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HERBERT Theodore HOOVER

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HISTORY OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN NEW MEXICO, 1867-1952

APPROVED BY

W. Eugene Hollon

Arthur H. DeRosier, Jr.

Marion L. Woodward

Brison D. Booth

John W. Wood

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

PREFACE

The primary objective of this study is to trace the history of the Republican party in New Mexico from its beginnings in the 1860's to 1952. The reader will seek in vain for a detailed account of each party convention, a summary of every campaign, or even the mention of all the Republican leaders whose contributions to partisan history merit attention. He will find instead a discussion of the origins of the party, its rise to power during territorial times, its decline after statehood in 1911 and some of the reasons for its relegation to a secondary role in public affairs in recent times.

While the research was taking shape, personnel in charge of manuscripts at the University of New Mexico and the University of Oklahoma libraries offered inestimable assistance by providing direction into the papers of Thomas B. Catron, Albert B. Fall and Patrick J. Hurley. Also, ex-Governor Edwin L. Mechem, Earl Stull and James E. Neleigh, all of Las Cruces, were exceedingly generous in affording time for personal interviews which helped clarify some of the current problems of the New Mexican Republican party.

Professor W. Eugene Hollon, chairman of the committee, has contributed generously in behalf of this thesis, giving rigid criticism and kind encouragement. Many of its merits are the product of his effort, while responsibility for its faults rests solely with the author. Other

members of the committee who have offered criticism and help are Professors Max Moorhead and Brison Gooch and Dean John Ezell. Mrs. Donna Bielski typed the preliminary and final drafts of the manuscript.

Finally, my wife, Karolyn, has been a constant contributor and friendly critic. Her understanding and willingness to sacrifice have been magnificent. Without them, this study would never have been completed.

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SPANISH TRADITION IN NEW MEXICAN POLITICS SINCE 1848

CHAPTER I

> Why people vote as they do is the result of the kind of environment in which they live, the way they make their living, their racial inheritance . . . their educational attainments, their religious affiliations, their leadership, and what John Stuart Mill once called their "temperament."[1]

Ray Allen Billington has observed that when Anglo America clashed with Spanish America in the Southwest "the outcome was never in doubt." Anglo-American frontier technique "emphasized the role of the individual in the subjugation of nature," while Spanish-American frontier policy subordinated the interest of the individual to that of the state. The success of those given free reign to exploit the new land for personal gain was inevitable. And "the conflict ended with the triumphant American frontiersmen planting their flag--and their crops--on the blue Pacific's shores, the conquered continent behind them."[2]

Billington's observation is a refreshing addition to the usual explanations for the outcome of the Mexican War. At the same time it fails to account for the fact that the conquest of the Southwest was a new experience for Americans, and that their triumph in 1848 was an incomplete one.

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[1]Thomas C. Donnelly (ed.): Rocky Mountain Politics (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 1940), p. 218.

[2]The Far Western Frontier (New York: Harper and Row, Torchbook; 1962), p. 1.

With the exception of Frenchmen in the Ohio Valley, the frontier had previously engulfed few non-Anglo-Saxons, other than Indians who ultimately had to accept political domination. But military conquest and occupation of the Southwest created new problems. Spaniards and Mexicans had been in possession of New Mexico for two and one-half centuries. Their descendants, plus the Pueblo Indians of the upper Rio Grande, outnumbered Yankee immigrants by more than sixtyfold at the time of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.[3] As a result, two distinct political systems would exist there after 1848: one based on Spanish, the other on Anglo-Saxon traditions.

Understandably, the change in sovereigns meant little more to the "natives" of New Mexico than the reluctant acceptance of a new flag.[4] With strength of numbers and pride in their heritage, they showed no sign of total submission. Instead, they continued to adhere to political rules based upon their own traditions.[5]

The importance of the "natives"--or Spanish-Americans--in New Mexican politics has gradually diminished since 1848 because of the changing complexion of the population. Indeed, in less than a century Anglos gained numerical superiority.

During the first seventeen years after the conquest migration to New Mexico was slow and sporadic. The population of the territory did

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[3]Ruth Laughlin Barker: "Where Americans Are 'Anglos'," The North American Review, CCXXVIII (November, 1929), p. 568.

[4]In New Mexican political history the word "native" usually denotes any person with a Spanish, Mexican or Indian name, excluding nonvoting Indians. It is used interchangeably with "Spanish-American," "Hispanic," "Hispano-Indian" and "Mexican" even though their denotations are by definition more specific.

[5]Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, January 19, 1883, p. 2.

increase by an estimated fifty percent, but it was not wholly the result of Anglo penetration.[6] Would-be immigrants in the East were discouraged until after the Civil War because of the possession of the best lands of the territory by "native" families, absence of adequate transportation facilities, fear of hostile Indians, fighting in New Mexico between Confederate and Union forces and greater attractions elsewhere.[7]

From 1866 to 1880 Anglos began to arrive more regularly. This wave of immigrants did not immediately alter territorial society. For many returned to the East during the same period because of the capricious behavior of the Indians. And others who remained were scattered so as to hardly make their presence felt. Some took to the mountains in search of precious metals. Texas Cattlemen moved into the Pecos Valley to enjoy lucrative beef markets at United States Army posts and Indian agencies.[8] Nevertheless, by the end of the 1870's enough Anglos had entered New Mexico to threaten the existing socio-political order.

Then around 1880, they began to arrive in sufficient numbers to

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[6]Population statistics for these early years are confused. Contemporaries optimistically estimated an increase of at least fifty percent from 1850 to 1870 despite the loss of some 23,000 people to Arizona and Colorado in the 1860's. Anglo immigrants accounted for some of this increase. Natural population growth accounted for some. But also, a substantial number of "natives" who had fled during the Mexican War returned upon learning that their property rights had been secured by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

[7]Mesilla News, June 13, 1874, p. 1; The Daily New Mexican, May 22, 1874, p. 1; Santa Fe Gazette, June 4, 1864, p. 1; Marion Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood 1895-1912," New Mexico Historical Review, XIV (January, 1939), p. 5.

[8]Mesilla News, June 13, 1874, p. 2; The Daily New Mexican, May 22, 1874, p. 1; Santa Fe Gazette, June 4, 1864, p. 1; Charles F. Coan: A History of New Mexico (Chicago: American Historical Society, Inc.; 1923), I, p. 391.

affect a drastic change in the whole society. This rapid influx of immigrants resulted from several developments: the advent of the railroads, diminishment of Indian depredations, new economic opportunities and the closing of other frontiers. And once it began it soon swelled to flood proportions, growing steadily until around 1910. People came for commercial reasons, cattle-raising, mining and irrigated farming--giving considerable diversity to New Mexican life. Old towns expanded and new ones sprang up, and lawyers, teachers, doctors and other professional groups responded to the demand for their services.[9]

This inrush continued intermittently after statehood. By 1930 the number of Anglos had increased by more than 3,500 percent since 1848, while that of the "natives" had increased by a mere 150 percent. Finally, by the 1940 census Anglos had gained numerical superiority.[10]

Obviously, political power shifted from one race to the other as the Anglos gradually increased their proportionate numbers. These changes did not necessarily occur at the same rate, however, due to the enthusiasm with which "natives" have participated in elections. There are no available statistics distinguishing "native" from Anglo voters after 1906, when the former cast approximately two-thirds of the vote.[11] So it is impossible

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[9]Work Projects Administration, Workers of the Writers' Program in the State of New Mexico: New Mexico: A Guide to the Colorful State (New York: Hastings House; 1940), pp. 77-78; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, September 2, 1885, p. 4; Santa Fe New Mexican, January 15, 1912, p. 4.

[10]Ernest Barksdale Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico, 1912-1950" (doctoral dissertation, New York University; 1950), pp. 9, 17.

[11]Personal interview with Earl Stull, former state House member and now Revenue Commissioner from Las Cruces, June 19, 1965; Santa Fe New Mexican, November 24, 1908, p. 4.

to tell exactly when Anglos began to dominate elections.

But it can be assumed that Anglos became predominant at the polls by 1945. The atomic age brought a group of immigrants to New Mexico who exerted an extraordinary influence upon its politics. Not only did they increase the already predominant Anglo majority, they also demonstrated more enthusiasm and studied concern for politics than the immigrants who had arrived before them. As one contemporary puts it, this educated group abhorred any attempt at "counting the votes of sheep and dead men," they attacked practices which had allowed politicians to "get away with murder," and they quickly "Anglicized" the political life of the state.[12]

Their impact became especially apparent in 1950. In the general election of that year all but one "native" candidate for an important office went down to defeat. "Native" nominees have been at the mercy of the Anglo electorate ever since. The only reason Spanish-Americans have survived as an influential voting bloc at all is their concentration along the Rio Grande and its northern tributaries.[13]

But prior to World War II "native" voters were in the majority. Their political preconceptions were of greater importance than the ones held by Anglos. Thus a review of the nature and importance of political forces which guided the Hispanic people at the time of the conquest must precede any attempt to describe the evolution of parties--the political system introduced by Anglos.

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[12]Albert Rosenfeld: "New Mexico Cashes In," Harper's Magazine, CCVIII (January, 1954), pp. 33-34.

[13]Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, March 2, 1887, p. 2; Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," pp. 20,243, 269; Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, pp. 231-32.

The nature of Hispanic influence upon New Mexican politics is a topic upon which there is considerable controversy. But for illustration, existing studies adequately define four forces that emanated directly or indirectly out of the Spanish colonial past which have been leading determinants in "native" political behavior since the American conquest. These are the effects of racial ties, the Roman Catholic Church, action groups created to serve Spanish-American interests, and the patron system.

The average New Mexican explains that the principle determinant governing the political behavior of "natives" down through the years has been the racial bond. They not only look alike, they also eat alike, dress alike, talk alike and vote alike. There is abundant evidence to support this view. For example, "native" candidates always have had the edge in central and northern counties, regardless of qualifications. Also, certain rules adhered to by political parties whenever possible attest to the importance of race. The two major parties always have tried to balance their tickets between Anglos and "natives" in approximate proportion to the numerical strengths of the two groups. They have tried to avoid racial clashes by seldom running candidates of one race against candidates of the other. These rules guided the selection of nominees as recently as 1948. In nine contests for seats in the state senate that year, five Anglo-Republicans ran against five Anglo-Democrats, while four "native"-Republicans ran against four "native"-Democrats.[14]

The power of the Church also exerted great influence upon "native"

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[14]Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 181; The New York Times, June 11, 1950, VI, p. 4; Alicia Romero (compiler): State of New Mexico Official Returns of the 1948 Elections (Santa Fe: The Rydal Press; 1949), p. 148.

politics, and for that matter, upon every aspect of life in the territory for three or four decades after 1848. As one prominent New Mexican put it: "The peons were in effect owned by the landholders" and "the landholders were dominated by the Church."[15] The overwhelming power of the Church clearly manifested itself in the public career of Jose Manuel (Padre) Gallegos. A noteworthy clergyman and political figure in New Mexico before 1848, Gallegos was one of the most outstanding public leaders in the territory after the American conquest. He was elected to the office of Delegate to Congress in 1853, 1859 and 1871. And he was almost unsurpassed as a vote-getter until he violated the oath of celebacy by his marriage in 1867. From that time on his popularity waned rapidly. He managed to win a seat in Congress in 1871 because of a serious defection in the opposition party. But when he ran a fourth time in 1873 he was defeated decisively by Stephen B. Elkins and soon passed into oblivion. There is no apparent disagreement that the political demise of Gallegos resulted directly from clerical opposition after 1867.[16]

The origins and influence of action groups are more difficult to determine, for they did not exist in 1848.[17] They appear to have grown up

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[15]Harvey Fergusson: "Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," The Nation, CXXI (July, 1925), p. 112.

[16]Weekly New Mexican, April 27, 1875, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4; The Daily New Mexican, September 23, 1875, p. 1. The rise of political parties affected the political demise of such men as Gallegos, as will become apparent in Chapters II and III. However, parties did not discard good vote-getters without cause. And that cause in Gallegos' case was obviously his flouting the Faith.

[17]The tendency of "natives" to support action groups can be explained in numerous ways: family bonds, the relationship between group action and the social organization of Spanish haciendas and towns, and the

in the late nineteenth century to defend "native" interests against Anglo encroachment. The extent of their influence is especially difficult to appraise because it is not always possible to distinguish between the effects of racial ties and action groups in a given election. A distinction did exist, however. For the former was more a personal phenomenon, while the latter affected large, organized groups of Spanish-Americans.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, action groups greatly influenced "native" politics by the turn of the twentieth century. Some were of purely political nature, such as the Association for the Advancement of Spanish Americans. Some were primarily fraternal, like the Alianza-Hispano-Americana. Others even took the form of local terrorist groups, such as the late nineteenth-century "White Caps" of San Miguel County.[18] But all controlled substantial blocs of Spanish-American voters.

The fourth, and by far the most important influence upon "native" voters, was the patrón system. Nearly all writers on New Mexican political history have discussed the patrones. But though they have been the most discussed, they have also probably been the least understood force in New Mexican politics. Indeed, this writer could not find a single study which clearly explains their origins and powers or the extent of their influence.

To understand the patrón system, it is necessary to begin with the institution from which it originally emanated--the frontier policy of

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propensity of Spanish-Americans to place the good of the community above the freedom of the individual. So although action groups first appeared in the mid-territorial years, they were nevertheless indirectly related to Spanish colonial habits.

[18]Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 99; Miguel Antonio Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897 (Albuquerque; The University of New Mexico Press; 1939), pp. 248-49.

colonial Spanish America. As Billington points out, frontiers in Spanish America expanded not for the benefit of individuals--as in Anglo America--but mainly for the aggrandizement of the state. This was accomplished under the rigid control of Spanish law. One of the chief instruments of frontier development was the pueblo (or town), a territorial unit comparable to an American county. To foster frontier expansion, the Spanish King held out grants of land as inducement to individuals willing to establish new pueblos on the fringes of Spanish-occupied dominions. Hispanic law regarding these land grants varied somewhat, depending upon whether a single proprietor or company of proprietors engaged in the endeavor. But in either case a person could acquire title to a substantial plot by participating in the establishment of a town. In this way the King extended his domain and served the interest of the state. Yet, original founders and their heirs also profited by achieving a high place in the socio-economic structure of their respective communities. So the creation of a small landed aristocracy accompanied the establishment of each pueblo, even though Spain subordinated the interest of the individual to that of the state.[19]

Original grantees, and their legitimate descendants, were given much more than land for their service to the state. They also received the title hidalgo and all of the honors and privileges of men of the same rank in Spain itself. Together with other individuals known as vecinos (citizens), they obtained a guarantee of the perpetual enjoyment of

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[19]O. Garfield Jones: "Local Government in the Spanish Colonies as Provided by the Recopilacion de Leyes de Los Reynos de las Indias," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (July, 1915), p. 66; Frank Wilson Blackmar: Spanish Institutions of the Southwest (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1891), p. 161.

special consideration in the distribution of public office, whether it be through election, direct sale or auction. Thus, their influence over large communities was assured. For the jurisdiction of the pueblo included all that Anglo-Americans normally associate with three units of local government: the municipality, township and county. They also acquired special powers with far-reaching social, economic and political importance such as the authority to regulate the prices of food and drink.[20]

In return for this capitulación, pueblo founders assumed many responsibilities. They were expected to attend faithfully to public administration. It was their duty to provide each family subsequently moving to the town with a specific number of livestock and fowl. They had to provide a priest, a church and all necessary ecclesiastical accessories.

