects less effective. Some districts have done their job poorly. That is an inevitable incident to local administration, but we may well remember that when a Federal system develops faults, and it always does, those faults extend throughout the entire country on a universal scale. The adoption of a Federal system looks perfect on paper but in practice it soon develops the inefficiencies of every huge bureaucracy, besides subjecting 25,000,000 children to the particular ideology of a small clique in control in Washington.

This is about as emotional as Taft got in any of his speeches; it can be clearly seen that his emotional appeals are not strong which is why newsmen often wrote that "he was incapable of emotion" in his speeches.

After this, Taft stated that some of the faults in education were caused by a lack of money; this was a condition that could be remedied. He cited the per capita income ranges as the basic cause; in Mississippi the per capita income was $1,84 in 1940 compared to $1,452 in California. This results in a poorer education in the less wealthy states. To illustrate the poor quality of education in some areas of the country, he used two of the same instances as in the Senate speech: selective service rejections and the illiteracy rates in the nation. In all, this second point was adequately supported with explanations and specific instances; he used less statistics than in his Senate speeches to prove essentially the same arguments.

The third main point was that the Federal Government should undertake a system of extending aid to the states to insure a minimum education. He justified federal action on the basis of its "secondary obligation" to education and because of the limited abilities of some states to finance education, two of his main arguments in the Senate
speech. He followed by presenting his own philosophy regarding the role of the Federal Government:

My own belief is that the Federal Government should assist those States desiring to put a floor under essential services in relief, in medical care, in housing, and in education. Apart from the general humanitarian interest in achieving this result, equality of opportunity lies at the basis of this Republic. No child can begin to have equality of opportunity unless he has medical care in his youth, adequate food, decent surroundings, and above all, effective schooling. It is the concern of the entire Nation to see that the principles of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution are translated into reality.

The same ideas were contained here as in the Senate speech in 1948. In fact, the phraseology is almost the same. This illustrates what Taft's associates meant when they said his memory enabled him to retain his speeches almost word-for-word over a long period of time.

After justifying federal aid to insure equality of opportunity, Taft listed two basic principles that should be followed in any aid program: (1) the administration of education and control of the school system must be completely in the hands of state and local administrators, and (2) the federal contribution should be auxiliary and should not become the principal support of education. Under each of these principles, he discussed the dangers of federal control. Also under the second one he returned to a discussion of state taxation which he had mentioned earlier. In effect, he used these two principles as criteria for any solution to the educational finance problem. In the next point, he presented his solution.

As his fourth main point, Taft stated that Senate bill H72 would provide an adequate education. He began by explaining the provisions of the bill. Since these were essentially the same as mentioned in his
Senate speech, they will not be repeated here. After rapidly presenting the formula for determining the amount each state would receive, he summarized the provisions of the bill in this way:

In summary, therefore, the basis of Senate bill 472 is that if a state, after making more than the average effort, cannot raise $40 per child from half its revenues, the Federal Government will assist the state to see that every child receives at least a $40 minimum. I realize that this is too low a permanent standard, but it is very much higher than is now being spent for many children in the poorer districts of the United States.

His listing of the provisions of the bill was done rapidly; the summary, although very general, was helpful. 1

His next statement was directed to the teachers, "I quite realize that this bill does not hold out any immediate promise of relief to the teachers in many states." Since most in the audience were teachers interested in what might be done about low salaries, Taft wisely made the features of the bill explicit on this point. He went on to say that probably 80% of the federal money would go for increases in teachers' salaries in the poorer states. He criticized some proposed federal aid bills which provided for large increases in salaries, concluding, "I do not believe that Congress under the present budget condition could possibly adopt any such bills." He did not dodge the question of teachers' salaries, even though his answer may have disappointed some in the audience.

His conclusion stated his specific purpose: all advocates of federal aid should unite in supporting Senate bill 472.

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1. It should be noted that the 1947 bill sought to insure a minimum of $40 per child per year whereas the 1948 bill's figure was $50.
It can be seen that Taft relied most heavily on logical materials in this speech, just as he had done in the Senate speech. It was noteworthy that he used less statistical materials in the speech before the School Administrators than in his Senate speech. In place of the statistics, he offered conclusions which likely would have been accepted as valid by his audience. In view of this, the logical proof in their entirety were deemed adequate.

Typically, he made little use of emotional materials. The one instance of an attempt to arouse feelings against a huge federal bureaucracy spreading its mistakes across the nation was cited. With an audience of school administrators, this was undoubtedly an effective appeal.

Taft made little use also of ethical appeals. He did not even mention his previous opposition to federal aid and the reasons why he changed his mind. There was some ethical value in bringing in his philosophy that the government should insure equality of opportunity in education. It helped establish him as a man of good intentions and motives.

**Audience adaptation.** It was noted that Taft used most of the same arguments in his two speeches in favor of federal aid. In this sense, his speech did not reveal a particular adaptation to the school administrators. In the introduction where most speakers made a special effort at adaptation, Taft said only, "It is unnecessary in such a gathering as this to dwell on the importance of education to the United States." He then proceeded to discuss its importance in three aspects: education lies at the basis of all intelligent self-government, it is
essential to economic welfare, and it is the only defense of liberty against totalitarianism. He may have been criticized for considering the importance of education in as much detail since his audience was in agreement with his point of view. Yet an analysis of the development of each of the three aspects reveals that they may have had a stimulating effect on the audience. Taft's development was couched in terms that many educators may have overlooked. Further, the fact that a distinguished Senator had so much faith in education undoubtedly would have been impressive to this audience.

In only two other places did Taft make direct references to this particular audience. The first of these was when he stated that Senate bill 472 did not provide for general raises for teachers. Since the audience was vitally interested in improving teachers' salaries, this omission may have been significant to them. Taft sought to justify it, however, by estimating that about 80% of the money received from the Federal Government would go for increases in salaries. Of course, this could not be guaranteed since the states and local districts had complete freedom in spending the money they received.

The second particular adaptation was a general one; it appeared in his conclusion when he asked all advocates to unite in supporting Senate bill 472. He did this recognizing that various educators favored differing bills for federal aid. His adaptation was to those who favored other bills; he sought to gain their support by showing how his bill would accomplish what they desired. He fulfilled their expectations of finding out what the chances were for passing the bill by saying that if all supporters would unite, the bill might be passed at
this session of Congress.

His style revealed no particular adaptation to this audience. His word choice and arrangement followed the same pattern of all his speeches: straight, basic, easy to understand English which gave the qualities of simplicity and clarity to his speeches.

Effects of the speech. In summary of the quality of the speech, it was seen that the organization was superior. The logical proof was satisfactory; emotional and ethical proof were quite limited but they supplemented the logical materials well enough. On an over-all basis, the speech did not reveal much adaptation to his particular audience. He showed an awareness of teachers' attitudes in two instances. His dealing with the attitudes was deemed satisfactory. On the basis of the above criteria, the speech may be judged better than average in quality.

Since overt results of the speech cannot be measured, the effects of the speech must be judged on whether it accomplished its purpose. It was seen that Taft waited until his conclusion to make his purpose clear. He desired to get support for his version of the aid bill. His speech was devoted to showing that it was a sound basis for giving aid. But the relationship between the sound basis and his bill was implied more than stated. He did not make a concerted effort to connect the two. This may have been a detriment to accomplishing his purpose.

But, in the last analysis, this detriment was outweighed by his explaining that Senate bill 472 had the best chance of passing if it were supported by all advocates of federal aid. Since the educators
were interested in getting the aid policy started, Taft's statement would have won considerable support. Hence, he probably accomplished his purpose in this speech. But as noted, had he presented his purpose earlier, he might have been able to more strongly convince that his bill deserved their support.

III. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter assessed three of Taft's speeches on federal aid to education. The first was a speech in the Senate opposing the Hill-Thomas bill in 1913. Taft was the principal opponent to speak on the measure. He opposed both provisions of the bill, of providing money to raise teachers' salaries and to equalize educational opportunities on these grounds: (1) while inequalities in education and low teachers' salaries existed, they were not serious enough to justify expenditure of that much money on a non-essential activity in wartime; (2) by making the proper effort, the states can finance adequate educational programs; (3) the Federal Government should not be concerned because education is a state function; and (4) there was a great danger that federal aid would lead to federal control over education. He sought to raise all possible objections in order to defeat the bill. This tactic resulted in his presenting arguments that were insufficiently supported. He was effective in proving only the fourth point above. His emotional and ethical appeals were incidental to the logical. From the standpoint of its quality, the speech had many defects. It was defeated by the Senate, however, because of the strong feeling that the Federal Government would have too much control over education. The Langer amendment
which would have required all money, state and federal, to be spent equally in segregated schools was passed by the Senate. With this provision for control added, Taft was easily able to get the bill referred back to committee.

The second speech analyzed was a Senate speech in 1948 favoring aid to education. The major reason for his reversal was that Taft had become convinced some states were unable to provide adequate educational programs. He then was determined to build safeguards against federal control into an educational finance bill. With this done to his satisfaction, he became a co-sponsor and the floor leader of the bill in 1946. In the Senate speech analyzed in this chapter, it was seen that Taft very effectively defended the bill on the issue of federal control. Thus having met the major objection to the bill, he was able to secure its approval by the Senate. His logical proof was sound; he capitalized greatly on his ethical status as a former opponent turned sponsor of a bill, and he made some considerable use of emotional appeals when he pointed out the undesirable conditions which result from the lack of education.

Comparing the two Senate speeches, Taft was more effective in support than in opposition. In both cases, it was apparent that he had studied the problem thoroughly. He used the results of his study more effectively in supporting the bill; his tactic of raising all possible objections when opposing the bill resulted in the use of some weak arguments.

As a further comparison, a third speech was analyzed. This address was given before the American Association of School Adminis-
T rators. In it, Taft advocated his bill as a sound basis for federal aid to education. It was found that Taft used most of the same arguments as in his Senate speech favoring federal aid. He relied less on statistics in the non-Senate speech, choosing instead to present commonly accepted conclusions about education.

His adaptation to the educators was chiefly in the form of reconciling his bill with the proposals advanced by various groups. This was done only with respect to increasing teachers' salaries, which was not specifically provided for in his bill, and to gaining united support for passing the aid bill at the time. His speech was judged better than average. It was much improved in organization over the Senate speeches. This was to be expected because Taft had a manuscript while his Senate speeches were extemporaneous. Also, the Senate speeches were frequently interrupted by questions, which impaired their organization. He was able to accomplish his purpose in the educators' speech by showing that his bill had the best chance to pass of the bills then being advocated. Taft had the knowledge on federal aid to education. He showed an ability to analyze problems well in his speaking on this issue. This chapter revealed that his speeches in support of the measure were better from a quality standpoint. He was able to accomplish his purpose in all three of the speeches.

The chief difference in the speeches on education compared to those on medical care is the greater emphasis on logical materials in the former. There was less emphasis on emotional proof in the speeches on education.
CHAPTER VIII

SPEECHES ON PUBLIC HOUSING

The Taft story on public housing was slightly different from his role in the federal aid to education controversy. The difference was that Taft favored public housing in principle before he entered the Senate. It was noted in Chapter II that he supported public housing while a member of the Ohio General Assembly. 1 That Taft favored public housing before he entered the Senate was corroborated by Stanley M. Rowe who wrote,

At the time the Senator and Mrs. Taft, my wife and I journeyed by train to Mexico City in 1937, I was Chairman of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority and we had recently completed our first slum clearance project. We had long discussions about it and Bob was convinced that federal aid was necessary for the low income group, if they were to be properly housed. My task of interesting him in housing was made easy by the fact that Martha and my wife had been previously sold on its worth and added their persuasive arguments. 2

Hence, newsmen were not completely accurate when they reported that Taft first opposed and later supported public housing. In his early years in the Senate, he did opposed specific Administration measures on the grounds of excessive cost. As Time magazine reported,

Ohio's ambitious Senator Taft strove vainly last week to prevent the Senate from doubling U.S. Housing Authority's $800,000,000 loan capital for slum clearance. Half that much more would be enough, he thought. The Senate repeatedly overrode the Senator. 3

Taft also opposed the specific version of the public housing bill in 1945, known as the Wagner-Ellender bill. Concerning this, Felix Morley wrote,

When Taft first examined the Wagner-Ellender housing bill, he was in favor of public housing, but he called this bill socialism. Taft's interpretation of socialism was that its purpose is to rise all to the average, which necessarily will bring all others down to the same dead level and take all life and progress out of the system.

But his sense of justice led him to examine the situation more carefully. He then discovered that, while the bill was as bad as he had thought, its intentions were honorable. At once he was seriously interested. For weeks on end he plowed through the stacks of studies made of the housing situation and ended by becoming an authority. The Taft researchers brought him piles of charts, data, figures, books and clippings, and he dug in with zest. He emerged from his studies with a clear and sensible measure. 1

Taft had been chairman of a Senate subcommittee on Housing and Redevelopment. After holding hearings intermittently from June 1, 1945, to January 7, 1946, the Taft committee filed its report on August 1, recommending a clear statement of national policy to maintain the predominance of private enterprise and to keep governmental participation supplementary to private enterprise. 2 The Wagner-Ellender bill, which Taft called "socialistic," was first introduced on August 1. After studying the bill, Taft became a co-sponsor in a revised edition of the bill. It became known as the WET bill, from the initials of its sponsors. The WET bill, after passing in the Senate, died in House committee in 1946. 3


2. Congressional Digest, 25 (November, 1946), 260. 3. Ibid.
On March 10, 1917, the old WET bill was introduced in the Republican-controlled Senate as the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. But it was not passed in that year, and was again introduced in 1918. 1

This chapter will analyze two speeches on public housing, both in favor of the measure. Since Taft always favored public housing in principles, he gave no speeches against the issue. The purpose of this chapter will be to assess his speaking skill in speeches on public housing before two different types of audiences. The first speech to be analyzed was given in the Senate on April 15 and April 20, 1918. 2 The second speech selected for analysis here was delivered before a meeting of the Mortgage Bankers' Association of America and the Graduate School of Business Administration of New York University in New York City on January 25, 1919. 3

I. THE SENATE SPEECH, APRIL 15 AND 20, 1918.

Because the first part of Taft's speech was devoted to an explanation of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill, no other discussion of its provisions will be presented here. He introduced the bill on the floor of the Senate.

Taft began his remarks with a summary of previous federal housing activities. He pointed out that the housing policy had proceeded in

1. Congressional Digest, 27 (June-July, 1918), 168-70.
2. Taft's speech can be considered an entity. Text taken from Congressional Record, April 15 and 20, 1918, pp. 4690-1 and 46500-1.
3. Text of this speech was supplied by Miss Blanche O'Berg, personal secretary to the Senator.
three separate groups, two of which provided for private housing and one for public housing. The first group of legislation created the Federal Home Loan Bank which financed building and loan associations and savings associations. The second established the Federal Housing Authority, by which the government insures private mortgages for builders and home owners. The third was the United States Housing Act, under which, before the war, there was a great deal of low-cost housing. The government built emergency housing, and still owned a considerable portion of it.

The authors of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Act, he explained, tried to set up one government housing policy, consolidating the various policies already in existence.

Thus, his first basic appeal for support of the new law was that it was only a coordinating of previous measures into a unified whole.

He then explained why the Federal Government was drawn into this type of legislation:

A great many persons have asked me, "Why is the Federal Government concerned with housing at all? Why have any Federal action?" I can only say that it is a little late to ask such a question, because the Federal Government has been in the housing business. The difficulty is that we have had two or three different ideas. Certain individuals made studies to prove that particular programs were better than other programs, and we have had three or four separate agencies. In addition, there were about 10 other bureaus which built housing at one time or another. The effort here is to have a unified policy.

Explanation of provisions of the bill. Most of the remainder of his speech on April 15 was devoted to clarifying the policy set up by the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. It was designed to stimulate private housing with about one-tenth of the funds devoted to public housing. It was the public housing feature which had aroused a great deal of
opposition. Taft said, "There has been very little objection to the remainder of the bill." He pointed out that the Senate could eliminate the public housing feature and still pass the rest of the bill "as a very valuable assistance in the long-term problem of constructing housing."

Thus setting up the status of the issue — Should public housing be included? — he devoted the next portion of his speech to a brief justification of public housing. Chiefly this bill provided for public rental housing; the Federal Government would subsidize rents although the housing would be owned by local sub-divisions. He maintained that the Government's policy up to this time had neglected rental housing in favor of financing homes owned by citizens. The general purpose of the housing bill was to make more money available for rental housing; this portion of it was known as Title VI. Realizing that Title VI was the controversial portion of the law, he saved further defense of it until the rest of his speech on April 20. In the speech of April 15, he then explained the other proposals of the bill, taking them in order.

Title I was designed to make the Federal Housing Authority "more extensive and more available" by inducing it to finance more rental housing as well as to permit a more convenient method for financing construction by universities and private institutions. He justified this provision by pointing out the good job the Federal Housing Authority had done in getting a uniform rate of interest established throughout the country and eliminating the old second mortgages with high interest rates. But he added that the principal difficulty with housing was the actual cost of construction, saying, "That problem is not solved, and I think it is going to be very difficult to solve it."
Title II would set up a corporation to provide a secondary market for GI home loans and Federal Housing Authority insured mortgages. In effect, this provision would make mortgages easier to obtain by taking some of the existing mortgages off the hands of the banks. New mortgage money would be made available if this were done. The restriction would be that mortgages would be purchased only when additional private credit could not possibly be obtained. The justification given by Senator Taft for this provision was:

Primarily, the housing problem arises from the fact that housing is too expensive for the income of the people. Low-income families which are able to purchase sufficient food and adequate clothing for themselves find they are unable to obtain decent housing because the cost of housing is so high that the rental is beyond their means. The reason we have slums is that a large number of people are unable to pay the rents which have to be charged for decent housing, considering what the present cost of housing is.