To guarantee their intention to live up to the contract they also had to post a bond. Violation of any part of the agreement resulted in the loss of both the bond and the entire capitulación. Moreover, to make sure these leaders did not abuse their official posts, the King subjected them to the residencia--a review of an official's administration at the end of his term in office.[21]

Accordingly, on each Spanish colonial frontier there appeared a paternalistic, landed, titled, politically preponderant aristocracy. If these public benefactors complied with Spanish law, they enjoyed perpetual status and extensive individual liberty--even more than the officials of larger units of colonial administration. The Crown limited the economic

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[20]Jones: "Local Government in the Spanish Colonies," pp. 66-71, 81.

[21]Jones: "Local Government in the Spanish Colonies," pp. 66-67, 74; Blackmar: Spanish Institutions of the Southwest, p. 161.

and social activities of the latter and went to great lengths to assure their detachment from local ties and support. They could not marry within their respective jurisdictions, for example, or appoint close relatives to office. Moreover, the King permitted the elite at the local level great freedom. For by giving them patronage, social privileges and economic advantages, he obviously intended that they entrench themselves and exploit the lower class.[22]

The vast majority of inhabitants of Spanish pueblos--those who settled after the original founders--had a completely different kind of existence. Spanish law deliberately destroyed the principles of equality in land allotment, title, privilege and eligibility for office. As a consequence it discouraged class mobility. And late arrivals who had little chance to get established, had practically no hope of advancement. Symbolic of their role was a law distinguishing between their land grants and these given to the first settlers. One was called the caballería, the other the peonía. One went to gentlemen, the other to foot-soldiers and laborers--the peons.[23]

A division of society similar to that on the pueblo also existed on the encomienda--an institution designed to solve the labor problem in colonial Spanish America without reducing Indians to real slavery. An encomendero possessed the right to use Indian labor in return for christianizing, civilizing and protecting the Indians under his sway. Long before the end of the colonial period the encomienda became legally defunct. But this altered the system very little, because meanwhile many of the

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[22]Jones: "Local Government in the Spanish Colonies," pp. 88-89.

[23]Ibid., p. 69.

privileges of the encomendero were transferred to local officials who collaborated with Indian caciques and continued to exploit the aborigines.[24] The main difference between the pueblo and the encomienda, it seems, was that in the case of the former the underprivileged were Spaniards, while in the case of the latter they were Indians. For in both instances society divided into two classes--the ricos and the pobres; the few with privileges and the many with practically no privileges at all; the few who sold and the many who bought; the few who commanded and the many who obeyed; the few who loafed and the many who worked.

It was a society based upon traditions such as these that Juan de Oñate established in New Mexico in 1598. Oñate himself was an adelantado, with responsibilities and privileges akin to those of the hidalgo and encomendero. He provided a complement of two hundred military colonists, livestock and necessary agricultural implements. In return he received a title, grant of land, and the right to use Indian labor. Likewise, Oñate's soldiers obtained land, special privileges, and political power which enabled them to dominate Indian and Spanish settler alike.[25]

This whole social, economic and political arrangement based on Spanish frontier policy and sheep culture came to be known as the patrón system.[26] It existed in New Mexico at the time of the Mexican War and

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[24]Clarence H. Haring: The Spanish Empire in America (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., Harbinger Book; 1963), pp. 66-67.

[25]Blackmar: Spanish Institutions of the Southwest, p. 224.

[26]Charles Fletcher Lummis: The Land of Poco Tiempo (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; 1906), pp. 18-10; W. P. A.: New Mexico, p. 84; John T. Russell: "New Mexico: A Problem of Parochialism in Transition," The American Political Science Review, XXX (April, 1936), p. 285; Harvey Fergusson: "Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," p. 112. When Oñate brought

seems to have reached its highest point of development around the turn of the nineteenth century. At that time one man owned two million head of sheep which required the care of 2,700 tenders. The first Governor of New Mexico under Mexican rule, Francisco Xavier Chaves, had approximately a million sheep, with a proportionate number of tenders. Land grants issued by the Republic of Mexico may have encroached upon the power of patrones like these to a limited degree, but not enough to disestablish them as masters of local society before the United States acquired the territory in 1848.[27]

Raising the American flag likewise changed the existing order very little because the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed the property rights of the patrones. As before, "los Ricos rode horses bridled with silver, los pobres were lucky to have a burrow. . . . Los ricos owned vast flocks of sheep, los pobres managed to forage two scraggly goats."[28] The only real change that occurred was the peon's acquisition of the right to vote. This complicated the choice of political leaders very little, for the peon lived in a world completely alien to concepts of popular government.[29] Probably the only immediate result of extending him the franchise was that after 1848 the peon began to receive proceeds from the sale

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merino sheep to New Mexico he added to land a second basis for wealth, mark of affluence and implement of power. And by using the partidario--a kind of sharecropping system whereby sheep-owners permanently indebted sheep-tenders and their descendents--sheep-owners instituted debt peonage in New Mexico.

[27]Lummis: The Land of Poco Tiempo, p. 12; Harvey Fergusson: "Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," p. 112.

[28]Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 359; Ruth Laughlin Barker: Caballeros (New York: D. Appleton and Co.; 1931), p. 300.

[29]Barker: "Where Americans are 'Anglos'," p. 570.

of public officer!

Even the first steady influx of Anglos following the Civil War did not threaten the patrón's power. In fact, it tended to reinforce the system. Among the immigrants arriving prior to 1880 were men of wealth--mainly cattlemen and lawyers--who saw in New Mexico an opportunity to create feudal estates of their own. They acquired land by any means available, bought sheep and cattle, and employed peons. Consequently a group of Anglo patrones grew up beside existing "native" patrones. This mattered little to the peon, for as long as he had food, shelter and clothing he accepted his lot. Until awakened to the power of the ballot by the press in the late 1870's and the flood of Anglo immigrants after 1880, peons continued to vote as their patrones directed them to vote.[30]

Such were the main forces governing the Spanish-American's political behavior for several decades following the American conquest of New Mexico. When a "native" went to the polls he was acutely cognizant of the interests of his race, the dictates of the church, community needs, and--most of all--of the commands of his patrón.

Serious problems arise in attempting to apply these same forces as sole determinants of native political behavior in the twentieth century. They did not disappear abruptly with the rapid influx of Anglos after 1880. Nor did all of them disappear entirely as Anglos began to control elections after World War II. As previously mentioned, political parties gave clear recognition to racial ties as late as 1948. But just as it is possible to characterize these forces of tradition as leading political determinants

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[30]Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," pp. 131-32.

in the political behavior of "native" voters in the nineteenth century, so is it easy to illustrate their decline as chief factors in politics around the turn of the 1900's.

The eclipse of racial ties as a force in politics became evident as early as 1900. In the election of a Delegate to Congress that year, Bernard S. Rodey defeated Octaviano S. Larrazolo by a substantial margin. Rodey won solid support from northern and central counties where most voters were "natives," while Larrazolo's main strength came from eastern counties where these same groups were scarce.[31] This example does not invalidate the view that every Anglo nominee since 1900 has had to recognize in his failure the result of an opponent's racial and language ties.[32] But it does reveal t a very crucial fact that new forces had appeared by the turn of the century which sometimes superseded racial ties as a guide for "native" voting behavior.

The power of the Church in politics waned even more sharply during the nineteenth century. One reason was the appointment of Archbishop John B. Lamy to the New Mexican vicariate in 1850. Although Lamy brought much needed reform to the Church in the territory, he weakened its prestige when he provoked a struggle among clergymen by attempting to replace established "natives" with imported French and Castilian Spanish priests. He also attacked clergymen like Gallegos for their political activities and sought to force them back into the pulpit where they belonged. A second reason was the activity of American Protestants, especially after the

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[31] The Chieftain (Socorro), November 17, 1900, p. 2.

[32] Paul Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," Southern Observer, II (February, 1954), p. 23.

coming of the railroads. Also, about the same time the Mormons' influence began to be felt in parts of western New Mexico.

Certain organized groups within the Catholic Church persisted in actively participating in politics. The most notable was Los Hermanos Penitentes (The Penitent Brothers). Lamy condemned this whole group for reasons unrelated to politics, but the Brothers were not easily discouraged. Their organization had roots in the middle ages and came to New Mexico with the party of Oñate. Although their main purpose was doing penance by self-torture, during the latter part of the nineteenth century they divided into partisan groups and commanded substantial followings in the northern counties through the Morada Democrata and the Morada Republicana. At about the turn of the century their membership amounted to several thousand, and they continued to exert some influence in politics as late as the 1920's.[33]

But the Brothers were the exception rather than the rule. After Gallegos, no clergyman ever ran for high public office in New Mexico. And by 1900 no one any longer talked about "blind obedience to ecclesiastic authority,"[34] or regarded the Church as a dynamic force in politics.

The decline of the importance of "native" action groups is as difficult to assess as their origins and influence. It is certain that by the 1930's action groups with purely "native" objectives had been

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[33]Harvey Fergusson: "Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," p. 112, and Rio Grande (New York: Alfred A Knopf; 1933), p. 237; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 362-63; Barker: Caballeros, pp. 216-18; Lummis: The Land of Poco Tiempo, p. 83; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 46; Warren A. Beck: New Mexico: A History of Four Centuries (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press; 1962), pp. 214-18.

[34]Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, July 9, 1882, p. 2.

supplanted by such organizations as the Taxpayers' Association, the Cattle Growers' Association and the Chamber of Commerce, all representing special interests and serving goals common to members of both races.[35] In fact, there is no evidence that purely "native" organizations had much impact after statehood. By that time Spanish-Americans had begun to voice their needs through campaign platforms and reform candidates.

Finally, and most important of all, the patrón system disappeared about the time of statehood. The assertion that this system no longer exists in New Mexico contradicts some recent writing on the state's history, but it is nevertheless true. The reason for discrepancy of opinion lies in the fact that many writers have not traced the patrón system to its origins, and consequently have failed to understand the role of the patrón. The result has been a mistaken confusion of the patrón with the twentieth-century political "boss."

Harvey Fergusson, who understood early twentieth-century New Mexican politics as well as any one could, recognized the difference. He wrote in 1925 that "until the past few years New Mexico has been dominated by a political machine which is probably the oldest in America. . . . It was founded upon complete control of the peon class of Mexicans by the landowning aristocracy and by the church."[36]

Yet, as recently as 1950 Ernest Fincher discussed patrones as though no change had occurred whatsoever. He carefully characterized Solomon Luna, Octaviano A. Larrazolo, Bronson Cutting and Dennis Chavez as

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[35]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, p. 242.

[36]"Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," p. 112.

the leading patrones of the twentieth century. Luna, "a man of great wealth and varied interests," was the most influential patrón about the time of statehood. Contenting himself with being the "power behind the throne," he chose candidates, determined policy and "delivered" the vote of Hispanic-Americans. The same writer maintains that Luna's successor was "the brilliant and ambitious O. A. Larrazolo, famed as an orator and equally famous as the avowed champion of the Spanish-speaking" people. His role was described as being wholly in the enhancement of the "acute group consciousness" of the New Mexican people.

Next came Bronson Cutting, who was characterized as the most powerful of all twentieth century patrones. Though Cutting was "neither Catholic, native-born nor Spanish in extraction," he nevertheless supposedly controlled the "natives" because of his genuine liking for them and his sensitivity to their needs. His main role was said to be "delivering" the Spanish-American vote. Finally, Fincher characterized Chavez as the "last of the patrones." His role was presumably to champion the interests of the Spanish-speaking population by getting them jobs, obtaining anti-discrimination legislation and by giving them aggressive leadership. All four succeeded as patrones, he added, by playing upon "ignorance, economic disadvantage and political adolescence." Fincher predicted that Chavez would be the last of the patrones, since the "improved educational and economic status" of the "natives" had finally made his type an anachronism.[37]

This reflects a mistaken view of the patrón system held by many writers of New Mexican history. A reader of Fincher's study gets the

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[37] "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," pp. 158-61.

impression that anyone from anywhere, belonging to any race or church who was willing to take advantage of ignorance, poverty and political naivete could be a patrón. He needed only to possess one of several combinations of propensities. He could be a man of brilliance and ambition with a flare for oratory and a desire to lead the Spanish-Americans. He could be one who merely liked the "natives" and felt a sensitivity to their needs. Or, he could simply be willing to lead them and get them jobs and race-oriented legislation. Accordingly, his real responsibilities were practically nonexistent. For in the opinion of Fincher a patrón needed only to play upon ignorance to earn an active role in politics.

The previous discussion of the origins of the patrón system will perhaps bear out this writer's view that nineteenth-century Spanish and most Anglo patrones would not have recognized themselves in Fincher's characterizations. The average patrón of territorial times dominated peon voters in a limited region within the territory through power and prestige based upon the possession of land, livestock and an illustrious family heritage. He usually came from a line which had resided in New Mexico for several generations, unless he was one of the newly arrived Anglo patrones. Furthermore, he was fluent in the Spanish language, almost invariably Roman Catholic, and a man of considerable knowledge who was capable of advising his peons in all matters of local interest. Most of those who went to him for advice worked for him, and he assumed great personal responsibility for their practical needs. For his aims were paternal as well as personal. Only occasionally did he seek high office for himself. Instead, he influenced the selection of candidates, the determination of policy and the perpetuation of stable, conservative government to protect not only his own

interests, but the whole existing system.

Out of the four men described by Fincher the only one who even remotely fits a proper characterization of the nineteenth century patrón was Solomon Luna. Though he fits the description perfectly,[38] each of the others lacked basic traits to qualify. Larrazolo was an unpropertied Mexican immigrant, practically unknown when he first ran for office in New Mexico. Bronson Cutting was an Anglo immigrant, known principally for the progressive ideals expressed in the New Mexican for two decades after statehood. It is true that his ideals appealed to low-income "natives," but even so Cutting did not become a leader of Spanish-Americans until after World War I. His popularity then resulted mainly from a rejection of the "Americanization" movement in the American Legion.[39]

Dennis Chavez was more like the nineteenth century patrón than any other leading twentieth-century boss. But he too was different. He gained public status by slowly working his way up in state politics.