In other words, Title II would make it easier for low-income families to obtain mortgages to pay for their own homes. He seemed to be implying that they could meet these payments easier than to pay the high rents in some areas of the country. Taft followed this same pattern throughout the exposition of the provisions of the bill: he summarized briefly what the provision would accomplish and then showed why it was needed. He used few statistics in proving a need; rather, he presented the conclusions of his own study of the housing problem. Undoubtedly, he had the figures to show the need available if his conclusions were challenged. His exposition of each provision was brief and very general. He may have assumed that the Senators were familiar enough with the legislation so that he did not have to go into details to any great extent. Further, he may have considered these provisions
non-controversial and requiring no proof.

Title III, he explained, provided for research with respect to reducing housing costs and increasing the production of better housing. Title IV was a "new and experimental" provision whereby the Government would guarantee a two and three-fourths per cent return to insurance companies which constructed low-rent housing as investments. He justified this provision on the grounds that such projects in the past had not succeeded in getting rents any lower than in privately-built projects. By guaranteeing a certain return on the money invested, this provision, it was hoped, would attract investment capital in greater amounts. This would benefit the low-income groups by providing cheaper rental housing for them. Taft further explained:

Whether that provision will be used by insurance companies, I do not know. However, I think it is worth trying, because today a very large amount of the savings of the people has been consolidated in insurance companies; and that money has been available primarily for investment, not for mortgages. With this guaranty, we make available the savings of millions of policy holders for equity investment in housing, if this provision works.

He offered no proof of the probability that the provision would accomplish its purpose. He appealed to common-sense in saying that it should work.

Title V was the urban redevelopment, or slum clearance, section. This would enable cities to purchase slum-lands and receive assistance in clearing them from the Federal Government. The land would then be sold for private housing or a portion of it used for public rental housing. He offered an illustration which made the operation of this provision clear:
What will happen is, roughly, this: The city will buy the land, and will replan it and revalue it. The Federal Government will pay two-thirds of the cost of clearing the land. It will pay nothing for reconstruction purposes; but inevitably there will be some loss in the slum-clearance operation. Inevitably the buildings will cost more and tearing them down will cost more than the land will be worth after the city has obtained it. Roughly speaking, this measure proposes that the Federal Government by grant shall take care of two-thirds of the loss the city suffers in that connection. For that purpose there is provided a total of $500,000,000 during the next five years.

Although the arrangement of the sentences in this illustration might have been improved to enhance its clarity, this technique of making provisions of the law clear was an often-used Taft technique. He had the ability to translate technical and detailed provisions into readily understandable language.

He then concluded by repeating the purposes of the bill: to stimulate private housing on a long-term basis and to provide about 500,000 additional units of publicly-financed housing.

In summary, the April 15th portion of the speech was devoted entirely to an exposition of the provisions of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. He briefly explained what each section would accomplish and offered a justification for it. His proof consisted mainly of his own conclusions; very few facts and statistics were introduced as support. He recognized that the most controversial portion of the bill would be its public housing feature; he devoted the next part of the speech to a defense of it.

Defense of Public Housing Features.

His speech on April 20 was devoted entirely to the public housing aspects of the bill. Other Senate business intervened between the
two parts of Taft's speech. This portion was devoted to a defense of the controversial public housing feature of the bill.

Taft organized his defense around a problem-solution pattern. The problem in housing was the high costs of construction in the post-war years. Taft's point was, "At the present moment, certainly not more than half of all the families in the United States and not more than half of the veterans can afford to buy new houses of the cheapest type of construction." He offered as proof the many studies which had been made of the housing situation. The inability on the part of many to finance a home resulted in what Taft called "hand-me-down" housing. He explained that such people would live in second-hand and third-hand housing. The danger in such a situation, he maintained, was that "by the time it gets to the bottom of the scale there are not enough people who can pay sufficient rent to keep such houses in condition. At the bottom, 'hand-me-down' housing will always produce a slum problem."

Thus, the need for federal action was developed: people were unable to buy homes, they paid rent to live in older homes, and this situation resulted in slums when low-income groups were unable to pay rent for decent housing. The plight of some low-income families might have been used by some speakers in this situation as the basis for an emotional appeal. Taft introduced it matter-of-factly; he did not utilize its emotional connotations in his persuasion.

After surveying the problem, Taft asked: "What can the Government do about this problem?" He proceeded to discuss several alternative solutions, showing that none was the answer to the problem. The obvious thing that needed to be done was to devise a plan of building homes to
replace those in slum areas. The alternative methods of accomplishing this were unsatisfactory: (1) tax exemptions do not work; (2) municipal bonds for slum clearance do not sell because of their low interest rates; and (3) private builders will not do it because of government regulations on rent control. After having disposed of the alternatives, Taft stated, "The only solution is to begin at the bottom and build up with decent subsidized housing."

He then discussed the cost of the direct governmental subsidy, pointing out that it would be around $160,000,000 a year to provide half a million housing units. He expressed the hope that some day methods to reduce the costs of housing would be found so that no further public housing will be needed.

Taft then stated his philosophy of welfare measures:

We have long recognized the principle that persons who cannot pay for medical care should be given a minimum of medical care. We have recognized the principle that persons who cannot pay for education should be given a free education. We have gone further in education than we have in other fields. We have not, until within the last ten years, recognized a similar obligation with respect to shelter. I very strongly believe we have that obligation. I believe that if we desire to have reasonable equality of opportunity for the children of this country they must be allowed to grow up in a situation in which there is at least decent shelter in which families can live as human beings and can receive a start in life free from crime and free from the demoralization of character resulting from living in a slum area.

Coming from Senator Taft, this was a rather strong emotional appeal. He came to rely on the philosophy of providing basic essentials of life to insure equality of opportunity in his persuasion. In view of his long opposition to socialistic measures, his support of public housing on this basis enhanced his ethical persuasion as well.

Recognizing that the real estate lobby had opposed public housing,
Taft directed his remarks to it near the end of his speech:

Under the plan proposed, the Federal Government will pay most of the cost of the subsidy. I have told the real estate people that if they have any other plan, if they are willing to say, "This should be changed in this way, you ought to think of the limit of the income of the people who live in this area" --- if they are willing to require the States to contribute a larger percentage --- I am perfectly willing to consider changes in the system. But they have insisted upon complete opposition to public housing, and simply because public housing is included in the bill, they did not even want to have the bill considered. They have objected to the entire bill, although the truth is that 90 percent of it relates to private housing, and 90 percent of it meets with their approval.

This statement was part an ethical appeal; it also had a logical appeal to it. It was ethical in the sense the Senator was trying to show that he was reasonable: if the real estate lobby had a better plan, he would consider it. It was logical in the sense that it supported his opening statement: don't reject the entire bill simply because one provision of it is unsatisfactory. He appealed to the Senate by directing his remarks to the real estate people in this case.

His conclusion to the speech was that the public housing was an essential feature of a complete housing program. He said, "A complete housing program cannot be carried on unless we are prepared to provide some public housing at the bottom of the scale, and set an example, help eliminate slums, and take the edge off the problem at the bottom." He assured the Senate that this bill was not intended for the "perpetual relief clients." The bill instead was designed for the low-income families who have steady employment.

Considering the aspect of the quality of this speech, it must be said that the Senator had a better balance of the forms of proof --- logical, emotional, and ethical --- than in his speeches in the Senate on
federal aid to education. In this speech on public housing, he relied less on logical proof than in preceding speeches although the logical materials were not neglected. The organization of the speech was again especially outstanding. His chronological exposition of the provisions of the bill and his problem-solution defense of the public housing feature resulted in a well-integrated talk. Again, his style was inconspicuous; it did not call attention to itself because of any outstanding strengths or weaknesses. It was simple and clear; the economy of words used to express the provisions of the bill was noteworthy. It was not particularly compelling or inspiring. In total, this Senate speech on public housing was one of Taft's better talks from the standpoint of its quality.

Considering the effects of the speech, it should be noted first of all that Taft was not the only speaker on this issue. He introduced the bill but the other sponsors carried a considerable portion of the speaking load. Their combined efforts resulted in the Senate's approving the bill. But, as in the case of federal aid to education, the bill was held up in the House of Representatives. It was not until 1949 that a public housing bill was approved by both houses of Congress and signed into law by President Truman. Even though he had been instrumental in securing the passing of a public housing law, Taft was not known to the general public in this role. Only those who studied the actions of Congress would be aware of his efforts. In the 1950 campaign, for instance, Taft was frequently asked why he opposed public housing. As noted in Chapter III, he read a Youngstown audience the letter he had received from President Truman commending his efforts on housing legis-
lotion during his 1950 Senatorial campaign. Thus, Taft the conservative, the anti-New Dealer, was not given credit by the general public for his role in promoting public housing. His speech helped secure the passing of the measure in the Senate; he did not gain public recognition for his efforts. The next section of this chapter will analyze Taft's speech on housing before a meeting of the Mortgage Bankers Association of America and the Graduate School of Business Administration of New York University in New York City on January 25, 1949. His speech was entitled "Federal Aid to Housing."

II. FEDERAL AID TO HOUSING

The evaluation of Taft's New York speech on housing will follow a different pattern from those previously considered in this study. From the detailed analysis of the six preceding speeches, the pattern of Taft's speaking has emerged fairly clearly. It was found that he was well-prepared as a speaker, that he relied chiefly on logical appeals with less reliance on ethical and limited use of emotional appeals in his proof. His organization usually was excellent; he adapted to his audiences by anticipating and answering their possible objections to his views. His style was characterized as plain, simple, and clear.

In order to compare the speech to be analyzed in this section with those considered previously, an outline of his speech will be presented with notations regarding his style, audience adaptation, and proof. The audience analysis and the over-all organization of the speech will be considered first. These will then be followed by the outline with the critical comments.
Analysis of the Speaking Situation.

The public housing measure in Congress aroused a great deal of opposition from groups concerned with the housing field. While everyone recognized that the post-war housing problem was serious, there was widespread disagreement over the proper solution to the problem. The private housing interests were strongly opposed to any public housing legislation. President Truman and Senator Taft were in agreement that the Federal Government needed to take some action. As Time magazine reported in 1948,

Whatever the reasons, private industry had not met the nation's requirements in housing. But there was at least a partial solution in a program on which Harry S. Truman and Bob Taft could agree. It was the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill, calling for U.S.-aided slum clearance, federal guarantees in the next year of up to $1.6 billion on private mortgage loans, and construction of 15,000,000 dwellings in the next decade. (500,000 in 5 years under federal public housing). The Senate had passed the bill. At week's end it was bottled up in the House Banking Committee. 1

Taft's speech to the New York audience of the Mortgage Bankers Association of America and the Graduate School of Business Administration of New York University provided an interesting study of hostile audience attitudes. Taft was a firm supporter of public housing; the MBAA, along with many other real estate groups, was on record as being opposed to the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill. Taft was addressing an audience whose attitude on his subject was one of opposition. One of the major concerns of the evaluation of his speech will be to note his adaptation to their attitude. From his study of the housing problem, Taft was aware of his audience's stand on the issue.

The Taft Speech on Housing.

Taft's purpose was to gain support for his public housing bill by convincing the audience that it would not interfere with the private housing industry. His concluding remarks made this clear. It will be recalled in his non-Senate speech on federal aid to education that he also waited until the conclusion to make his purpose clear. In this housing speech, Taft covered the whole range of the problem before revealing his specific purpose.

Organization. The Taft speech again was well organized. His basic pattern was a problem-solution order. Discussing the problem in housing, he mentioned the emergency situation caused by the post-war boom in the demands for housing, discussed the rental and slum housing problems. He showed that efforts by private industry and the Federal Government to alleviate these problems were not working successfully.

This led to the solution phase of his speech: "Public housing is the only solution." Here he maintained that public housing was not socialism, justified federal activity in the housing field, and set up the necessary conditions of federal aid. Before presenting the scope of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill, he answered some of the main objections to public housing. After presenting the provisions of his bill, he discussed the unsatisfactory nature of the alternatives to it. This was followed by his conclusion in which he made the purpose of his talk specific.

This exposition of the topics covered shows the comprehensive scope of the talk. The pattern was similar to the one used in his talk on federal aid to education before the school administrators which was
analyzed in Chapter VII.

**Introduction to the speech.** Taft began with a typical opening sentence expressing his appreciation for being invited to speak on that occasion. He then established his qualifications on the subject:

I have been interested in the subject since long before I came to the Senate. In 1913, I was Chairman of a subcommittee on post-war Economic Policy and Planning to consider the housing problem. I have participated in the drafting of most of the bills that have been passed, and in the public housing bills which have twice passed the Senate but failed in the House. Unfortunately, the housing problem is so complicated in itself, it has been approached from so many angles and with so many panaceas for solution, it has created such violent prejudices, that it is hard for anyone to feel confident of the wisdom of his views.

He frequently explained to his non-Senate audiences his "expertness" on the subject being discussed. In this case, he tempered his qualifications with the last sentence above, concluding, "it is hard for anyone to feel confident of the wisdom of his views." Essentially all of this was ethical; it established Taft as an authority on housing and he admitted that he did not have all the answers.

He then explained that regardless of all the measures taken, "One thing is certain; we have not solved the housing problem." He cautioned in view of this that "We ought not to be led into unsound permanent measures simply because of the emergency situation." With this background, he began the body of his speech, discussing first the two aspects of the problem. These will be presented here in outline form, using the speaker's phraseology. They will then be followed by critical comments on style, audience adaptation, and proof.

**Main points.** Taft used the same two basic problems as he discussed in the Senate speech on public housing.
I. There is one field in which Government programs have largely failed, apart from the low-income family, that of encouraging rental housing for the middle-income group.

A. Nearly everyone who wants a home is forced to buy it, although some would prefer to rent.

B. We have gone about as far as we can with Federal Housing Authority financing for rental housing of this character.

   1. I believe that the difficulty is not so much with housing as it is a fundamental failure in securing investment in enterprises involving a degree of risk.

   2. One of the things which Congress is studying today is some change in the tax laws or other laws which will make it more attractive to invest money in productive enterprises.

II. But the good work done by the Federal Housing Authority and the Federal home loan banks has not solved the slum problem, or the problem of the lowest income families.

A. In 1940, according to the census, there were nine million urban and rural nonfarming units.

   1. Of these, nearly four million were listed as needing major repairs and are, therefore, in bad physical condition.

   2. Of those in good repair, over three million had no running water of any kind.

   3. Two and a third million more had no private toilets or baths.

B. Many of the homes which do not meet a minimum standard of decency are in city slums where the bad quality of the residency is accentuated by the bad surroundings.

   1. Our committee concluded that about six million homes in 1940 were below a proper minimum standard.

C. The difficulty with the housing problem as compared to food, clothing, medicine, and the like is that shelter is absolutely essential to every family, and yet the cost is out of line with the income of most of the population.

   1. Only about half the families in the United States can afford to buy a new house.
2. The other half can only buy or live in second-hand houses.

3. But as these houses are handed down to families with still less income, they get older and older and finally reach families which can only pay a minimum rent.

   a. In 1940, the six million sub-standard homes rented for an average of less than $15 a month.

   b. The rent paid is not sufficient to keep the houses in good condition, and they deteriorate further.

D. No one is saying that the private builders are to blame for the present situation, but it seems to be the inevitable results of present conditions.

1. While I am a great believer in the system of free enterprise, this happens to be a field where it has failed to find a solution.

These were the two aspects of the problem which Taft believed called for action. His consideration of the first was brief. He held that not enough rental housing was available for the middle-income group. He offered no proof as such for this statement. He then explored its causes: the difficulties in getting investment in rental housing enterprises. He mentioned that the Congress was studying ways of revising the tax laws so that such investments would be profitable in the future. But, in the meantime, he was calling for some action by the Federal Government in providing rental housing for this group.

It can be seen that the second aspect, the slum problem, received most of his attention. He introduced a series of statistics relating to the sub-standard housing, a favorite technique of his to prove a point. He next discussed the cause of this problem: the high cost of
construction. He used his "hand-me-down housing" phrase, just as he had
done in the Senate speech on housing. This was continued "to the bottom
of the scale" to show how it resulted in slums. He ended by assuring
the audience that he was not blaming the private housing industry for
these conditions. The conditions were a natural result of the high
costs and low incomes. Throughout, the emphasis was on statistics and
explanations for proof. Little emotional and ethical material was used
in showing the "need" for action. Taft devoted most of the speech to
a consideration of the solution. He was justified in doing this because
there was common agreement that a problem existed. After asserting that
public housing was the only solution, he developed the ideas that it
was not socialistic, that there was good justification for federal ac-
tion, that there was a responsibility to provide the basic necessities
of life to those who couldn't afford them, and that federal aid should
be based on restrictive principles. The development of these four
points is given in outline form below.

I. Many have denounced public housing as a communistic or socialistic
enterprise.

A. Of course, to a certain extent it is true that it is social-
istic in nature.

B. But this question of socialism is a relative matter.

1. We have long socialized our public education.

2. We have socialized medical care to the extent that we
provide medical care to the poor through public hos-
pitals.

   a. But this does not mean that we have social-
   ized medical care as a whole, or the medical
   profession.
C. The public housing program is in no sense a socialization of the building industry or of the housing industry.

1. It is intended to reach only those whose income is so low as to prevent their renting the minimum of decent housing.

II. Of course, in Congress, we are faced with the further question whether the Federal Government has any function in this program.

A. Housing, like food, relief, medicine, is primarily the obligation of the states and local governments.

B. It is a little late, however, for us to argue the place of the Federal Government in the picture.

1. Under President Hoover we set up the Federal Home Loan Bank System to assist the building and loan associations to finance housing more adequately.

2. Under President Roosevelt we established the Federal Housing Authority which, by mortgage insurance, has revised the financing of homes.

III. Furthermore, I believe that the Federal Government does have a responsibility for preventing the suffering and hardship resulting from extreme poverty at any point in the United States.

A. Under American principles of freedom, we have built up the highest standard of living in the history of the world.

1. But its success is based on adequate reward for those who are more intelligent, better workmen, more diligent, or superior in other ways.

2. Some must necessarily fall behind, either from misfortune or lack of ability or their own fault.

B. The philosophy of socialism is to raise all to the average, which necessarily will bring all others down to the same deal level and take all life and progress out of the system.