Thus, while racial ties, the Church, action groups and the patrón system were prime determinants in "native" political behavior for several decades following the American conquest, all gradually receded from prominence in New Mexican politics during and shortly after territorial times. In addition to reasons already given there were other important causes. First of all, Anglo encroachment caused the redistribution of land. Some

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[38]For Luna's role in New Mexican politics see Erna Fergusson: New Mexico: A Pageant of Three Peoples (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.; 1951), p. 317 and Santa Fe New Mexican, August 19, 1908, p. 2. Luna's career ended with his tragic death in 1912. Santa Fe New Mexican, August 30, 1912, p. 1.

[39]Patricia Cadigan Armstrong: A Portrait of Bronson Cutting Through His Papers, 1910-1927 (Albuquerque: Division of Government Research, University of New Mexico; 1959), pp. 34-35.

new arrivals acquired land by homesteading in areas theretofore used but not owned by hacendados. Some acquired land by contesting old Spanish and Mexican land grants. Some acquired land through purchase. By these means they gradually broke an important basis for traditional power. For the twenty families holding the lion's share of good land in great haciendas as late as 1880 saw it gradually slip from their control. With it went their great sheep flocks, prestige and political influence.[40]

Secondly, along with an Anglo nuevo rico came investment in industry, mining and mercantile pursuits, which shifted the basis for wealth. A rico after 1880 could be a man with money to spend, as well as one holding land and livestock. Thus, as the basis for wealth changed, so did the basis for political power.[41] Also, the diversification of the economy and introduction of public education provided new opportunities for "native" peons. Persons whose ancestors had been in debt ser itude for generations left their traditional homes to seek a better life in the towns and cities. And each time a peon left a hacienda, the power of some patrón and perhaps some clergyman diminished.[42] Furthermore, with educationaand Anglo influence came the realization of the power of the ballot, and a weakening of mystical ties to the Roman Church. "Natives" who theretofore voted according to commands from the traditionally elite came to regard the ballot as a symbol of equality and a means of achieving social and economic justice. By 1911 the population of New Mexico was

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[40]Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 390, 462-83.

[41]Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, April 22, 1883, p. 2; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 445-61.

[42]Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 484-90.

divided about equally between Protestant and Catholic churches.[43]

Further examples are unnecessary, for the significance of the arrival of an entirely new culture upon the New Mexican scene is obvious. The important point is that traditional politics lost some force with the arrival of each immigrant and each Anglo-Saxon institution. Gradually old leaders found they could no longer "deliver" the vote on the basis of race, religion, community interests and personalismo. For their former peons slowly had become cognizant of the advantages of representative government.

The introduction of this new concept into New Mexican "native" society was of course the province of political parties. Understandably, their emergence was slow and chaotic. Yet they were sufficiently developed by the twentieth century to fill the gap left by the eclipse of traditional politics. Even today partisan politicians continue to grapple with vestiges of "native" traditions. But for all practical purposes, political parties moved to the center of New Mexican politics during the last few years of the territorial period.

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[43] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 21, 1911, p. 4.

CHAPTER II

THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN NEW MEXICO, 1848-1910

> The most important single determinant of elections of New Mexico, since statehood date, has been the influence exerted by rival party organizations.[1]

That parties emerged to dominate the political conduct of "native" New Mexicans before statehood is remarkable, for they had to take root in a society where there was practically no precedent for partisan life.[2] There had been little popular participation in Spanish colonial politics in the New World after 1600, since by that time elective offices had become either saleable or hereditary in all but remote frontier pueblos.[3] Nor did real parties appear in the Republic of Mexico prior to 1848. Politics during the various administrations of Santa Anna was little more than an angry contest between caudillos and radical leftists. Furthermore, political life in territorial New Mexico during the first two decades of American occupation was still the private perquisite of the patrones. But finally permanent Republican and Democratic organizations began participating in elections in 1869, flowered almost miraculously in the three

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[1]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, p. 237.

[2]Information regarding the importance of parties in New Mexican politics prior to statehood can be found in the Santa Fe New Mexican, September 21, 1908, p. 2, November 12, 1908, p. 4, November 24, 1908, p. 4 and February 27, 1929, p. 4.

[3]Haring: The Spanish Empire in America, pp. 152-53.

succeeding decades, and completely overshadowed all other political determinants before 1911.[4]

Though political parties did not begin participating in elections until 1869 in New Mexico, the groundwork had been laid several years before. Voters had already been introduced to popular elections and had been schooled in the meaning of partisan life. Hence the founders of each party had only to claim nominal leadership of one of two large factions.

Two developments were responsible for this. One was the biennial separation of voters into groups supporting candidates for the territorial legislature and Congress. During the 1850's these loose aggregations were known as the "American" and "Mexican" parties. In the early 1860's they usually took the names of current congressional nominees, calling themselves the "Chavez," "Gallegos" or "Perea" parties.[5] Except that they haphazardly participated in campaigns, none of these groups resembled organized political parties. There is no evidence either of their establishing operative machinery, or of their taking an active role in politics between elections. But they did divide the voters into factions every two years and accustom them to cooperative political action.

The second development was the Civil War. It influenced the establishment of parties by drawing the above mentioned groups into two permanent political camps and schooling them in partisan life. The War

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[4]Barker: "Where Americans Are 'Anglos'," p. 570.

[5]Miguel Antonio Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1864-1882 (New York: The Press of the Pioneers; 1935), p. 282; The New Mexican, September 29, 1865, p. 2; Santa Fe Gazette, May 28, 1864, p. 2, September 3, 1864, p. 2, September 10, 1864, p. 2; Santa Fe Weekly Gazette, September 22, 1866, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

probably would have effected local politics very little had New Mexico's loyalty to the Union not been in question. But to the first Republican administration in Washington, its defection to the Confederacy seemed imminent. Determined to prevent this, Abraham Lincoln chose territorial officials according to how they might effect New Mexico's loyalty to the North, giving little attention to such things as personality and previous party membership. The result was the appointment of an uncompromising Democratic governor and an impetuous Radical Republican territorial secretary. Within approximately a year of their taking office, an inevitable quarrel developed between the two men. Each formed his own administrative clique, allied himself with several ambitious patrones to build up a popular following and endeavored to take personal charge of the territory. When the patrones entered the feud, their peons naturally became involved. Thus, by 1865 nearly all New Mexican voters had unwittingly fallen into one or the other of two camps, each of which was nominally headed by a highly partisan official.[6]

Politically minded Anglos arriving after the War quickly envisaged the opportunity to found a two-party system. All that was really needed was the drafting of party charters and the announcement of their existence. So small groups of Democrats and Republicans met, declared the formation of organized parties and established central committees.[7] Each committee

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[6]Much of the material upon which this chapter is based is also used as basis for the more specific studies in Republican history in succeeding chapters. The genesis of parties during and after the Civil War will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

[7]Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

then claimed leadership of one of the factions emerging from the War, and each in turn selected a leading "native" patron to run for the office of Delegate in 1869.

From appearances, party founders might have congratulated themselves on immediate success after this first election. The Republicans won by a substantial majority, but the future doubtless looked bright to both camps.[8] With war-time antagonisms still fresh and parties so new that internal feuds had not yet developed, both Democratic and Republican ranks held firm.

Numerous problems had to be solved before parties could claim general acceptance, however, for partisan politics was still only an idea in the minds of the founders. Mere establishment of central committees and the display of party rosters were not tantamount to permanency. Foremost was the problem of personalismo. Although each party claimed the support of thousands of voters, few were aware of their own memberships. As long as parties had no local machinery through which to work they continued to depend completely upon "native" patrones for support. Peons voted for party tickets only because they were directed to do so.

Consequently, the first several nominating conventions and elections were not party functions in the strict sense. They were mere occasions for ambitious patrones to vie for power. Every attempt at forming a logical partisan ticket met with confusion imposed by personal interests and traditional loyalties. An example of this occurred in 1875, when the Democratic nominating convention attempted to run Republican Mariano S. Otero for Delegate to congress. The periodic nomination of an

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[8] Ibid.

Anglo candidate--such as Stephen Benton Elkins--should have offset the influence of personalismo somewhat. But it did not, because men like Elkins were as interested in self-aggrandizement as were the patrones, and devoted little effort to promoting the interests of parties.[9]

Hope of undermining the influence of personalismo was futile at first. For one thing, communications were inadequate. The development of territory-wide organization suffered because delegations from remote counties frequently failed to arrive in time for conventions. The establishment of precinct and county organizations likewise was hampered because nearly one-sixth of the eligible voters of New Mexico were isolated.

Another problem was the practice of holding elections during the harvest season. This hindered popular participation both in party conventions and elections. Lawlessness and Indian depredations also deterred party growth. Not only did violence in the 1870's distract New Mexican residents, it also discouraged would-be immigrants in other parts of the United States--who proved important to party development.[10]

These and other problems continued to frustrate party operations for a decade or more. As late as 1875 partisanship still exerted little influence on elections. There was no party distinction drawn on the county and legislative tickets of such important northern and western counties as

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[9]Daily New Mexican, June 18, 1875, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, October 19, 1878, p. 2.

[10]Daily New Mexican, July 16, 1873, p. 1 and July 2, 1875, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, May 22, 1874, p. 1; Mesilla News, March 7, 1874, p. 2. August 1, 1874, p. 1 and November 14, 1874, p. 2; Barker: Caballeros, pp. 72-76; Calvin Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years: The Story of Early Territorial Governors (Albuquerque: Horn and Wallace; 1963), p. 173; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, p. 62; W. P. A.: New Mexico, p. 77.

Colfax, Rio Arriba, San Miguel and Socorro. Local election results in all of the southern counties depended mainly upon personal interests and prejudices. People all over the territory voted for congressional nominees on the basis of personal loyalties rather than party dictates. There was not even an accurate partisan division in the territorial legislature.[11]

As long as these conditions existed, parties would continue to play a secondary role. Meanwhile, Anglo leaders were not idle. They were already taking remedial steps which would provoke general interest in partisan politics and free parties from complete dependence upon the active patrones.

One such step was the establishment of local party machinery. Throughout the late 1870's and early 1880's politically minded Anglos strove to introduce parties into isolated towns and haciendas. Both Democrats and Republicans participated, but the latter excelled much because of the regionally famous "Santa Fe Ring." Led by some of the best politicians in New Mexico and supported by men of wealth, the Ring gradually spread its influence over the counties on the Upper Rio Grande, so by about 1885 at least one section of the territory had become thoroughly accustomed to partisanship.[12]

Another development was the popularization of parties by local newspapers. Poor as they were in political commentary, partisan-minded New Mexican editors of the 1870's worked diligently to call attention to

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[11] The Daily New Mexican, May 15, 1875, p. 1 and September 13, 1875, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, September 14, 1875, p. 2.

[12] Otero briefly summarized the role of the Santa Fe Ring during the 1870's in My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 83. Chapter IV will deal with the Ring in more detail.

parties. They urged oppressed "natives" to participate in conventions as a means of wresting power from the existing aristocracy. Various editors likewise initiated the first movement to educate the electorate on the power of the ballot--when used purposefully through partisan action. Their persistent comments doubtless had as much to do with popular interest in parties in the communities they reached as any single factor.[13]

There were other changes which also made participation in politics easier. In 1876 election day was moved from the harvest season to November, which encouraged participation in politics by farmers. Another was the establishment of mail routes. This contributed to the coordination of party activities.[14]

Due to these developments--and doubtless because of slow but steady Anglo immigration during the 1870's--political confusion characteristic of the first half of the decade began to disappear. Personalismo gradually lost some of its force as party machinery moved into isolated communities. Regular party tickets supplanted the patrón-dictated "citizens" and "peoples" tickets in all but such sparsely populated counties as Colfax. By 1878 the territorial legislature had divided along partisan lines for the first time.[15] Parties achieved a degree of permanency, and their general acceptance could be discerned all over the territory.

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[13]Weekly New Mexican, August 15, 1871, p. 2 and July 13, 1875, p. 2; The Daily New Mexican, July 9, 1875, p. 1 and various issues 1870-1880. It is noteworthy that prior to and during the 1870's each edition of leading New Mexican newspapers was printed both in English and Spanish.

[14]Mesilla News, March 28, 1874, p. 2 and December 5, 1876, p. 1.

[15]Weekly New Mexican, December 7, 1878, p. 2; Daily New Mexican, September 18, 1880, p. 4; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, November 4, 1882, p. 2.

These achievements in the organization and popularization of parties during the 1870's were especially significant and timely. For when Anglos began pouring into New Mexico during the next decade, operative local political machinery was at hand. And with skeleton organizations already in existence, it was possible for parties to mature naturally along with other facets of society. Just as mining and cattle-raising altered the economy, and education and Protestantism influenced social and religious life, so did parties gradually move toward the forefront in political life. Immigrants began to swell party ranks, and increased patronage made parties more attractive. At the same time newspapers publicized their existence, and improved communications made them more effective.

Indeed, the ultimate triumph of parties was assured with the advent of the railroads. In each election after 1880 the number of voters unaffected by non-partisan forces increased and parties gradually overcame the restraining influence of personalismo. It would have been only a matter of time before they would have triumphed as part of the natural change that came over New Mexico in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

As this gradual change occurred, a more revolutionary transformation took place in territorial politics, however. In a span of approximately twenty years parties replaced patrones as the chief objects of political loyalty. What had been two frail, loosely organized associations in 1880 became two powerful, smooth-operating machines by 1900. The Democratic party took shape under the leadership of Governor William T. Thornton (1893-97) and congressional Delegates Antonio Joseph (1884-94)

and Harvey B. Fergusson (1896-98). The Republican party emerged even stronger under the guidance of Thomas Benton Catron and Governor Miguel Antonio Otero II (1897-1906). The latter organization grew so powerful that during Otero's administration "even the appointment of notary public was considered in some localities a great favor" and a mark of both social and political distinction. By 1900 voters flocked to party banners as though no other loyalties had ever existed.[16]

The gradual waning of Spanish influence and the increase of Anglo immigration--both previously discussed--afford a partial explanation for party development after 1880. But by themselves they do not account for a sudden and wholesale rejection of traditional political habits. While the power of patrones was slowly dying, there is no reason why they should not have continued to exert strong political influence well into the twentieth century--unless, of course, their prerogatives were challenged in some way not yet considered. Prior to 1900 immigration was not so rapid, patronage, so abundant, newspapers so plentiful nor communications so improved as to cause "native" voters to turn against old loyalties for organizations with which they had been barely familiar two decades previously. There had to be other reasons.

These included the nature of late nineteenth century New Mexican parties and the techniques used by their leaders in winning the loyalty of the "native" electorate. Immigrant politicians displayed great wisdom

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[16]Ralph Emerson Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press; 1911-17), II, p. 524; Santa Fe New Mexican, April 10, 1903, p. 2. All dates appearing in parentheses after the names of territorial officials in this study indicate tenure of office and can be confirmed in L. Bradford Prince: A Concise History of New Mexico (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press; 1912), pp. 264-66.

in shaping their organizations. Rather than establishing parties as they existed in the rest of the United States and endeavoring to adjust New Mexican society to them, they adjusted to the existing socio-political setting.

From the time parties were founded, the essential obstacle to their rise to predominence was the existence of two political systems in the same society. It will be recalled that the established, traditional system had at first been a boon because "native" patrones had "delivered" the vote when parties had no means of doing so. But once parties took root, these entrenched leaders at the same time became prime vote-getters and chief competitors for parties. And as long as the patrón system continued as a major political force, parties could not dominate politics by their own right.

Reducing patrones to a secondary role was a task which Anglo party politicians did not have the power to perform on a broad scale in the nineteenth century. But what they did do was to develop their organizations in such a way as to compete with patrones, use them where feasible, and then take over their constituencies when they fell. Though Anglo party leaders might not always have planned so deliberately, their actions followed this course.

The distinguishing characteristic of New Mexican parties in the nineteenth century was the emphasis given to local organization and a corresponding absence of strong central leadership. From the time they became politically significant--in the late 1870's--ultimate partisan authority rested unquestionably in the hands of the collective leadership

of all precincts and counties,[17] the role of the federal government notwithstanding.[18] Central committees served only to arrange conventions and to appease disaffected local leaders. There was no discipline for the defector and no means of controlling local troublemakers.[19] The establishment of strong central leadership and party unification, which would have been obtrusive if not impossible in the nineteenth century, did not

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[17]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, pp. 239-40; Daily New Mexican, October 1, 1880, p. 2 and October 8, 1880, p. 2.

[18]Most New Mexican historians have felt that presidential appointees dominated partisan politics and that territorial New Mexico was therefore usually Republican because all presidents between 1860 and statehood were Republicans except Grover Cleveland. That view does not stand up under close examination, however. In the first place, presidential appointments accounted for only a small percentage of territorial patronage. The President appointed the high officials--the Governor, the Secretary, federal judges and a marshal--and several lesser officers. And he often indirectly effected the selection of other officials, nominated by the Governor. But final approval for all but direct presidential appointments came from the territorial Council, and unless the Council approved a governor's appointees, territorial offices remained in the hands of officers appointed by the previous administration. This is what happened during Cleveland's first administration, when a Republican Council rejected most of the nominations made by Democrat Edmund G. Ross (Chapter IV).

The President sometimes even bent to the wishes of a minority of local party officials regarding the governorship when party unity was in danger. It was mainly fear of the disintegration of the territorial Republican party that caused Theodore Roosevelt to fire Governor Otero in 1906 and Governor Herbert J. Hagerman in 1907 (Chapter VI).

The assertion that presidential appointees dominated politics also ignores the partisan power of the Delegate to Congress. Not only was he influential because he was the territory's best fund raiser and advocate of statehood in Washington. In the Republican party, at least, he also controlled territorial party machinery for two years following his nomination. For by custom he named the Chairman of the Central Committee. Miguel Antonio Otero: My Nine Years as Governor of the Territory of New Mexico, 1897-1906 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 1940), p. 229.

Thus party politics was actually controlled by county leaders. They were responsible for the election of Councilors. The majority of them selected congressional nominees. And a minority, if well organized, could force the firing of a territorial governor. This can be confirmed by reading the New Mexican through any decade between 1870-1910.

[19]Santa Fe New Mexican, November 28, 1908, p. 4.

come until the twentieth.

The evolution of the Republican party serves as the best example because its development preceded that of the Democratic party by at least a decade. Its emergence might be likened to building a pyramid. Precinct organizations, especially those established by the Santa Fe Ring in the late 1870's and early 1880's, were its cornerstones. County organizations, appearing as precinct leaders began to cooperate in the 1880's, were its slopes. And the apex was not shaped until Otero's administration, when the "Governor's Ring" finally drew all lower blocks together into one.

This order of establishment was a key to the success of the Republican party because it was completely responsive to local needs and desires. As a result, Republicans suffered from intermittent upheavals for want of a capstone--or unifier--for three decades. Between 1869 and 1900 they experienced four major and several minor intra-party wars. But from the late 1870's their party was available and acceptable to the average "native" voter.

Anglo leaders in both parties also endeavored to make participation in partisan politics a social highlight from the "native" viewpoint. Every party function was a gala occasion in the best Spanish-American tradition. Local rallies were accompanied with much ritual, dining, and dancing. Whole families attended and ate, drank and listened through hours of oratory delivered in lofty phrases. Thus every campaign became a social oasis in an otherwise arid existence for most peons and their families.[20]

Along with making parties unobtrusively available, and giving

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[20] S. Omar Barker: "La Politics," New Mexico Quarterly, IV 1934), pp. 6-10; Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 133; Harvey Fergusson: ,Rio Grande, p. 116.

partisan politics special social significance, Anglo politicians did one more thing. Unable to overcome the native patrón system, they included it in the operation of party politics. And by doing so they permitted entrenched leaders to achieve what they could not do for themselves. The patrones destroyed their own system as a political force independent of parties.

For want of leaders, and doubtless to make parties more acceptable, patrones were allowed to head most precinct and county organizations. Also, with few exceptions the late nineteenth-century congressional nominees of both parties were patrones. In short, during the 1880's and early 1890's local organizations and leading places on party tickets were handed over to them. Not until 1900, when parties had nearly overshadowed the patrón system as the dominant force in politics, did Anglos themselves begin to supplant "native" patrones in these capacities.[21]

By accepting nominations and positions as local partisan leaders, patrones placed themselves in a vulnerable position. For as political leaders with power based upon tradition, they could not have but abnegated personal prerogatives by leading their various followings into a party. What they were doing, in fact, was asking their peons to join them in serving another master. Thus, they tacitly renounced their exclusive

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[21]Harvey Fergusson: "Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," p. 112; Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 133. That parties used patrones, then disgarded them after they lost their usefulness is reflected in the changing nature of congressional candidates. In 1880, when parties needed patrones, the Republican and Democratic nominees for Delegate were Tranquilino Luna and Miguel A. Otero, I--both members of old, influential families. In 1900, after patrones had become reliant upon parties, the candidates were Octaviano A. Larrazolo and Bernard S. Rodey--both immigrants and partisan politicians. Weekly New Mexican, August 9, 1880, p. 1; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, November 3, 1882, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, passim and My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 135-36; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 543.

possession of political authority in their own communities. For in the party, their power was subject to challenge by aspirants with no traditional basis for authority. In the party, merchants, mining barons, lawyers and anyone else with friends and money became an equal and a potential political adversary.

Moreover, once a patrón became a partisan leader, he had to step down from his traditional pedestal and ascend the "political stump" with all of his challengers. Suddenly his peons became his masters. To compete with other candidates he had to offer something tangible to attract votes--the same votes which a few years before he had undisputably controlled. The lingering forces of tradition temporarily allowed some patrones--such as J. Francisco Chavez of Valencia County--to both "deliver" the vote and head a precinct or county partisan organization.[22] But the inevitable effect was to make the patrón over into just another political boss.

Once this happened, the patrón became subordinate to the party, rather than vice versa. Pedro Perea serves as an example of what happened to patrones who sought to use parties for self-aggrandizement. A member of a powerful family which came to New Mexico in 1693 as soldiers of Captain General Diego de Vargas, Perea became one of the more influential patrones of the late nineteenth century. Yet once in the party he became its servant. The Republicans used him in 1898 to defeat the popular Democratic incumbent, Delegate Harvey Fergusson. But after winning the seat in Congress, Perea was not even considered for renomination in 1900.

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[22] Santa Fe New Mexican Review, September 1, 1884, p. 2.

That year both Catron and Otero decided to support Rodey[23] and to send Perea into political oblivion.

Even Catron, leader of Anglo *patrones* and the one who was more responsible for founding local Republican machinery in the late nineteenth century than any other individual, fell into the trap. By the turn of the century his personal influence was no longer adequate to sustain him in power against the will of the party. Between 1896 and 1902 he was reduced to a mere county politician by several defeats from the Otero Ring. When the Regular Republicans of Santa Fe County turned against him between 1904 and 1906, he kept his political career alive only by joining the Democrats.[24]

When the *patrón* system had accordingly become a society of partisan bosses, the battle for party predominance in New Mexican politics was nearly won. For all practical purposes this had occurred by 1900. Only once thereafter did a *patrón* personally attempt to challenge the leadership of a party. In 1904 Frank Hubbell, a Bernalillo County *patrón* of longstanding, attempted to use his personal influence to defy the authority of Otero's machine.[25] After Hubbell failed, no *patrón* ever again played a prominent role in politics, except as a political boss cooperating fully with other partisan politicians.

Thus, through most of the last territorial decade both parties

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[23]*Santa Fe New Mexican*, January 12, 1906, p. 2; *Santa Fe Daily New Mexican*, November 3, 1882, p. 2; *The Las Vegas Daily Optic*, October 12, 1898, p. 2; *The Chieftain* (Socorro), October 13, 1900, p. 2; Otero: *My Nine Years as Governor*, pp. 135-36.

[24]*Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 5, 1906, p. 2.

[25]*Santa Fe New Mexican*, October 10, 1906, p. 2 and September 16, 1911, p. 4.

regarded patrones as harmless anachronisms and concentrated upon resolving factional differences in their ranks. The Republicans, whose local organizations were the strongest, inevitably suffered from the greatest internal strife. Only after several heated conflicts between leaders, and the firing of two territorial governors, did they achieve stability. On the other hand the Democrats, with less local machinery to bring under central leadership, concentrated mainly upon strengthening their county and precinct operations, and building up a following.

By the time of the Constitutional Convention of 1910 both parties were unified and about equal in strength. After existing only approximately four decades they had--for all practical purposes--supplanted the forces of tradition in New Mexican politics and were ready to compete with each other in the establishment of the new state government.

The Republican party, whose history is examined in the succeeding chapters, was by far the stronger of the two major parties until the last few years of the territorial period. Factors already mentioned were partly responsible for this, such as the emphasis Republican leaders placed upon local organization. But to understand clearly their preeminence, it is necessary to begin with a more careful analysis of the genesis of the two parties. For like Republicans in the rest of the United States, those of New Mexico benefitted greatly from the politics of the Civil War.

CHAPTER III

GENESIS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN NEW MEXICO, 1848-1875

> In the winter of that year [1867] the writer invited a few well known republicans to a conference and the result was the formation of the republican association of the territory of New Mexico, which became quite a power in politics and was the first movement toward the organization of the party.[1]

This is how Colonel William Breeden remembered the birth of Republicanism in New Mexico--after nearly two decades. Inasmuch as Breeden provided what little central leadership the party had until the mid-1880's, he was its "father." After calling the conference in 1867 he became Chairman of the Central Committee. While serving in that capacity he did more than anyone else to hold the party together by virtue of his being the only leading Republican official who remained sufficiently aloof from quarrels within its ranks. For example, in 1871 he played a key role in preventing local party leaders from completely destroying the organization. He also was instrumental in reuniting the leaders in 1873, and subsequently keeping an uneasy peace for nearly a decade. Then finally he relinquished the chairmanship in 1886 in the interest of harmony within the ranks.[2]

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[1] Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

[2] Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, November 30, 1882, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, January 7, 1885, p. 2. William Breeden was the leading public figure in New Mexico for two decades following the Civil War. After

Since Breeden knew more about the beginnings of the party than any of his contemporaries, his comments must be regarded among the most authoritative ever written. But that the genesis of Republicanism in New Mexico was not as simple as he implied has already been noted. The reader will recall that a groundwork had been laid by the biennial formation of factions and the establishment of unorganized parties through their alliance with administrative cliques during the Civil War. So when Breeden and his friends met in 1867, they did not create a new party. Rather, they simply took charge of what had already existed for several years, gave it the Republican label and provided it with permanent central leadership.

The Colonel's failure to relate these facts in 1884 stemmed mainly from his current concern for the party's welfare. A large bloc of quarrelsome Republicans was threatening to bolt and allow the Democrats to gain control of elective offices. To prevent this, Breeden published an article describing the party's achievements since 1867, hoping thereby to restore harmony within the ranks.

Thus, omissions in his writings are explainable, but by failing to include the story of the political embroil which preceded the conference

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arriving in 1866 as Assessor of Internal Revenue, he became the most capable partisan officer and one of the leading public officials of his time. Not only did he serve as Republican Central Committee chairman for more than two decades and represent the party at national Republican conventions on several occasions. He was also appointed Attorney General five times, elected to the territorial Council twice (serving both times as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee), served as Clerk of the Supreme Court of New Mexico for three years and was a leader of the New Mexico bar all through the 1870's and 1880's. His success in the party was due partly to the fact that he arrived after the Civil War upheaval had ended and started fresh with neither enemies nor friends. But more important, he was unique among politicians of New Mexico at that time for his integrity and unblemished character.

in 1867, Breeden glossed over two important aspects of his party's history. First of all he failed to relate its true origins. Secondly, he ignored completely an important underlying cause for its strength. Doubtless territorial New Mexico would never have been so decidedly Republican as it was, had the party's genesis involved nothing more than an inconspicuous meeting of a few individuals in 1867 as its "father" suggested. Indeed, due to previous developments, the Republicans had every advantage over the Democrats from the time the two parties nominated their first candidates in 1869. A full understanding of the disparity existing between them at that time can be derived by beginning with events in the pre-war period.

At the time of the American conquest a citizens' convention had petitioned Congress to prevent the introduction of slavery into the territory. Again in 1850, at the first Constitutional Convention, New Mexicans resolved to banish it forever. Then during the ensuing decade, while no further statement of opposition to slavery in New Mexico was made, there was also no public expression hinting that its introduction would meet with approval. In other words, most New Mexicans either opposed slavery, or did not care one way or the other.

Those occupying the two most important posts in the territory during the 1850's, however, were either southerners or New Mexicans with southern sympathies. James S. Calhoun (1851-52), the first civil Governor and a Georgian, betrayed his views by asking the territorial legislature to outlaw free Negroes. Congressional Delegate Miguel A. Otero I (1855-61), a "native" New Mexican, loudly proclaimed his pro-southern procilivities to the press. Then in 1859, Governor Abraham Rencher, from North

Carolina, signed a so-called slave code, revealing his support of the institution.