1. There might be more equality under socialism, but I am certain there would be a much lower standard of living for the great majority of workmen.

C. The extreme philosophy the other way is to let the devil take the hindmost and let those who are unable to keep up suffer poverty and hardship on the theory that in the end general progress will be faster.
1. Without arguing the economics of this theory, it is enough to say that it offends every humane sense, and that Americans are humane people.

D. I believe that the American people feel that with the high productivity of which we are now capable there is enough left over to prevent extreme hardship and maintain a minimum standard floor under subsistence, education, medical care, and housing to give to all a minimum standard of decent living and to all children a fair opportunity to get a start in life.

1. But if we accept this theory it is obvious that a large number of the states do not enjoy this high productivity or the high resulting income which will enable them to maintain such a standard.

2. The Federal Government comes into the picture, because of the great differences in financial ability among our various states.

The three points above were all anticipatory of the objections which likely would be raised against his proposal. In the first, he granted that public housing was socialistic to a degree. But he defended it by comparing it with other governmental activities which had been long accepted. His analogies were similar enough to be judged effective as proof.

He used reasoning from analogy to establish his second point that the Federal Government could legitimately take action concerning housing. His third point was the most crucial to his case: that the Government had the responsibility to take action. Here, his appeal was emotional in its overtones. He appealed to the motives of helping the under-privileged and even of pity. His philosophy of welfare activities by the Federal Government appeared in nearly all his speeches considered so far in this study. And, in the last point, he added his familiar argument that some states were financially unable to provide essential
services to their residents. This added further to the responsibility of the Federal Government.

The four sub-points under the third main point show Taft's ability to present a closely-reasoned argument. His main point was that the Federal Government had a responsibility to relieve the suffering caused by poverty. He first developed that the United States had the highest standard of living in the world. But under the American system, some would be under-privileged. One way of dealing with these people would be to adopt socialism which would "raise all to the average." This would be undesirable because it "would bring all others down to the same dead level." Another method, on the other extreme, would be to let the poor suffer from their own misfortunes. This alternative "offends every humane sense." The recourse is the middle-of-the-road policy of putting "a minimum standard floor under subsistence, education, medical care, and housing." Even though he may be charged with over-simplification, there is little other fault that can be found with his reasoning.

Since the points in the outline are in Taft's exact phraseology, his style can be appreciated. His sentences are generally long, yet the meaning and impact of them are clear. He frequently used personal pronouns; many of his arguments were introduced with the phrase, "I believe that." The speaker employed few loaded or colorful terms in his language.

In this section of the speech, there was no direct adaptation to his particular audience. The arguments presented here could have been made before any audience. The only adaptation was in anticipating pos-
sible objections of mortgage bankers to public housing programs. His extensive concern with developing the Federal Government's responsibility in this area shows that Taft was anticipating the arguments of the opponents of the measure.

Thus having developed the responsibility of the Federal Government in housing, Taft next set up the "necessary conditions of federal aid."

IV. If we adopt this theory, however, and wish to avoid a complete centralization of authority in Washington, there must be certain definite limitations, and we must adhere to the basic doctrine that the role of the Federal Government is only one of financial assistance.

A. The Federal Government must not take over the administration of these various welfare services, but must leave it with the States and localities so that the communities themselves may work out their own solutions.

B. The minimum floor which we provide must not be so high as to destroy the incentive to improve one's conditions through one's own efforts.

C. The cost must not be so great as to bear too heavily on the other four-fifths who have to work harder to pay the bill.

D. Of course aid should be extended only to those who need it.

These four "necessary conditions" of federal aid were integral parts of Taft's philosophy. He introduced them in the speech to further allay the fears of growing federal control. In the next section, he dealt with specific objections to any federal housing program.

V. The public housing program is intended to deal only with those who cannot reasonably be expected to pay the rentals in decent private housing.

A. One of the objections to public housing is the claim that it competes with private renters by admitting families able to pay.
1. The present bill requires a constant survey to see that families remotely able to rent good private housing shall not remain in the public housing projects.

B. It is objected that the whole program is socialistic and contemplates a socialistic community.

1. The cause of public housing has been injured by some of its vociferous supporters, because unquestionably there are among those supporters many who want all housing to be socialized.

2. But after all, this support does not to my mind give any argument against public housing if there are sound arguments for it.

C. Private interests criticize public housing as being too expensive.

1. It does seem to me that the limits in the bill which would permit the expenditure of about $12,500 per housing unit are very high indeed.

2. But if this program is to avoid public criticism, it must be carried out in most places at far below the limits.

D. It is contended that the financial participation required from the State and local authorities is too small a percentage.

1. Again, I think the criticism is justified, but we must remember that housing is a new Government activity, and that State and local authorities have found little place in their budget for housing subsidy, and that their tax revenues are very difficult to increase.

Here, Taft's analysis of the opposition's arguments led him to consider four main objections: socialism, competition with private housing, expense, and too little financial support by states. In meeting these objections, he clearly set up the point to be refuted. The basis of his refutation was largely his own understanding of the bill. It was interesting to note that he agreed that the cost could become
excessive. Yet this did not deter him from advocating the policy. It would be difficult to judge whether Taft had adequately answered the objections to public housing which might have existed in the minds of his audience. The main objection of the private housing interests was that public housing would compete unfairly with their investments. Taft's assurance that this would not happen seemed logically adequate. After handling the objections to public housing, Taft presented the main provisions of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill. Since these have already been discussed previously in this chapter, they will not be repeated here. Just before concluding, he stated that the Committee had considered many forms of subsidy. They concluded that there was "no alternative to public housing as a method of providing low income rentals to those at the bottom of the income scale."

Conclusion of the speech. Taft's conclusion made his purpose clear to the audience although it had been implied throughout the solution phase of his speech. He stated:

Those of you who are at this meeting are largely interested in private housing. There is no reason why the public housing program should compete with or interfere in any way with the private housing industry, any more than general hospitals interfere with the practice of the private physician. I know of no one who does not feel that the major problem of providing shelter can only be solved by private industry.

He emphasized again the major objection of his audience to his proposal: that public housing would interfere with private housing interests. He ended by saying that the American people were determined to give every child equality of opportunity by assuring the basic necessities of life.
Quality-judgment of the speech. Taft's organization in this talk was impressive. His main points were integrated into a satisfying pattern. Each related to the previous one; each contributed to the progression of the development.

The outlining of the points in the problem-solution order indicated the cogency of his logical materials. He relied a great deal on statistics to prove the "need" for housing. By explanations and analogies, he developed the desirability of his solution. There would be little questioning of the adequacy of his logical proof in this speech. It was noted that Taft again made little use of emotional materials. The only instance was in his lengthy appeal for federal action to relieve suffering and hardship of the low income groups in order to insure equality of opportunity. He enhanced his ethical status by explaining his work on housing legislation in the past. Keeping this in the minds of his audience by frequent references to other housing legislation the committee had considered, Taft appeared as an authority on the problem.

His style in this speech was characterized by longer sentences and greater use of personal pronouns than in the Senate speech on housing. He frequently introduced main points with "I believe that." He did not "point up" significant ideas by parallel phrasing or transitions. He used few loaded words, no illustrations or quotations. In all, his style neither contributed to his communication in any special way nor detracted from it.

Taft's adaptation to this audience whose attitude on his subject
was unfavorable consisted of answering possible objections to public housing as an integral part of his speech. Other than this, the speech revealed little specific adaptation; his points could have been made to any audience or occasion where the subject of housing was being considered. Taft's failure to make specific adaptations to his audiences caused newsmen to report that whether he spoke to farmers, businessmen, or women, he made exactly the same points in exactly the same way.

The quality of his organization and logical proof was outstanding. His rating on the other constituents of rhetoric was only a little better than average in this speech.

Effects. It cannot be measured with any degree of accuracy whether Taft accomplished his purpose. He sought to convince the audience that public housing would not compete unfairly with privately-owned housing. By doing this, he hoped to gain support from the mortgage bankers for the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill. From the standpoint of logic, he probably succeeded in accomplishing his purpose. But over-all, the appeals were not motivating enough to have a significant influence on the attitudes of his audience. His technique of covering the whole area of the housing problem and ending with an appeal for acceptance of his solution resulted in abruptness in the process of persuasion. He did not relate his particular solution to the general criteria of federal aid to housing well enough. He again did this only by implication. This was the major deterrent to accomplishing his purpose in this talk.

His strong defense of federal activities in housing and his assurances that this would not interfere with private housing were good.
III. CONCLUSION

Taft favored public housing for the under-privileged even before he became a Senator. He first opposed the Wagner-Ellender housing bill in 1945 because he felt it was too socialistic. Later that year, he became a co-sponsor of the revised bill. Hence, he gave no speeches against public housing. This chapter analyzed two of Taft's speeches on the housing issue.

The first was in the Senate in 1948, when he introduced the bill. The first part of the Senate speech was devoted to an explanation of the provisions of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. Basically, it sought to consolidate existing governmental activities in the housing field. The essential features of the bill were the provisions to assist in slum clearance and to finance publicly-owned rental housing for the low-income group.