The code was insignificant as a legal document, for there were no more than two dozen slaves in the territory at the time. But Rencher's signature was interpreted by many northern political leaders as tacit acceptance of the southern cause by the whole population of New Mexico.[3] And all doubt vanished in 1861 when a citizens' convention met in Mesilla to secede, and numerous Union troops in the territory either resigned or deserted to join the Confederate forces. Even though Rencher denounced the Mesilla convention and resolved to keep New Mexico in the Union, these defections convinced both Lincoln and the majority of Congress that the whole territory was in danger of going over to the Confederacy.[4]

It was with these events in mind that the President chose nominees for territorial offices in the spring of 1861. Not surprisingly, he disregarded personalities and previous party membership in an effort to find

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[3]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 85-86; W. P. A.: New Mexico, p. 75. To remind the reader, by the terms of the Compromise of 1850, popular sovereignty was the rule governing slavery in territorial New Mexico.

[4]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 86-88; W. P. A.: New Mexico, p. 75. It is impossible to say exactly how most New Mexicans felt about the Civil War. The writers of the W. P. A. wrote the following: "The controversy between the North and South leading to the Civil War was not of vital interest in New Mexico, nor was the question of Negro slavery an outstanding issue. New Mexicans were accustomed to native peonage and to captive Indian slavery, but in 1861 there were only twenty-one Negro slaves in the territory. As a conquered province New Mexico had formed no strong attachment to the Union. But as many of the early pioneers and traders over the Santa Fe Trail, and many American officers in the territory were Southerners, the inclination was toward the South." This writer cannot accept the view that the inclination of the general public was toward the South. Clearly, several pre-War officials held pro-southern views. But from the lack of support for secession and the unpopularity of Copperheads during the War, one cannot help concluding that most of those who were concerned at all favored the North.

individuals who might best serve the interests of the North. In this he succeeded, for once his appointees were in office there was never any danger of the territory's going over to the Confederacy, except by invasion from Texas. However, his obliviousness to personal qualities and partisanship resulted in a rift in the territorial administration and set the stage for the formation of two parties.

The selection of a governor would produce the faction which ultimately became the nucleus of the Democratic Party. Rencher was available for another term, though understandably, Lincoln could not reappoint him. While he persistently proclaimed his loyalty to Lincoln, his southern origins and his acceptance of the slave code made him unacceptable.[5] The President turned to Henry Connelly (1861-66) instead. There is no evidence that he was anymore a staunch Union supporter than Rencher, but he had lived in New Mexico for forty years and knew the ways of the "native" people. Moreover, he was in a position to sway the opinions of local leaders because of his marriage into the powerful Perea family.[6]

Connelly nonetheless proved an unfortunate choice, for he was never acceptable to the majority of the people of the territory. For one thing, he earned the reputation of being a "Copperhead" from the time he took office by vacillating on several basic issues of the War. While he denounced the Confederacy as a rebel organization and supported military action against it, he also declared that Texas and not the South was the

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[5]Vincent G. Tregeder: "Lincoln and the Territorial Patronage: The Ascendancy of the Radicals in the West," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXV (June, 1948), p. 84; Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 88-89, 93.

[6]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 93-94.

real enemy of New Mexico. Likewise he seemed to hedge on the question of slavery by demanding the repeal of the code, but at the same time he refused to free his Navajo "domestic servants" in the Government House.[7] While He proclaimed himself a loyal supporter of Lincoln, he also admitted a preference for the Democratic party. These discrepancies made him suspect from the start to those interested in national affairs.

Many New Mexican "natives" were unconcerned about the War, slavery and politics, of course. But the Governor also evoked opposition from them by his obliviousness to popular opinion in determining policy. Prior to the summer of 1862 Connelly and Edward R. S. Canby, Commander of the Department of New Mexico, were engaged in an heroic effort to repel the invasion from Texas. But once the War ended for New Mexico, he became extremely unpopular. Perhaps the most annoying of his policies was that which concerned the Indians. No one could complain that it was ineffective, for it was simply to kill them or else put them on reservations. But Connelly was suspected of cooperating with Canby's successor, General James S. Carleton, in herding Indians onto the Bosque Redondo reservation mainly to clear the mountains so his friends in the eastern states could exploit New Mexican minerals. The whole reservation idea likewise provoked hostility because it took up some of the best grazing lands in the territory. Also, giving lands to Arizona Apaches seemed like open defiance of local interests. And Connelly and Carleton ironically received criticism

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[7]Tregeder: "Lincoln and the Territorial Patronage," p. 85; Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 93-104. In A Concise History of New Mexico, p. 264, Prince classified Connelly as a Republican. This appears to be an error, however.

from various New Mexicans for being too harsh with the Indians.[8]

Still another cause for Connelly's unpopularity was his close friendship with the Commander of the Military Department, whom nearly everyone opposed. The principle reason was that Carleton kept the territory under martial law until 1866--almost four years after the withdrawal of Texas-Confederate troops. He also invited criticism by selfishly using military contracts to dominate civil affairs, and for collaborating with a group of local leaders in Santa Fe known as the "Metropolitan Junta of New Mexico, Collins, Watts and Company." By the end of the War Carleton and this coterie apparently had intimidated or thoroughly alienated a substantial majority of the population.[9] By associations with this so-called "Copperhead Party," Connelly shared their reputation for "treason" to the Union and for disregarding individual freedom.

Thus Connelly and most of his close associates were disliked in New Mexico. The whole faction--including the Governor's appointees, Carleton and the Metropolitan Junta, some Democratic Anglo immigrants, and a few self-seeking patrones and their respective followings--gradually gained the reputation of being conspirators against the interests of both the New Mexican people and the American Union.

This stigma had a momentous effect upon partisan affairs. It did not disappear easily when Connelly died and his faction became the Democratic party. Accordingly, it accounted for much of the unpopularity of

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[8]Tregeder: "Lincoln and the Territorial Patronage," p. 85; Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 104-07.

[9]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 107-08; The New Mexican, June 30, 1865, p. 2, July 28, 1865, p. 2, August 25, 1865, p. 2 and August 24, 1867, p. 2.

the Democrats, and for the corresponding success of the Republican party during territorial times. Secondly--and more important to the present context--that stigma also facilitated the formation of a larger and more popular Civil War faction, one which would be taken over by the Republican conference in 1867.

The Governor's leading opponent, and presumably the champion of freedom and the Union, was territorial Secretary William F. M. Arny. He was Connelly's opposite in that he personified Radical Republicanism, and arrived in New Mexico in 1861 with a senatorial mandate to defend the northern cause. Lincoln had first nominated Delegate Miguel A. Otero I, doubtless for the same reasons he had nominated Connelly, but the United States Senate rejected him because he had been a pro-southern Democrat. The President then yielded to Radical pressure and submitted Arny's name, whereupon the Senate confirmed him immediately in return for Arny's having led the anti-slavery movement in Kansas throughout the previous decade.[10]

Thus, it is unsurprising that the new Secretary eventually became the leading opponent of the Governor and his Copperhead clique. At first Arny got along with Connelly and Carleton. He cooperated with the latter in the attempt to force Lincoln to fire Kirby Benedict from the territorial Supreme Court. He also worked with Connelly and Carleton on their plan to concentrate the Indians on the Bosque Redondo reserve. Moreover, he did not quarrel with their exploitation of territorial resources by eastern capitalists, since at the same time he was promoting the interests

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[10]Tregeder: "Lincoln and the Territorial Patronage," pp. 83-84.

of Leavenworth merchants and Topeka railroaders.[11]

But a Copperhead Democratic governor and a Radicah Republican secretary--both of whom wanted to dominate territorial politics--could not work harmoniously for long. Soon the inevitable rift occurred, and Arny rapidly built up a following by hurling accusations at Connelly and all of his friends. Not only did he discredit them in the territory, he even went to Washington to complain to William H. Seward.[12]

Accordingly, the two men divided the voters of New Mexico into two distinct camps by 1865 and by that time there was little question about the partisan proclivities of each. Arny's followers called themselves the Administration party in reference to their devotion to Lincoln, and like their leader, they were Republican in most respects. In the election of 1865 they received support from the Santa Fe New Mexican, which by 1870 would be recognized as the official Republican organ. They supported Colonel J. Francisco Chavez that year for Delegate to Congress, a patrón who would be a major power in the Republican party for approximately twenty years. Arny's faction campaigned on a typical Republican platform, attacking the opposition as the party of treason and oppression.

Meanwhile, in the election of 1865 Connelly's faction emerged with characteristics of the Democratic party, though at first it called itself the Union party in hopes of dispelling the stigma of Copperheadism. Its leader was a Democrat, and its congressional candidate, Francisco Perea, was a member of the family into which Connelly had married. Furthermore, this faction received support from the Santa Fe Weekly Gazette,

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[11] Ibid., pp. 83-85.

[12] Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, p. 109.

which at the time belonged to Democrat Charles P. Clever.[13]

By 1865 the stage was set for the establishment of organized, two-party politics. Though it would be approximately two years before they would be referred to as such, it is nevertheless appropriate to call Connelly's followers--the rank and file of the Union party--Democrats, and Arny's followers--those belonging to the Administration party--Republicans. Had Republican "father" William Breeden been in New Mexico at that time to claim leadership of the latter faction, he could have organized the party.

Yet, the lapse of two more years placed the Republicans in an even more advantageous position. Meanwhile the Democrats were still further discredited. Their leadership soon changed, for by 1867 both Carleton and Connelly had passed from the scene. The former was relieved of his command, while the latter died in the fall of 1866. But their Democratic following remained intact and was taken over by the next Governor, a man who easily qualified to replace them as an opponent for Arny to ridicule.

Robert B. Mitchell (1866-69) came to New Mexico with an unsavory reputation that even surpassed Carleton's. While serving as a General in the Union forces during the War he had threatened to shoot 350 of his own cavalrymen for cowardice in the face of the enemy. Furthermore, he bore many similarities to Connelly. An Ohio Democrat, he could be characterized by his opponents as a Copperhead, and he was fully as

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[13]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, p. 125; Santa Fe Weekly Gazette, January 14, 1865, p. 2, February 18, 1865, p. 2 and March 4, 1865; The New Mexican, June 22, 1865, p. 2, June 30, 1865, p. 2 and May 25, 1867, p. 2.

uncompromising as his predecessor.[14]

Army took full advantage of Mitchell's appointment, even though he served only a few months after the new Governor's inauguration. President Andrew Johnson accepted his resignation as Secretary and replaced him with General H. H. Heath.[15] But Heath's arrival in New Mexico was delayed, and by the time he got there Army had fomented a rebellion against Mitchell in the territorial legislature which left politics in a state of chaos.

Mitchell was partly responsible. Soon after taking office he left for the East to advertise New Mexico's resources, and to complain in Washington about Army's conduct. This gave the latter an opportunity to discredit him before the people of the territory could judge for themselves. Also, as the incumbent Secretary, Army became Acting Governor and proceeded to set up the new administration.

The consequence was a vigorous fight over patronage. With cooperation from a strong majority in the Council, Army filled territorial offices with his own friends during the Governor's absence. Thus it appeared that Army would control most territorial offices even though he was forced meanwhile to surrender his own office to Heath. Upon returning, Mitchell hastily declared all of these appointments invalid, however, and submitted a new list of nominees. Realizing that the Council was friendly to Army, and hoping to defend his own appointment as Attorney General, Charles P.

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[14]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 107, 110, 116-17; The Daily New Mexican, September 30, 1867, p. 1. In A Concise History of New Mexico, p. 264, Prince classified Mitchell as a Republican. This appears to be an error, however.

[15]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, p. 124; Daily New Mexican, October 12, 1880, p. 2.

Clever maintained that although Heath had not yet arrived at the time Arny made appointments, he nevertheless had been officially installed in office. The outgoing Secretary therefore had no legal right to serve as Acting Governor. With this complicated and rather dubious defense, all of Mitchell's nominees declared themselves the legal administrators of the territory and established a second framework of governmental machinery.[16] So in the spring of 1867 there were two administrations in New Mexico: one serving Mitchell, the other serving Arny and the legislature.

With territorial affairs at a standstill, a solution to the dilemma had to come from Washington. Inasmuch as Radical Republicans dominated Congress at the time, Clever's proposition was rejected and Arny's appointees remained in office. Moreover, in response to a memorial from the territorial legislature, Congress amended the original Organic Act, abolishing the absolute veto power of the Governor. In other words, Radicals in Washington handed the administration of the territory over to the Republicans, made it possible for the legislature to hold Mitchell in check, and further discredited the Democrats.[17]

Amid this confusion William Breeden and his friends officially founded the Republican party, a timely act indeed. By 1867 the faction to which he fell heir was stronger than at any time in its previous history. It had grown steadily over the preceding four or five years from discredit brought to the Democrats by Connelly and the so-called "Copperhead party."

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[16]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 118-19.

[17]Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 119-20, 124, 130; The Daily New Mexican, September 30, 1876, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, October 18, 1880, p. 1.

Because of the War the latter had become, as the Democratic party in the rest of the country, an impotent opposition. And what little advantage they possessed for having a member of the same party in the Government House they lost when Congress declared Arny's nominees the winners of New Mexican administration. What further advantage could Breeden and his friends have had?

After it was organized, the Republican party benefitted from still other advantages. For one thing, though the territorial legislature did not divide sharply along partisan lines until 1878, the Republicans usually managed to elect a sufficient number of candidates to control it. Thus they not only dominated legislation, but also patronage. The New Mexican was important, for its editors took full advantage of the only meaningful campaign issue that existed for a generation by waving the "bloody shirt." They effectively portrayed the Republicans as the only true defenders of individual freedom in a society oppressed by peonage.[18]

Nor should the quality of Republican leadership be overlooked. Though more controversial than Breeden, William Arny contributed to holding the party together during the 1870's. Thomas Catron, a rising figure in the party who was to become its leader before the end of the century, likewise took an interest in its development. Not only did he contribute his genius for organization, he also brought prestige to Republican administration prior to 1875 while holding the offices of District Attorney, Attorney General and United States Attorney. Stephen Elkins, though he apparently was never active as a Republican official, strengthened the

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[18] Daily New Mexican, August 1, 1880, p. 4; Weekly New Mexican, October 18, 1880, p. 2.

party's image as liberator of the downtrodden by waging a vigorous campaign against peonage while holding the office of Attorney General.[19]

Even more important, the Republicans had the best congressional candidate from the time they began to cooperate as an unorganized faction. With practically no local organization and no partisan division on county and legislative tickets, contests for lower offices were confused and patronage was still the province of individual leaders. Consequently, for almost a decade after the Civil War success hinged mainly upon the ability of either party to win the race for Delegate to Congress. This could not be achieved through normal campaign efforts, of course, for the patrón system stood between the party and the voters. To elect a nominee for Delegate it was necessary to keep the most powerful combination of capricious "native" leaders working together. Success in doing so usually came to the party which placed the most powerful patrón at the head of its ticket. Fortunately for the Republicans, they fell heir to the leading patrón of New Mexico, because Arny and his friends had lured Colonel J. Francisco Chavez into their Civil War clique, and he eventually proved to be the best "native" vote-getter of the 1860's and 1870's.

Chavez first displayed this attribute in the election of 1865 by winning eight of ten counties from Francisco Perea.[20] In 1867 he did not appear so strong, but he ran under peculiar circumstances. The

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[19]The Daily New Mexican, May 6, 1873, p. 1 and September 14, 1876, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, October 4, 1870, p. 1; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 520; Oscar Doane Lambert: Stephen Benton Elkins (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh; 1955) pp. 27, 36, 39, 51-52; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

[20]Santa Fe Weekly Gazette, September 9, 1865, p. 2; The New Mexican, September 29, 1865, p. 2.

Mitchell-Arny feud had not yet reached a conclusion, so no one knew which faction would win control of patronage. Moreover, it was one of the more corrupt elections in New Mexican history. Consequently the Democratic nominee, Charles Clever, won a majority in the official count and rushed off to Washington. Chavez was unconvinced, and took his case to Congress, whereupon the Radical Republicans of the House of Representatives found evidence of corruption and forced Clever to relinquish the seat. Perhaps there should have been little gloating by Chavez' supporters, for both sides had corrupted the polls and Congress saw only the infractions committed by Democrats.[21]

But the Republicans could claim in 1869 that their candidate had won the previous two elections. And in that race Chavez proved fully as influential as they had expected. His power as a patrón enabled him to capture Bernalillo, Socorro, Dona Ana and Valencia counties, and he won nearly two-thirds of the total vote cast in the entire territory.[22]

With the patrón system thus working in their favor and the impetus of initial victory pressing them on, the Republicans worked enthusiastically during 1870. Statehood seemed a good possibility that year, and as Republicans controlled Congress, party leaders in the territory gained

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[21] The New Mexican, April 27, 1867, p. 2, May 18, 1867, p. 2, May 25, 1867, p. 2, June 1, 1867, p. 2, June 22, 1867, p. 2, October 5, 1867, p. 2, March 16, 1869, p. 2; The Daily New Mexican, March 10, 1869, p. 1; Santa Fe Weekly Gazette, March 23, 1867, p. 2, November 2, 1867, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4; Charles P. Clever: Address to the People of New Mexico (Santa Fe: Weekly Gazette; 1867), passim.

[22] The New Mexican, March 16, 1869, p. 2, August 10, 1869, p. 2, August 17, 1869, p. 2, August 31, 1869, p. 2., September 28, 1869, p. 2, September 26, 1871, p. 1; Santa Fe Weekly Gazette, September 11, 1869, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

support with the argument that their followers, and not the Democrats, would benefit most from the establishment of the new government. Also, the New Mexican, now the official party organ, began its vigorous war on personal politics.[23]

Despite their initial success and enthusiasm, the Republicans practically destroyed their own party before it became firmly entrenched. As previously stated, the mere creation of a Central Committee and the display of a party roster were not tantamount to permanency. For personalismo was still the deciding political factor.

The near disintegration of the party began with the loss of the election of 1871. Had they been united, the Republicans might easily have won the congressional race, for the Democrats could find no better candidate than the discredited old Jose Manuel (Padre) Gallegos. However, some of the Republican leaders of northern New Mexico decided to challenge Colonel Chavez for his congressional seat by presenting Jose D. Sena to oppose him at the nominating convention. Chavez defeated Sena and ran for reelection, but the latter walked out and ran as an Independent Republican, causing a general defection in San Miguel, Mora, Santa Fe and Rio Arriba counties. As a result, Sena won approximately 2,500 votes, just enough to defeat Chavez and send Gallegos to Washington.[24]

This election alone was devastating to the party because it

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[23] Weekly New Mexican, February 22, 1870, p. 2, March 8, 1870, p. 1 and July 12, 1870, p. 2.

[24] The Daily New Mexican, March 12, 1873, p. 1, May 1, 1871, p. 2, July 24, 1871, p. 1, September 11, 1871, p. 1 and September 19, 1871, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, May 23, 1871, p. 2, September 5, 1871, p. 1, September 26, 1871, p. 1 and September 14, 1878, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

temporarily alienated the majority of the Republicans of four counties. The worst was yet to come, however, About two months later a feud developed in the legislature which left the party on the verge of disintegration.

It began with the introduction of a bill into the territorial legislature in December, 1871, to reassign Chief Justice Joseph Palen from the first judicial district at Santa Fe to the third district at Mesilla. The authors were legislators representing a group of monied barons in Santa Fe who felt Palen's past decisions inimical to their interests. Fearing the formation of an opposition, they forced it through both houses so rapidly that it was never printed, referred to committees, or even submitted for deliberation.

Republican Governor Marsh Giddings (1871-75) stopped them with a veto, and the legislature sustained his action, whereupon a series of incidents transpired which approached the absurd. Through a group of pliable Republican legislators the Santa Fe barons conspired successfully to remove enough Republican members to give the Democrats a majority in both houses. In this way they hoped to create a legislature which would reenact the original bill to transfer Palen and override the Governor's veto. In retaliation, Giddings plotted with the Republican Speaker of the House to have four Taos Republican legislators restored. To prevent this, the Democrats called the House to order and appointed a new Speaker. Giddings then broke up their plan by ordering in federal troops, and the legislature ceased to function.

A solution came only when the Democrats in the Council agreed to recognize a Republican House if Giddings' friend, the Republican Speaker,

would resign. The rebellious members of the House attempted to block such a compromise by plotting to remove Giddings. But the scheme failed, the legislature resumed operations, and the Governor remained in office.

This fiasco brought total confusion to Republican ranks. Added to the alienation of so-called Independent Republicans during the previous election, at least two more breaches appeared. One was between Republicans of Taos County whose representatives were temporarily unseated and those in the legislature who plotted to unseat them. The second was between the same scheming Republicans in the legislature on the one hand, and Palen, Giddings and their friends on the other.[25]

The only hope of saving the party under the circumstances was to find someone to reunite it who was both popular and unassociated with events leading up to its near disintegration. At least this was the apparent strategy guiding Republican preparations for the forthcoming congressional election in 1873, and they found such a man in Stephen Elkins. His previous war on peonage had endeared him to the "poor people" of the territory, while he had not become involved in any of the intra-party feuds of 1871-72.

The Democrats made the task of Republican reunification easier, too, by renominating Gallegos, for his previous conduct was one thing about which all Republicans could agree. In an unseemly campaign they cooperated in completely disgracing the old Padre, harping particularly upon his excommunication from the Catholic Church, and while doing so they drew the party back together. Elkins won by more than 3,800 votes. Nearly all

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[25] The Daily New Mexican, January 16, 1872, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, October 4, 1870, p. 1; Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 153-67.

candidates claiming Republican affiliation won their county and legislative contests.[26] And the quarrelsome factions of two years before were again a victorious Republican organization--at least outwardly unified.

The election of 1875 only reaffirmed the results of 1873. Elkins won another decisive victory, even though he did not bother to return from Europe for the race. It is difficult to ascertain the size of his majority due to the rejection of a bloc of disputed ballots from Valencia County. Nevertheless, Elkins seems to have got at least 1,500 more votes than his Democratic opponent, Pedro Valdez. Also, the Republicans elected two-thirds of their candidates to the legislature, as well as three-fourths of all of their local candidates.[27]

1875 was at the same time a disappointing year for the Republicans. First of all, Elkins missed an excellent opportunity to achieve statehood for New Mexico when his party was strong enough to have dominated a constitutional convention. A bill providing for statehood preparations did pass both houses in Congress, but Elkins indiscreetly revealed his Radical Republican proclivities, alienating several southern Congressmen. Thus, when the measure went back to the House for consideration of the Senate's amendments it failed, and Republicans hopes for establishing a new state government were thwarted.

The party also experienced a substantial loss with the death of

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[26] Weekly New Mexican, July 29, 1873, p. 1, August 19, 1873, p. 1 and September 23, 1873, pp. 1-2; The Daily New Mexican, August 4, 1873, p. 1, August 16, 1873, p. 2, September 4, 1873, p. 1, September 15, 1873, p. 1 and September 19, 1873, p. 1; Lambert: Stephen Benton Elkins, p. 39.

[27] Weekly New Mexican, June 8, 1875, p. 1 and October 5, 1875, p. 1; Mesilla News, September 18, 1875, p. 2; The Mesilla News, October 9, 1875, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4.

Governor Giddings in June, 1875. He was the only Republican Governor before Miguel A. Otero II who had a salutary effect upon it, and his absence was especially felt because his successor contributed practically nothing. Indeed, Samuel B. Axtell (1875-78) proved every bit as unpopular as Connelly and Mitchell. Part of his disfavor resulted from having been a Democrat and from having befriended the Mormons while serving as Governor of Utah. Moreover, he had the misfortune of arriving at about the time of the outbreak of the Lincoln County War, and his administration turned into an epoch of fraud, corruption and political discord.[28]

These setbacks notwithstanding, the party came into its own by 1875. Never again would its very existence be threatened. Thereafter the major problem confronting Republican leaders was not the party's survival, but who would lead it now that it had become entrenched. This was the main theme in the next chapter of territorial Republican affairs. During the succeeding two decades numerous factional leaders emerged, each of whom envisaged himself as master of all the rest. To determine who would prevail they fought through a series of engagements until a victor emerged, capable of drawing the party together under one authority. That victor was Thomas Benton Catron, and the authority which enforced his leadership was his Santa Fe Ring.

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[28]The Daily New Mexican, June 4, 1875, p. 1; Horn: New Mexico's Troubled Years, pp. 173-74.

CHAPTER IV

THE SANTA FE RING AND THOMAS CATRON, 1873-96

> [In 1873] the Democratic Convention made denunciation of and charges against "the ring" as a plank in their platform, and a large portion of the address of the Democratic Central Committee was devoted to the same object. During that campaign . . . all manner of charges were made against that mysterious organization.[1]

Like the word patrón, the term Santa Fe Ring has been used in many ways. One contemporary thought it a combination of most late nineteenth-century New Mexican Republican leaders.[2] Another viewed it as an insidious "ring of fear."[3] Still another claimed it did not exist at all,[4] and recently W. H. Hutchinson described it as a machine which, "under the overlordship of Thomas Benton Catron," seized control of the whole territorial Republican party.[5]

Ironically, each of these would have described the Ring accurately at one time or another during the period presently considered, and it has been described appropriately in a dozen other ways or more. But the

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[1] Weekly New Mexican, September 14, 1878, p. 1.

[2] Unidentified note, Catron Papers, University of New Mexico Library, box labelled Political Campaigns--New Mexico--1878-1906.

[3] Weekly New Mexican, October 25, 1880, p. 1.

[4] Santa Fe New Mexican Review, October 7, 1884, p. 4.

[5] A Bar-Cross Man: The Life and Personal Writings of Eugene Manlove Rhodes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press; 1956), p. 30.

definition which best sums up its nature and significance is Hutchinson's. The Santa Fe Ring was the political machine through which Catron created local party organizations in north-central New Mexico, seized others after defeating rival leaders, and ultimately transformed the whole party into one loosely organized but undivided association.

Confusion on the term's definition results mainly from its having originated as a campaign issue in 1873, coined to describe an organization which did not yet exist. That year Democratic chieftains were hard pressed for campaign issues. They had to avoid reference to the past because it nurtured recollections of their Copperhead predecessors. Nor could they boast of success at the polls because their only notable victory had been in the previous congressional race, and even that resulted from Republican defections. Likewise, their current situation afforded no favorable campaign material. They now faced an election with ineffective leadership, a party whose machinery was undeveloped beyond the Central Committee, and a congressional nominee with an embarrassing record. In other words, the Democrats could say practically nothing in the way of recommending their own organization.

Conversely, it will be recalled that in 1873 they faced a Republican party with sound leadership, a platform of lofty principles and an excellent candidate in Stephen Elkins. And the Republicans made the most of their advantages. Having restored peace within the ranks, they focused their attention upon Democratic nominee Padre Gallegos, and waged a highly effective "smear campaign" against him.

Under these circumstances, about all the Democrats could do was answer in kind. Even this was not easy because there was no individual

Republican vulnerable to ridicule and so important to his party as Gallegos. Elkins, the obvious target, had an unimpeachable record and a substantial personal following. Republican Chairman William Breeden's record also was clean. So Democratic leaders apparently chose the next best avenue of attack. Several important Republicans resided in Santa Fe. As a group they did not compare to Gallegos for having violated social norms, but at least they lacked the individual popularity possessed by Elkins and Breeden. Why not simply create a scandal about them?

Under the slogan of "Down with the Ring" Democratic leaders made incredible allegations against these Santa Fe Republicans, accusing them not only of instigating foul play in politics, but likewise of fostering all other misfortunes that befall society. According to Republican New Mexican editors, so-called Ring leaders were charged by the Democrats with drafting careless bills for the legislature and causing a decline in wool prices. They presumably introduced disease into cattle herds and brought about crop failures. The Santa Fe Ring, as portrayed at that time by Democratic propagandists, was a kind of diabolical creature that engulfed and destroyed everything and everyone that passed its way.[6]

Having thus set up their target, Democratic party officials and newspaper editors continued attacking it in subsequent campaigns. Since at first there was no such Republican combination, they could not single out its leaders and bring specific charges against them. This made the Ring all the more effective as a campaign issue, however, because Republicans had little defense other than denials of its existence. Breeden,

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[6] Weekly New Mexican, September 14, 1878, p. 1 and October 11, 1880, p. 1.

for example, claimed to be unaware of its operation, offering to destroy it if the Democrats would identify its leaders. New Mexican editors awkwardly brushed it aside as a ridiculous fabrication.[7]

Nevertheless, the idea continued to grow. Once the seeds of doubt had been planted, no amount of denial could whisk away suspicions that something was afoot in Santa Fe. So after a time the Republicans were forced to change their tactics. Knowing that they could not erase the stigma of the "ethereal Ring," they also begin realizing that criticism inadvertently had brought much favorable publicity. For as the Ring had been accused of perpetrating every crime committed in the territory, so had it been characterized as a machine of overshadowing potency which could be credited with fostering all the good fortune that came to New Mexicans. Consequently, Republican editors joined their Democratic adversaries in writing about it as though it really existed.[8]

By the early 1880's most New Mexicans believed the Santa Fe Ring to be an awesome force operating in the Republican party. Although there was little truth to the charges and claims that convinced them, that preconception became highly significant. Because Republican leaders in Santa Fe meanwhile had developed a real partisan combination which fell heir to the label and profited from all the publicity.[9] It would be more than a decade before this combination would become the prevailing

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[7]The Daily New Mexican, October 23, 1876, p. 1 and October 7, 1880, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican, November 7, 1876, p. 1, November 14, 1876, p. 1 and October 11, 1880, p. 1.