Realizing that the most controversial portion of the bill was the public housing feature, Taft devoted the second part of his speech to a defense of it. His defense was based on the high cost of housing which forced many of the low-income families to live in slums. He further established that state and municipal governments were unable to deal with the problem. This led to the conclusion that the Federal Government must take action.

Quality-wise, this speech was judged to be better balanced in the forms of proof, logical, ethical, and emotional, than other Taft speeches which had been analyzed. His style was inconspicuous; its economy of words was note-worthy.
Taft's speaking assisted in securing Senate approval of the measure, although the other co-sponsors carried much of the load. This bill was never passed by the House of Representatives, depriving Taft the distinction of having his name attached to a public housing law.

The second analysis in this chapter was Taft's speech, "Federal Aid to Housing," delivered before the Mortgage Bankers Association of America and the Graduate School of Business Administration of New York University in New York City on January 25, 1949. The speaking situation was interesting because the mortgage bankers were opposed to the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. In his speech to this audience, Taft used the same arguments as in his Senate speech. They were better supported by logical proof, however, and the organization of this speech was much superior.

His "need" for action was based on the lack of enough rental housing and the slum problem. In the solution phase of his speech, he maintained that public housing was not socialism, that federal activity not only was justified but that the Federal Government had a responsibility to act as long as certain "necessary conditions" were followed. He then answered objections to public housing before explaining the provisions of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill. He ended by stating that it would not interfere with private housing interests.

The non-Senate speech was more comprehensive in the scope of its coverage. Logical proof was judged to be adequate, but the lack of emotional appeals and the plain style impaired the motivation for acceptance of his ideas. Taft adapted to his audience by anticipating their objections to public housing.
A comparison of his speeches on public housing and federal aid to education reveals a striking similarity in organization and development of ideas. The pattern of the two Senate speeches was almost the same in "topics covered" and in the order of their consideration. The same was true of the non-Senate speeches on the subjects of housing and education.

What were the effects of Taft's speaking on public housing? When the House failed to concur on the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill in 1948, Time reported, "Senator Taft is bitter toward the House Republican leaders who cooperated with the real estate lobby in sabotaging his housing legislation. Taft had counted on being able to point to the bill as the kind of social legislation the nation could expect under his leadership." 1 Apparently then, Taft had hoped to show the people an example of Republican welfare legislation.

As noted in Chapter III, Congress eventually passed a housing bill in 1949. Although it was not the Taft version, he was credited by President Truman for his efforts on its behalf. But the general public never afforded Taft this recognition. He still had to "prove" to them that he was an advocate of federal aid to housing. He used his support of housing to good advantage in the 1950 Senatorial campaign. Even labor leaders conceded that. 2 The impact of his welfare speaking on his total speaking career will be considered in more detail in the concluding chapter of this study.

2. See pages 101, 105-6, and 110.
CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper, A Study of Robert A. Taft's Speeches on Social Welfare Issues, had two major purposes. The first was to evaluate the Senator's speeches dealing with medical care, federal aid to education, public housing, and the functions of government in welfare. The second major purpose was to consider the part that his speaking played in his career as a Senator and Presidential candidate.

Following the traditional pattern of critical studies in public address, Chapters II and III reviewed the significant events in his life. An attempt was made in Chapter III to emphasize his speaking activities while presenting biographical information. Chapter IV considered aspects of the man as a public speaker. The next three chapters were devoted to evaluating ten of his speeches on welfare issues. Chapters II and III will be summarized under the heading, The Record of Robert A. Taft. Chapters IV through VIII will be summarized in the section, Speeches on Social Welfare Issues. The conclusions of the study will be included in that section.

I. THE RECORD OF ROBERT A. TAFT

Born September 8, 1889, Robert Taft was a son of the man who became the twenty-seventh President of the United States. His grandfather, Alphonse Taft, had securely established the family name in Ohio. He had also achieved some national prominence as Secretary of War and
Attorney-General in President Grant's cabinet. Alphonso Taft later served as Minister to Austria-Hungary and Russia.

Robert Taft's father, William Howard Taft, continued the family tradition of public service. After graduating from Yale and the Cincinnati Law School, he became successively a city Superior Court Judge, Solicitor-General of the United States, a Federal Judge, and the first Civil Governor of the Philippine Islands. His administrative ability in the latter position received notice from Theodore Roosevelt, who appointed him Secretary of War in 1904. Four years later, W.H. Taft was Theodore Roosevelt's personal choice as the Republican candidate for President. Even though he had never run for office before, W.H. Taft defeated William Jennings Bryan for the Presidency in 1908. His one term in office was not outstanding and he was defeated by Woodrow Wilson. He then became professor in the law school at Yale. In 1921, he was appointed Chief Justice of the United States where he served until his death in 1930.

William Howard Taft's influence on his son was considerable, especially in political philosophy. The elder Taft was a strong conservative who fought any attempts to socialize the country. He believed in individual initiative and free enterprise; Taft was a strong Constitutionalist. Robert A. Taft exemplified this philosophy throughout his life.

Robert A. Taft's early years were spent as the son of a high-ranking government official. This not only developed his interest in politics but it gave him the opportunity to travel in the Far East and Europe at any early age.
His enrollment in the Taft School for Boys in Watertown, Connecticut, in 1903, marked the beginning of Robert A. Taft's formal education. Prior to this time, he had attended public schools only briefly because of the family's frequent travels. At Taft School, his curriculum was heavy in classical languages and mathematics. He finished his studies as the top-ranking student in the class. Bob Taft entered Yale in 1906, two years before his father became President. He continued his excellent scholastic work while following a liberal education curriculum. His courses were in English Literature, languages, Greek, Latin, and German, rhetoric, economics, mathematics, history, science, and philosophy. The records at Yale reveal that he won several prizes and scholarships for his work in Latin and mathematics. The top student in his class, he served as President of the Phi Beta Kappa chapter in his senior year. Taft's instructors and classmates remembered him as a hard worker who was intent on developing his abilities. They also recalled that he was shy, modest, unassuming, somewhat stubborn, and very independent.

Taft broke the family tradition by enrolling in Harvard Law School --- the Tafts had always attended Yale --- in 1910. His outstanding accomplishments were receiving the Fay Diploma, given to the graduating senior who shows the greatest promise, and editing the Harvard Law Review. In addition, he led his class scholastically throughout his years in law school. Robert A. Taft probably received as good an education as could be obtained. All the schools he attended were highly regarded. He worked hard in order to receive the best they could offer. His outstanding record in school attested to his high
mental capacities.

Some special attention was given to his training and experiences in speech. At the Taft School, he had a course in Public Speaking, besides achieving distinction in the interclass debates. At Yale, he took four courses in speech: Public Speaking, Oral Composition, Debating, and Oral Expression. The Public Speaking course emphasized vocal delivery. Oral Composition studied the principles of speech, including all aspects of speech composition. The Oral Expression course resembled modern-day interpretation courses. These courses represented a rather extensive program of training in speech.

Taft was active in the Debating Association at Yale, serving as President in his junior year. One person who was active with him in the Association recalled that Taft studied the topics thoroughly and prepared his cases with care. Although he was not a "quick thinker" on his feet, Taft became a good debater because of his persistence, according to his contemporary. Even with his training and experiences in speech, he was hesitant about accepting public speaking invitations in his early legal career. His sister believes he overcame this hesitancy while serving in the Ohio General Assembly where his strong convictions on public questions developed.

After law school, Robert A. Taft began to practice law in Cincinnati. During World War I, he served on the legal staffs of the relief agencies headed by Herbert Hoover. This service was the beginning of a life-long friendship between the two men.

His start in politics came in 1920, when he was elected to the
Ohio House of Representatives. He served three successive terms, being majority floor leader in 1925 and Speaker of the House the next year. Out of the General Assembly four years, he was elected to the State Senate in 1930. His outstanding legislative accomplishment was serving as Chairman of the Special Joint Taxation Committee which rewrote Ohio's tax laws. In 1932, he lost in his bid for re-election to the state Senate, the only election he lost in his life. Robert A. Taft was rated an outstanding state legislator by those who served with him from both parties. The experience he gained as a member of the General Assembly and in campaigning for a seat there was valuable in his later political career.

The first chance for some nationwide political recognition came to Robert A. Taft in 1936 when he was chosen to oppose William E. Borah in the Ohio Presidential primary. No other prominent Republican candidate wanted to risk defeat against the Senator from Idaho; Taft took the chance and scored a political upset by capturing forty-seven of Ohio's 52 delegates, becoming the state's "favorite son" for the first of four times.

Having been raised in a family devoted to public service, Taft's victory over Borah in Ohio influenced him to run for the Senate seat held by Robert J. Bulkley in 1938. At first, Taft got little encouragement from Republican leaders in the state. But when he defeated his opponent in the primary by 75,000 votes, Taft was looked upon as a strong candidate. With the aid of his wife, Martha, he covered the state, making his views known. The outstanding feature of the campaign was a
series of six debates between the two candidates. Taft was able to put Bulkley on the defensive with an all-inclusive attack on the New Deal. Since Bulkley was an ardent New Dealer, the campaign served as a barometer of political sentiments of the people. Taft's personality impaired his effectiveness as a campaigner, but by intensive effort, he got his points across to the voters. In a contest watched by the entire nation, Taft was the victor by 170,000 votes.

Almost immediately, Taft was considered a possible candidate for President in 1940. His impressive electoral victory over Bulkley had boosted his prestige. The frequent attacks on the Administration's spending policies and handling of foreign affairs gave impetus to his candidacy. Taft became an active candidate for President in August, 1939, seven months after he entered the Senate.

Campaigning throughout the country, he called for a restoration of free enterprise, unrestricted by New Deal controls, and a reliance on individual initiative. In foreign affairs, he argued for strict neutrality which led to charges that he was an isolationist.

Even though Taft went to the Republican Convention with considerable backing from delegates, he could not halt the Willkie steamroller. Political analysts concluded that Taft was passed over because he appealed chiefly to the old-line conservatives and isolationists.

The remainder of his first Senate term was spent as a minority critic. As the term ended, he was gaining prestige as a Republican leader. His 1944 Senatorial campaign was a very limited one. Because he did not campaign extensively and because organized labor worked hard for his opponent, Taft barely won re-election.
It was during his second term that Taft was given the name, "Mr. Republican," in recognition of his capabilities for leadership. In the troubled post-war reconversion, it was he who most strongly opposed the efforts of President Truman. When the Republicans gained control of Congress in 1947, Taft had the opportunity to sponsor a constructive program of legislation to counteract the New Deal measures of the past sixteen years. After securing the approval of the Taft-Hartley Labor Law, Taft's efforts to provide for federal aid to education, public housing, and medical care were blocked by Southern Democrats and some of his own Republican colleagues. As the leader of the Eightieth Congress, he was blamed for the things it failed to do. President Truman's charge against it --- a "Do-Nothing Congress" --- hurt the prestige of Robert A. Taft, who was again a candidate for President in 1948.

Taft seemed to be the man with the strongest qualifications for President when the Republicans met in Philadelphia to select their candidate. Again, Taft was passed over, despite his intensive campaigning and his leadership in Congress, in favor of Thomas E. Dewey. Taft was doubly bitter when Dewey lost to Truman, whose party again gained control in Congress.

Taft almost immediately began to prepare for his re-election campaign. The battle in 1950 promised to be the stiffest yet because of the intense opposition of organized labor to his candidacy. The Senator went to work in August, 1949, on a campaign which he described as "volume in detail." He recorded broadcasts for radio stations, wrote a weekly newspaper column, and covered the state twice on speaking tours.
The campaign against him by the Democratic candidate, Joseph Ferguson, and organized labor was just as intensive. In the end, it may have back-fired. The people of Ohio seemed to resent the attempts to dictate for whom they should vote. Taft's astonishing margin of victory — 130,000 votes — was a major factor in his decision to try again for the Presidency. In the summer of 1951, he announced his candidacy after having made a concerted study of foreign affairs, his weak spot in former Presidential bids. He decided to apply his winning 1950 formula to the 1952 campaign: volume in detail. His efforts resulted in winning more delegates than any Republican candidate prior to the Chicago convention.

The supporters of Dwight Eisenhower seized upon seventy disputed delegates from Southern states and made a moral issue out of the affair. The debate over the disputed delegates on the Convention floor resulted in an Eisenhower victory which led to any easy first-ballot victory. But in the last analysis, Taft lost because of what he stood for, or what people thought he stood for, conservatism and isolationism. No matter how far he moved away from these positions, he was still regarded as a conservative and an isolationist. The times called for a liberal and an internationalist; Taft did not fill these requirements.

Taft became a valued aide in the early days of the Eisenhower Administration before illness forced him to leave the Senate in May, 1953. His death on July 31, 1953, although not unexpected, shocked the nation. Taft had gained more popular esteem than ever through his support of Eisenhower; the nation seemed genuinely sad when he died from
cancer. Four years after his death, he was chosen as one of the outstanding Senators, along with Henry Clay, John Calhoun, Daniel Webster, and Robert M. LaFollette, Sr.

Twelve of Taft's fourteen and a half years in the Senate were spent as a member of the minority. This was his place --- a minority critic who fought for what he believed. His positions often were not popular with the people; he was considered "out of step with the times" by many. But he was always a responsible critic. Taft probably delivered more speeches than any man of his time. In six political campaigns, three each for the Senate and the Presidency, he made over 3,000 speeches. As a Senator, he studied all major legislation and spoke on a wide variety of subjects on the floor. His occasional speeches before bar associations, social and economic groups, and college commencements numbered in the hundreds. Through his speeches, he was clearly on record with his views on the important public questions.

His political credo could have been summarized as "Liberty for the individual in all things." Anything that would interfere with individual liberty was strongly opposed by Robert A. Taft. This was largely the basis for his criticisms of the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations.

II. SPEECHES ON SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES

Preceding was a summary of the two biographical chapters of this study. In Chapter IV, Taft as a speaker was reviewed as a preliminary to the criticism of his speeches on the welfare issues. Three
aspects were considered: the ethos of Taft; evaluations of his speaking by rhetorical and non-rhetorical critics; and his method of preparing his speeches.

Taft's ethos was affected by his characteristics of candor, intellect, integrity, partisanship, and aloofness. His frankness in making his opinions known regardless of the consequences won for him a degree of respect. His intellect and his critical thinking ability were also widely respected. His integrity in all things was probably the most note-worthy component of his ethos. The strong partisanship which he exemplified either helped or hindered his credibility, depending on the political views of the listeners. His aloofness, his lack of color, was a deterrent to popular esteem; it did not affect his public speaking per se to any great extent.

Those who observed and studied his speaking, newsmen, political commentators, and rhetorical critics, generally agreed that Taft was strong in logical proof but rather weak in his use of emotional appeals. Most agreed that his style and delivery were not those of an outstanding speaker. There was less agreement on his ethical stature; the observers and critics saw both favorable and unfavorable aspects in his ethical appeals.

The distinguishing feature of Taft's speech preparation was that he did nearly all of his own research and all of the composition. After studying the problem to formulate his ideas, his method was to dictate to a secretary who presented him a typewritten draft for revisions. He made changes chiefly for the sake of clarity and then
read it over several times prior to delivering it. The exception to this general practice was in his campaign speeches. Most of these were delivered extemporaneously from notes.

Chapter V, The Smith-Taft Debates: Foundations of Democracy, began the analysis and criticism of the speeches. It was decided to include these in this study because they represented Taft's thinking on the role of the government extremely well. The series consisted of thirteen weekly debates on the functions of the government and the problems of the New Deal in 1939. At the outset, it appeared that perhaps Taft had made a mistake by agreeing to participate. This was believed because T.V. Smith, Representative from Illinois who had been a philosophy professor at the University of Chicago, was more experienced in public debate. Also, the Republicans were generally on the defensive in 1939. In agreeing to participate, Taft would be facing an accomplished opponent and he would be defending a minority viewpoint.

As the series progressed, it became apparent that Taft was "holding his own" with Smith. While Smith quite obviously made more interesting speeches, Taft's specific criticisms, backed up with proof, began to turn the tide in his favor. Senator Taft's speeches were carefully thought out; he analyzed each problem fully and selected the significant arguments to support his stand. His arguments followed logically from his premises. His ethical appeal was that of a strong partisan, a member of the minority who opposed the changes in government brought about by the New Deal. Taft was not particularly effective in using emotional appeals.
Aside from the clash of opinions, the debates revealed a great contrast in style. Smith used humor, quoted poetry, developed points through analogies, and generally had a personal touch in his speeches. Taft's language was more serious, less colorful, almost devoid of the rhetorical devices used by his opponent.

The debates were important in Taft's career. Being presented with a nation-wide sounding board, he did not miss the opportunity to make his ideas and philosophy clear and forceful.

In Chapter VI, three speeches were evaluated. Delivering two of them before medical conventions, Taft presented a strong indictment of compulsory medical insurance. Although the speeches were given twelve years apart, they revealed much the same philosophy. He never deviated from his strong opposition to federal medical insurance or from his belief that the government's function in health matters should be to insure care for the needy.

Both speeches were relatively weak in logical proof. The speaker made more use of emotional appeals and his style was enlivened by condemnations of the proponents of federal medical care. Taft's audience adaptation in these speeches was of a general nature. His ideas and the development of them did not reveal specific adaptation to medical audiences other than in choice of subject. While the quality of the speeches was not outstanding, it was concluded that he was able to accomplish his desired purposes in these speaking situations.

In the third speech, which was delivered before the annual meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, Taft relied more heavily on logical proof. He sought to arouse the members to a greater awareness of the dangers of
government controls. This speech featured a strong reprimand for those businessmen who asked for government protection from "unfair" competition and foreign imports when the need for such protection did not exist. It was characteristic of Taft's candor.

Chapter VII analyzed three of Taft's speeches on federal aid to education. The first was in the Senate opposing the Hill-Thomas bill in 1913. The principal opponent of the measure, he used the tactic of raising all possible objections to it, resulting in the presentation of several insufficiently supported arguments. He was effective in proving that federal aid to education would likely lead to federal control. This, in the last analysis, was largely responsible for the defeat of the bill. Taft's speech had many defects from the standpoint of its quality; nevertheless, it accomplished its purpose.