[8]Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, January 22, 1885, p. 1; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, October 7, 1884, p. 4 and April 27, 1885, p. 2.

[9]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 84.

and unifying force in the party. Occasionally it appeared to be more powerful than it was because Republicans from rival factions cooperated with it from time to time.[10] But the Santa Fe Ring as it actually emerged and gave substance to the term was only one segment of the party, operating chiefly in the north-central counties.

Exactly what specific year it came into existence is not clear. However, the premise that "Catron was the 'Ring' and the 'Ring' was Catron"[11] would make it reasonable to conclude that it dated roughly from between 1875 and 1880. That an effective Ring did not develop for several years after the Democrats coined the term seems certain, for during approximately a decade after his arrival in 1866 Catron put most of his energy into building his legal practice and personal fortune. He was well-known across the territory for his service as Attorney General in the late 1860's and for his participation in the first Republican central organization. But he did not play a large role in the turbulent politics of the early 1870's. Nor did he become a leader of singular importance outside of Santa Fe County until the latter part of the decade.[12]

As for its membership, the Ring included as many minor politicians

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[10] An unidentified author wrote in 1884 that up to that time Thomas Catron, Stephen Elkins, Governor Lionel A. Sheldon, Governor Axtell, William Breeden, Mariano S. Otero, Colonel William L. Rynerson and several other leading Republicans had been members of the Santa Fe Ring. Catron Papers, box labelled Political Campaigns--New Mexico--1878-1906. In the following pages it will be seen that several of these men fought each other as bitterly as they fought the Democrats, however, and seldom cooperated sufficiently to form a stable partisan combination.

[11] The Mesilla News, November 16, 1878, p. 2.

[12] Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, July 30, 1882, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, August 14, 1884, p. 3; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 520.

as Catron could control at a given time. Some were favorites who took over precinct and county organizations as they were created in the early 1880's. Some were Justices of the Peace and County Clerks. Others represented various counties in the territorial legislature, and occasionally Ring henchmen acquired positions in a governor's cabinet or the territorial Supreme Court.

Catron ruled all of these officials with a heavy hand, using numerous means of holding them under his sway. Through Ring members occupying offices of Justice of the Peace he applied economic pressure. In their hands rested the power to acknowledge deeds and mortgages, and thereby to govern property adjudication. Catron always controlled a certain amount of patronage with his influence in the legislature and through numerous cohorts holding local offices.[13] He intimidated his henchmen with threats of personal ruin.[14]

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[13] Daily New Mexican, October 7, 1880, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican, September 7, 1878, p. 2 and October 25, 1880, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, August 14, 1884, p. 3; Weekly New Mexican Review, November 15, 1888, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, April 27, 1885, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican, September 22, 1902, p. 2 and November 4, 1903, p. 2; The Chieftain (Socorro), October 26, 1894, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 4, 84, 229. An exemplary Ring policeman was historian L. Bradford Prince who, while serving as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1879-82), controlled the distribution of local offices in San Miguel County where he presided.

[14] An example is seen in a letter from Thomas Catron to Pedro Sanches of Taos: "I have asked you to put up $150.00 in money. . . . I expect you to spend amongst your individual friends something besides the $150.00, as you should do. It is your duty to see that the Republican party succeeds in Taos County. . . . You say you will not be responsible for the result. . . . I hope for your own sake, and your own reputation, you will see that the county is won by the Republicans. . . . What I, and the Republican party aske of you is, that you do everything for the ticket, and that you spend not only money, but also carneros where you can make them of use. I only have the interest of the party at heart, while with you, your reputation, as well as the party, is at stake." Catron Papers, October 27, 1888, Personal Correspondence, II, p. 33.

In these and other ways he shaped the Ring and expanded its operations, gradually constructing a machine whibh could live up to its name. Indeed, by the early 1890's it became most of the things it originally was credited with being. To numerous superstitious New Mexicans it became a kind of omnipresent force to be obeyed and never challenged. To Ring members it was a sure means of acquiring a fortune and political recognition. To Democrats it became a formidable foe, and to its own party's faithful it became the predominant force.

Building such an organization did not come easily, of course. Numerous patrones and Anglo rivals were as determined to control the party as Catron. Had he possessed a capacity to appease comparable to his ability to intimidate, he could have risen to power more rapidly than he did. Of all the rival factions in the party, his was the best organized and the most thoroughly disciplined. But the same personal characteristics that made him master of the Ring also made him anathema to other important leaders. Always jealous of anyone whose power approached his own, he fought with each Republican governor from Lew Wallace (1878-81) to Miguel A. Otero II (1897-1906). He antagonized Republicans serving with him in the legislature with his arrogant insistence upon dominating legislation and patronage.[15] He was constantly at odds with other party chieftains for allegedly bullying, lying, and cheating and stealing from them whenever it served his own purposes.[16]

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[15] Weekly New Mexican Review, October 25, 1894, p. 2 and November 29, 1894, p. 2.

[16] Examples of charges brought against Catron by Republican and Democratic adversaries are found in the Weekly New Mexican Review, June 28, 1894, p. 1, October 18, 1894, p. 1, October 25, 1894, p. 2 and

As a result, several rings existed in the party until 1892. Except during President Cleveland's first administration there was always a rival Republican Governor's Ring, made up of federal appointees and their friends.[17] There also were several powerful regional factions whose leaders dared to defy Catron's pretensions. Most notably, there were rings headed by Colonel J. Francisco Chavez in western New Mexico, by William Rynerson in the southern part of the territory, and by Joseph Workman Dwyer in the northeastern counties.[18] Only after Catron had defeated the leaders of all these other rings and reduced their influence by drawing some of their followers into his own machine, was he able to expand operations outside of north-central New Mexico on a scale sufficient to claim leadership over the whole Republican organization. As

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November 29, 1894, p. 2; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, October 25, 1882, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican, September 22, 1902, p. 2, September 29, 1902, p. 2 and November 5, 1904, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, pp. 142-43, 238; Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood 1895-1912," New Mexico Historical Review, XIV (January, 1939), pp. 19-23.

[17]Weekly New Mexican, May 10, 1880, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, August 27, 1884, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 242.

[18]The reader is already familiar with Colonel J. Francisco Chavez, leading patrón from Valencia County. William Rynerson of Las Cruces, an important cattleman and friend of Catron since the 1860's, was the man who emerged to represent the southern counties in territorial affairs during the early 1880's. Both he and Joseph Dwyer gained popularity for their efforts in organizing cattle growers during the early 1880's. The latter came to Colfax County from Ohio in 1874, engaged in raising cattle, sheep and horses, and was instrumental in expanding Republican operations in the northeastern counties as stock-growers moved in during the late 1870's and early 1880's. He apparently never controlled a large, effective partisan machine, as did Catron, Chavez and Rynerson, for the population in his region was sparse during the nineteenth century. But until the appearance of Miguel A. Otero II in the inner circle during the 1890's, Dwyer was considered the leading Republican northeast of Santa Fe. Santa Fe New Mexican Review, March 4, 1884, p. 2 and March 7, 1884, p. 2; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, August 3, 1886, p. 2 and September 6, 1886, p. 1.

long as these others competed in high party councils, they could combine to prevent him from having his way. Whenever they fought the Ring, the party's politics became a series of conflicts which kept it in a state of upheaval and Democrats in public office.

Numerous minor struggles went on during the period, but it was largely through two major ones that Catron rose to power. The first spanned at least four years, culminating in 1884 in a bitter fight between Catron and the Santa Fe Ring on the one hand and Colonel Chavez and William Rynerson on the other. Since it occurred when the Ring was still new and confined to a small region, Catron did not have the power to seize control of the whole Republican organization when it ended. But it was nevertheless an important milepost in his rise to power, for it eliminated one of the leading contestants for party control--J. Francisco Chavez.

Faint signs of trouble portending danger for the advantageous position Colonel Chavez had held in the party first appeared in the decline of Republican majorities during the late 1870's. While in 1876 Republican congressional nominee Trinidad Romero defeated Pedro Valdez by 2,000 votes, Republican Mariano S. Otero won over Benito Baca by only 600 two years later. Otero and Baca were cousins by marriage, so many voted in the latter election according to which member of the same family of patrones they preferred. Yet, some contemporaries saw in this close race a hint of tension and a threat of rebellion within the ranks.[19]

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[19]The Daily New Mexican, December 5, 1876, p. 1; Weekly New Mexican, September 12, 1876, p. 1, November 16, 1878, p. 2 and December 7, 1878, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, p. 60. According to returns Romero's majority was 2,000 in 1876. Some observers thought it more like 600, however, because of corruption in Valencia County. But

In 1880 the signs became more clear. That year, though the Republicans ran Tranquilino Luna, a powerful patrón and friend of Chavez from Valencia County, they defeated Democratic veteran Miguel A. Otero I only by corrupting the ballot box wholesale. According to Miguel A. Otero II, son of Miguel A. Otero I, Chavez created a whole new Republican precinct out of a small sheep camp in Valencia County, from which he produced nearly 1,000 votes for Luna. He also banished Democrats from the polls in parts of western New Mexico and allegedly delivered another thousand votes from six railroad workers, whom he paid to vote all day. Corruption had appeared in Valencia County during nearly every election, so its mere existence was not remarkable. But the degree to which it occurred in 1880 indicated the necessity to compensate for a breakdown in party discipline. Republican editors expressed concern that something was going wrong.[20]

The trouble, it seems, was that Thomas Catron had built up his machine sufficiently to begin challenging existing leadership. Heretofore the Ring had been in the formative stage, dwarfed beside Chavez' tradition-based empire west of Albuquerque. But now Catron felt strong enough to withhold sufficient Republican support in north-central New Mexico from Chavez' favorites to reveal inadequacy in the old Colonel's leadership and to display the growing influence of the Santa Fe Ring.

Catron's plan allowed no consideration for the current success

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even assuming the latter was correct, if Chavez corrupted the polls in 1876, he doubtless did so in 1878 too. Thus, in either case, Republican majorities were on the decline.

[20]Weekly New Mexican, May 24, 1880, p. 1 and November 22, 1880, p. 3; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, pp. 270-72.

of the party as a whole. If it worked the Democrats would obviously win the office of Delegate. But that this was nevertheless the course he was taking became obvious when Tranquilino Luna sought reelection in 1882. First, Ring henchman L. Bradford Prince[21] led a rebellion at the nominating convention that year. Then during the campaign defections occurred in Colfax, Taos, Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Socorro and Bernalillo Counties--all around Santa Fe. When the returns came in, every county in north-central New Mexico except Santa Fe gave a majority to Democratic nominee Francisco A. Manzanares and in Santa Fe County Luna won by only a few votes.

Being fully cognizant of the situation on the upper Rio Grande prior to the election of 1882, Colonel Chavez had strengthened his efforts to compensate. He again bought and created votes until he had enough to assure Luna's election. But this time so many votes were needed that his best efforts were of no avail. Valencia County reported a Republican majority of more than 4,000, though there were less than 2,000 eligible voters. Also, in Bernalillo County the Republican majority far exceeded the sum of eligible voters. Evidence of corruption was so irrefutable that when Manzanares contested the election in 1883, Congress had to give

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[21]L. Bradford Prince was one of the most important figures in New Mexican territorial history. His political career began in New York, where he associated with Roscoe Conkling. He was offered the governorship of the Territory of Idaho by President Rutherford B. Hayes but declined and instead accepted appointment as Chief Justice for New Mexico in 1879. After serving on the bench for three years he became a prominent lawyer, President of the Historical Society of New Mexico (an office he held from 1883 to 1923), Governor of the territory in 1889, a leader in the Republican party and was known for his compilations of New Mexican law, as well as numerous historical publications. Mary Elizabeth Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron 1896-1921" (Master's Thesis, University of New Mexico; 1951), p. 8; Anonymous: "Hon. L. Bradford Prince," El Palacio, XV (October 1, 1923), p. 113.

him the seat.

Thus in 1882 Catron's strategy fully materialized and forced Colonel Chavez into the open for all to see him as he really was. Previously, as long as he delivered majorities without disgracing the whole organization, most Republicans closed their eyes and let him have his way in order to win. Now, as Catron apparently had hoped, leaders over the territory turned against the old Colonel to save face. The Central Committee, the Republican majority in the legislature, and the editors of the New Mexican all issued public statements apparently designed to read him out of the party.[22]

Had there been a nominating convention at that point wherein Catron and Chavez could have matched strength, it appears Catron could have won easily and congratulated himself on forcing the demise of a principal adversary without breaking up the party. Unfortunately, convention time was more than a year away, and consequently the party would suffer a serious upheaval. For Chavez meanwhile had time to recoup his forces for a final stand in defense of his position in party inner circles. Furthermore, Catron made errors which aided in Chavez' recovery.

Among other things, he quarreled with Chavez over numerous issues of general concern in the interim and unquestionably forced many Republicans back into the Colonel's camp. For example, the two men led opposing groups in a battle between rival Republican claimants for seats in the territorial

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[22] Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, October 25, 1882, p. 2, October 27, 1882, p. 2, November 1, 1882, p. 2, November 22, 1882, p. 2, November 29, 1882, p. 2 and December 2, 1882, p. 3; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, March 6, 1884, p. 2 and March 27, 1884, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, July 31, 1884, p. 4; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 422; Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, p. 273 and My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 232-33.

legislature. They became principal leaders in a struggle over whether to build a new capitol in Santa Fe or Albuquerque. And they backed different party favorites when leaders assembled in May, 1884, to select a delegation for the Republican National Convention.[23]

Also, Catron's indecision on whom to support as congressional nominee in 1884 provided Chavez a strong ally. Early in the year, when the renomination of Democratic Delegate Manzanares seemed certain, Catron had solicited the candidacy of wealthy patrón and former Delegate Mariano S. Otero to get financial backing for local Ring candidates. Running Otero on the Republican ticket meant sacrificing the congressional race to the Democrats, since Manzanares was by far the more popular of the two. But Catron was willing to make the sacrifice to get Otero's money because Manzanares had shown no inclination to fight the Santa Fe Ring during his first term. He did not attempt to undermine the Ring's control in the legislature, nor did he oppose Catron's crusade to keep the capitol in Santa Fe.