The second was a Senate speech in 1918, favoring aid to education. The main reason for his changed opinion was that Taft had become convinced some states were unable to provide adequate educational programs. In this speech, he very effectively defended the bill on the issue of federal control. Thus having met the major objection to the bill, he was able to secure its approval by the Senate. His logical proof was sound; he capitalized greatly on his ethical status as a former opponent-turned-sponsor of a bill. He made considerable use of emotional appeals when he pointed out the undesirable conditions which result from the lack of education. The second speech was clearly superior to the first.

As a further comparison, a third speech was analyzed. This address was given before the American Association of School Administrators in 1917. Using most of the same arguments as in his Senate speech
favoring federal aid, Taft advocated his bill as a sound basis for federal aid to education. He relied less on statistics in the non-Senate speech. His adaptation to the educators was chiefly in the form of reconciling his bill with the proposals advanced by various groups. His speech was much better organized than his Senate speeches. In quality, it was judged better than average.

It was learned in Chapter VIII that Taft favored public housing for the under-privileged even before he became a Senator. He opposed some housing measures early in his career on the grounds that they were socialistic and too expensive. Two speeches were analyzed in this chapter. The first was in the Senate in 1918, when he introduced the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill. Realizing that the most controversial portion of the bill was its public housing provision, Taft devoted most of his time to a defense of it. Quality-wise, this speech was judged to be better balanced in the forms of proof — logical, ethical, emotional — than other Taft speeches which had been analyzed. His style was plain and unadorned; its economy of words was noteworthy.

The second speech was his address before the Mortgage Bankers Association of America in 1949. The Association was on record as being opposed to the Taft housing bill. In his speech to this audience, Taft used the same arguments as in his Senate speech. They were better supported by logical proof and the organization of the speech was much better. The lack of emotional appeals and the plain style impaired the motivation for acceptance of his ideas. Taft adapted to his audience by anticipating their objections to public housing. His refutation of these objections was well-handled.
The general public probably was not aware of Taft's positions on welfare issues. He was generally regarded as a conservative; that he supported such measures as public housing and aid to education would have surprised many. It was seen that he used his support of welfare measures to good advantage in the 1950 Senatorial campaign. But, for the most part, his speeches on taxation, labor, and foreign policy received more attention. His speeches on social welfare issues have been neglected.

Taft's philosophy of social welfare legislation was based on three principles:

(1) The Federal Government should provide basic services to insure equality of opportunity if state governments were unable to provide them.

(2) The Federal Government should exercise no control, however, in the welfare field; state and local administration should prevail.

(3) Costs of the programs should be kept at a minimum. The proposals should be designed to meet demonstrated needs, and the services provided should be on basic, minimum levels.

He did not regard his program of federal aid to education, medical care, and housing as socialistic. Complete state and local control over welfare measures would prevent socialism, he believed. His support of welfare programs reflected, to a large degree, his concern for the individual. As William S. White wrote:

Webster in short was concerned with a great and lasting question, the proper relationship of the states to the Federal power. Taft of Ohio was a great Senator for similar reasons. For all his shortcomings ..., Taft too was a man not of an hour or of a day but of a space in history. His concern was with nothing less than the rela-
tionship of the individual to the Federal power — in the fields of labor, finance, civil rights, housing, health, and nearly all the rest. Whether his conclusions were correct did not so much concern the Senate as that they so fittingly ranged over such wide areas of life. 1

III. CONCLUSIONS

What final judgment, then, can be assigned to Robert A. Taft's speaking? From the foregoing analyses, it is apparent that he was a good speaker. It is probably also apparent that he was not an outstanding one. Using the constituents of rhetoric as a guide, Taft's rating would be as follows.

In the area of invention, he had the knowledge on the things he talked about. He was highly competent in analyzing problems and selecting significant arguments. The logical proof in his speeches was generally valid; he was not consistent, however, in this respect. His evidence and reasoning did not always meet the tests of logical adequacy. In his Senate speeches, Taft used more statistics than in talks before public groups. He relied heavily on his own experiences and study to provide evidence. He seldom quoted the testimony of others. Taft most frequently used causal reasoning to arrive at conclusions. Sometimes his arguments were presented in syllogistic form. In his strongly partisan speeches (such as the two on medical care and the one against federal aid to education), his attempts to raise all possible objections resulted in the presentation of arguments lacking in proof.

Senator Taft relied more on emotional materials than was commonly believed. His appeals were not extended or fully developed, which may explain the belief of many that Taft was not an "emotional speaker." He showed the ability to use emotional proofs well in his public housing speeches. In them, he appealed for equality of opportunity and a decent living for all Americans. He used many loaded terms with emotional connotations in the medical care speeches which condemned the New and Fair Deal programs. In the ten speeches analyzed in this study, Taft's appeals were mostly to logic, rather than to emotion.

His adaptations to his audiences were usually revealed through the selection of the subject. In his non-Senate speeches on education and housing, he anticipated and answered objections to his proposals. Other than these two methods, he did not make specific adaptations to his audiences.

Robert A. Taft's ethos was a major factor in his persuasion. That he was a man of high character was not disputed. His integrity was revealed in his speeches: he was unafraid to speak his views, regardless of the consequences; even though he was a strong partisan, Taft was a responsible critic; and he willingly admitted that he had been wrong in originally opposing federal aid to education. He established his sagacity or competence through references to his legislative experience and his study of welfare measures as a member of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor. He appeared as a man of good will by showing concern with the problems faced by members of his audiences and by his concern for the liberty of the individual.
Consistently, Taft's speeches were well organized. The pattern of his Senate speeches was affected by questions and interruptions. Even so, their basic structure was well planned. His public speeches nearly always were organized around a problem–solution pattern. After a brief reference to the audience or occasion, Senator Taft either made his central idea clear or discussed the relevant aspects of the problem. In his non-Senate speeches on education and housing, he waited until the conclusion of the speech to make the central idea clear. He used the didactic approach in the other speeches --- the central idea was stated early in the speech. Since he followed the problem–solution pattern closely, Taft's speeches had unity and progression. About half of the time, he used a preview of the points to be covered. He seldom summarized a main point before going on to the next one. The conclusions of his speeches usually summarized the main points and re-emphasized the central idea.

The preceding qualities are enough to insure good speaking. But on style and delivery, Taft lacked the artistry necessary to an outstanding speaker. His language was straight-forward and clear; it was also very plain and unimpressive. For the most part, he used simple words. Rhetorical devices --- figures of speech, imagery, climax, rhythm --- were almost totally lacking. Taft's speaking voice, characterized by high pitch, lack of variety, and rapid rate, was not particularly pleasing. His physical action, although abundant, was not skillfully executed. His gestures were repetitious.

It should be noted that Taft usually was able to secure his desired responses in the speeches analyzed in this study. The strength
of his invention and arrangement, coupled with his position of leadership in the Senate, was largely responsible. The fact that he advocated positions acceptable to his immediate audiences contributed also. On other issues, chiefly foreign policy and taxation, his positions were often antithetical to those of his audiences.

The final judgment of this study is that Senator Taft was an effective speaker on welfare issues. The quality of his speeches was enhanced by his strengths in invention and arrangement. His comparative weaknesses in style and delivery detracted from the quality of his speeches. Thus, he may be considered a good speaker but not an outstanding one.
APPENDIX

Courses Taken by Robert A. Taft at Yale University and Harvard Law School.

Yale University, 1906-10. 1

First Year.
- English A-1
- Greek A-1
- History A-1
- Latin A-1
- Mathematics A-1
- German A-1
- Public Speaking A-1

Second Year.
- Biology A-1
- Economics A-1
- English B-1
- German A-4
- Greek B-1
- Physics B-1
- Rhetoric B-2

Third Year.
- English E-15
- English B-19
- German B-15
- German B-17
- Mathematics B-9
- Philosophy A-5
- Rhetoric B-11
- Oral Expression A-5

Fourth Year.
- English B-7
- English C-19
- Philosophy A-1
- Geology B-17
- History C-35
- Economics B-3
- Economics B-5
- Economics C-11
- Economics C-31

1. Data supplied by Ronald C. Marsh, Registrar.

(329)
Harvard Law School, 1910-13. 1

First Year.
Agency
Civil Procedure
Contracts
Criminal Law
Property
Torts

Second Year.
Bills and Notes
Equity Jurisprudence and Procedure
Evidence
Insurance
Property II
Sales

Third Year.
Bankruptcy
Conflict of Laws
Corporations
Municipal Corporations
Property III
Trusts

1. Data supplied by Margaret E. Quinn, Registrar.
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I, Thomas Reed McManus, was born in Windham, Ohio, August 10, 1931. I received my secondary school education in the Windham schools, and my undergraduate training at Kent State University, which granted me the Bachelor of Science in Education degree in 1953. My Master of Arts degree was earned at Northwestern University in 1955. I served as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Speech at Ohio State University in 1957-58, while working toward the doctorate. I am now an Assistant Professor in the School of Speech, Kent State University.