Prior to convention time Manzanares declined to run and it appeared that Antonio Joseph, an open opponent of the Ring, would receive the Democratic nomination. As a consequence, Catron had to change course and find a Republican candidate who could win. For a time he considered supporting William Rynerson of Las Cruces. This would have been ideal, for it would have combined two strong regional factions. But for some unknown reason--perhaps that Rynerson was from the wrong part of New Mexico--Catron changed

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[23]Santa Fe New Mexican Review, March 6, 1884, p. 2, May 19, 1884, p. 2, August 28, 1884, p. 2 and August 29, 1884, p. 2; Santa Fe Weekly New Mexican and Live Stock Journal, April 29, 1886, p. 4; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 235-40.

his mind again and leaned toward Ring supporter L. Bradford Prince.[24]

This indecision was important. For what it did was first inspire Rynerson to seek the nomination and lead him to believe he would get it. But then, after building up his hopes, it left him embittered, with no support outside his own faction. His embitterment in turn accounted for what happened at the next nominating convention. Rynerson, hitherto having befriended the Ring, suddenly changed sides when he found Catronites and Chavezites fighting each other at the opening session. With little hesitation he agreed to head an Independent Republican ticket composed of Chavezites, walked out of the convention hall, and took with him delegations from Colfax, Bernalillo, Valencia and all of the southern counties.

Thus, much because of Catron's own blunders, his struggle with Chavez grew into a Republican upheaval. When Chavez and Rynerson bolted they broke the party roughly along the same geographic line that divided it back in 1871. Like thirteen years earlier, there once again were two Republican nominees. Prince, representing northern counties, ran with the support of the Regular Republican Central Committee, the Santa Fe Ring and the New Mexican. Rynerson, from the South, headed the Independent ticket backed by the Albuquerque Journal and Chavez, now Chairman of a rival central committee.[25]

Certainly neither side hoped to win the election, for under the

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[24]Note by J. Sloan, 1884, Catron Papers, box labelled Political Campaigns--New Mexico--1878-1906 and Catron to Elkins, January 13, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 431.

[25]Santa Fe New Mexican Review, April 19, 1884, p. 2, August 13, 1884, p. 2, August 27, 1884, p. 2, September 1, 1884, p. 2, September 2, 1884, p. 4, September 8, 1884, p. 2 and September 19, 1884, p. 2; The Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, August 28, 1884, p. 2 and September 4, 1884, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 242.

circumstances the results were a foregone conclusion. The two Republican candidates divided some 15,000 votes between them, allowing Antonio Joseph to win a plurality.[26] What mattered, however, was who would be blamed for the defeat. On this point Catron was clearly the victor.

It was Colonel Chavez whom party leaders chose to discard from inner circles, because he had disgraced them in 1882 and perpetrated the defactions that divided the party in 1884. Chavez would continue to participate in Republican affairs for approximately two decades, but never again would he figure as a major contestant for predominence over the party as a whole. Thus Catron's first major bid for power ended in triumph, forced Chavez out of contention, and left only himself and Rynerson as important competitors.

Had the party not been in a state of chaos, perhaps he and Rynerson would have continued the fight at the next opportunity, for they had become bitter enemies. Obviously in 1885 neither could gain from such an engagement, however, because there were two Republican parties, each led by its own Central Committee. Until some compromise could be found through which all Republicans could reunify, there would be no victory.

More than a year passed before such a compromise was affected. Neither Catron nor Rynerson suggested a solution because the key issue was which of two central committees would prevail, and for either to have yielded would have meant retreat.[27] But finally William Breeden offered to relinquish his chairmanship in 1886 to make way for a new, rising

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[26] The Weekly New Mexican Review and Live Stock Journal, November 27, 1884, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 496-500.

[27] Santa Fe New Mexican Review, December 5, 1884, p. 2.

figure whom he hoped everyone could accept. Joseph Workman Dwyer, leading Republican in the northeastern counties, was untarnished by previous factional disputes. Having arrived in New Mexico as recently as 1874, he had spent most of his time attending to personal and local public affairs. His only important involvement outside his own region was to organize the first Stock Growers Association of New Mexico during the early 1880's, and in that endeavor he won respect. Catron did not like him personally. But since no one could benefit from the current situation, Dwyer was accepted as Central Committee Chairman and congressional nominee for 1886.[28] Accordingly the two parties again became united.

Now that a reorganized Republican party existed to fight over, no one showed any inclination to renew old quarrels. For new problems arose forcing Republican leaders into a truce which would endure for approximately five years. One was the loss of support during the upheaval of the early 1880's, which forced them to cease fighting each other in order to merely hold their own at the polls against the Democrats. Even by working together in the elections of 1886, 1888 and 1890, they were unable to do more than maintain control of both the legislature and a majority of local offices. In the same elections they failed to unseat Delegate Antonio Joseph.[29]

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[28] Santa Fe New Mexican Review, February 19, 1884, p. 2 and March 4, 1884, p. 2; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, June 3, 1886, p. 2, August 3, 1886, p. 2 and September 6, 1886, p. 1; Marion Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood, 1895-1912," New Mexico Historical Review, XIV (April, 1939), pp. 131-34; Catron to Elkins, February 9, 1889, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, I, p. 30.

[29] Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, March 22, 1886, p. 2, September 13, 1886, p. 1 and December 4, 1886, p. 2; Weekly New Mexican Review, May 31, 1888, p. 2, August 30, 1888, p. 1, September 13, 1888, p. 2, December 13,

A second and more compelling cause for the truce was Grover Cleveland's selection of a territorial governor in 1885. Republicans doubtless found getting along with each other relatively easy in comparison to putting up with Edmund G. Ross. As Governor he displayed the same uncompromising nature that he revealed in the impeachment proceedings against President Andrew Johnson, but in the former instance it was no attribute. Within a short time of his inauguration he antagonized all leading Republicans. He was so unbending, in fact, that even the main leaders of his own party joined the Republicans to oppose him. Delegate Joseph, Harvey B. Fergusson and Democratic Central Committee Chairman Charles H. Gildersleeve all fought him at various times during his administration.

To stop Ross from seizing control of legislation and patronage, Republican leaders cooperated to an almost unbelievable extent in the legislature, appointing Colonel Chavez as majority leader in the Council, Albert J. Fountain of Las Cruces as head of the House, and Catron, it appears, as a kind of behind-the scenes supervisor. Forming this combination must have been extremely difficult because it involved bringing representatives from each major faction together into common cause. Yet once it was formed its members thought of nothing other than checking Governor Ross at every turn. He vetoed more than 150 bills, but they passed most of these over his veto. He submitted list after list of

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1888, p. 1 and October 25, 1894, p. 2; Santa Fe Weekly New Mexican and Live Stock Journal, July 22, 1886, p. 1 and December 9, 1886, p. 4; Rio Grande Republican, June 22, 1889, p. 2, May 3, 1890, p. 2, June 21, 1890, p. 1 and November 22, 1890, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 219, 227; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 510, 514; Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood, 1895-1912," XIV (January, 1939), pp. 131-33; Catron to Elkins, January 27, 1889, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, II, p. 107; Catron to Elkins, May 1, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 81.

relatives and friends for territorial appointment, but they rejected them in the Council. He attempted to remove Republican officeholders for cause, but they fought him in the courts.[30] For four years the battle went on, keeping all leaders of various Republican factions from each other's throats.

Inevitably, this artificial bond began to disintegrate when Ross left office in 1889. As the decade drew to a close old animosities reappeared and Republican leaders grew restless. Catron especially felt he had not received recognition commensurate to his contribution. In his letters to Stephen Elkins he complained of mistreatment, and about a plot fostered by L. Bradford Prince to destroy him politically.[31]

Apart from his unquenchable thirst for power there are at least two additional explanations for his sullen attitude at that time. First, President Benjamin Harrison ignored his wishes--expressed through Stephen

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[30]This will direct the reader to more than sufficient evidence to substantiate assumptions drawn about Edmund G. Ross, one of New Mexico's most famous but most controversial governors. Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, September 10, 1885, p. 2, November 9, 1885, p. 4, November 12, 1885, p. 2, November 13, 1885, p. 1, November 14, 1885, pp. 1, 4, November 19, 1885, p. 1, November 20, 1885, p. 2, November 23, 1885, p. 4, November 27, 1885, p. 4, November 30, 1885, p. 2, December 3, 1885, p. 4, December 5, 1885, p. 2, December 8, 1885, p. 2, February 4, 1886, p. 2, February 11, 1886, p. 2, February 20, 1886, p. 2, March 15, 1886, p. 2, March 23, 1886, p. 4, December 3, 1886, p. 3, January 18, 1887, p. 2, February 2, 1887, pp. 3-4, February 24, 1887, p. 2, February 25, 1887, p. 2, February 26, 1887, p. 2, May 31, 1887, p. 2, July 5, 1887, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican Review, September 13, 1884, p. 2 and October 25, 1894, p. 2; Santa Fe Weekly New Mexican and Live Stock Journal, July 22, 1886, p. 2 and December 9, 1886, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 500-92; George Curry: An Autobiography, 1861-1947 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press; 1958), p. 88.

[31]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 271; Catron to Elkins, February 9, 1889, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, II, p. 130; Catron to Elkins, November 18, 1889, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, II, p. 400; Catron to Elkins, February 23, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, IV, p. 474.

Elkins--by appointing L. Bradford Prince Governor in 1889. While Prince had been a friend and reliable supporter from the time of his arrival ten years earlier, making him Governor was another thing. In that capacity he had a clique of his own and became a rival.[32] Secondly, Catron's power and morale suffered a blow in the election of 1888. That year for the first time Democrats took Santa Fe county away from the Santa Fe Ring, winning every office but that of Councilor, which the Ring leader won himself.[33]

These and doubtless numerous other incidents inspired Catron to break the truce which had endured for seven years and launch a second major struggle for party control in 1892. It would be interesting to know all that transpired in the way of preparation, but of such events there is no complete record. It can be surmised, however, that careful plans were made. Though Republican leaders argued over such issues as free silver, there was a conspicuous calm in inner party circles when Catron and Governor Prince under normal circumstances would have quarreled. Also, when Catron finally decided to overthrow his adversaries and seize control of the party, he did so in a series of carefully executed steps.

The first of these came at the convention of Republican leaders in the spring of 1892 to select a delegation to attend the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis. In the course of that convention Catron managed to defeat Governor Prince and overshadow the now failing but still influential William Rynerson. He persuaded Tranquilino Luna of

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[32]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 502-04; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-97, pp. 230-31.

[33]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 510-12.

Valencia County, Rynerson from the south and a rising figure from northeastern San Miguel County, Miguel A. Otero II, to support him in naming the delegation. To prevent an uprising from the Governor, he then sent Hipolito Vigil to kidnap a whole delegation of Prince supporters from Taos County and lock them in a railroad car at Lamy until the meeting ended. Having thus fixed the convention, he set out to show "who were the rightful leaders of the Republican party."[34]

Everything went as planned. Practically without opposition he chose a delegation consisting of himself as Chairman, Tranquilino Luna, Miguel Otero II and three lesser Santa Fe Ring members. Then, after using Rynerson to defeat Prince, Catron replaced him as Republican National Committeeman. So as Rynerson and Prince left the convention, neither any longer possessed enough prestige to fight effectively for control of the party. The latter went to Minneapolis, but with no official capacity, helpless to do more than stand by and watch Catron proclaim to represent New Mexico.[35]

The second step in Catron's scheme came in his winning the congressional nomination for the first time in the fall of 1892--a kind of formal announcement that he now controlled the party. Here again he prepared carefully. He first made sure of support from the national Republican organization by acquiring a commitment of approval and financial aid from National Central Committeeman Richard C. Kerens. Then he tested

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[34]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-97, p. 258.

[35]Weekly New Mexican Review, October 5, 1893, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-97, pp. 258-61; Catron to Elkins, March 2, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 12; Catron to Elkins, May 1, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 81; Catron might have saved his concern for Rynerson, for the latter died in 1893.

political channels to get assurance of probable victory before announcing his intention to run. Finally, at the nominating convention he was selected by acclamation.[36]

Then came the last step in Catron's coup. Almost as an afterthought he removed Joseph Dwyer from the chairmanship of the Central Committee. Since by custom the current Republican congressional nominee possessed the prerogative of choosing the Chairman, all he had to do was call for Dwyer's resignation. In his place he appointed a young but important Ring lieutenant, Ralph Emerson Twitchell.[37]

Thus, after approximately two decades of consistent effort and two major power struggles, Catron emerged the master of the entire Republican organization. For all practical purposes he took possession when he won the congressional nomination in 1892, and the party was his personal province for the succeeding four years. As its prime leader he was never a success. Though he ruled territorial conventions with an iron hand and expanded his Ring into constituencies hitherto dominated by Colonel

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[36] Weekly News Mexican Review, June 28, 1894, p. 1; Richard C. Kerens to Catron, Catron Papers, August 16, 1892, Correspondence, Box XV, #8602; Kerens to Catron, October 31, 1892, Catron Papers, Correspondence, Box XVI, #9185; Catron to Elkins, August 23, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 302; George W. Gregg to Catron, August 27, 1892, Catron Papers, Correspondence, XV, #8650; D. Martinez to Catron, August 30, 1892, Catron Papers, Correspondence, XV, #8681; Joseph D. Martinez to Catron, September 2, 1892, Catron Papers, Correspondence, Box 16, #8715; Anthony Gavin to Catron, October 30, 1892, Catron Papers, Correspondence, Box 16, #9161; Note on election returns 1892, Catron Papers, box labelled Political Campaigns--New Mexico--1878-1906; Catron to W. S. Hopewell, November 27, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 402; Catron to Kerens, November 27, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 399; Catron to Kerens, January 3, 1893, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, V, p. 469.

[37] Rio Grande Republican, October 28, 1892, p. 1; The Chieftain (Socorro), November 30, 1894, p. 2.

Chavez, Rynerson, Dwyer and others, he was still despised by many leaders and rank and file party members. This became obvious almost immediately when he lost the congressional election of 1892 to Antonio Joseph by some 600 votes, despite his liberal use of money and influence. He attempted to explain his defeat in terms of inadequate support from the National Central Committee and the accidental alienation of Republicans through previous contacts in his law practice. But the returns revealed that although he had defeated leaders in western and southern New Mexico, it did not mean that their followings would wholeheartedly support him at the polls.

Two years later he appeared to have gained popularity when he won back the office of Delegate for the Republicans by unseating Joseph after the latter had served five successive terms. But important as this was to the party, it cannot be considered a personal triumph for Catron. He obviously won renomination only because of the overwhelming power of the Santa Fe Ring, and not because he was generally acceptable. Prior to the nominating convention newspapers all over the territory, from Albuquerque southward, vigorously popularized local favorites to oppose him. Even the younger Otero, supposedly his "watch-dog" for northeastern counties, threatened to lead a revolt. Only after considerable conflict did this opposition break down and make possible Catron's heading the Republican ticket again.[38]

Another indication that Catron ruled the party with sheer force was that he won in 1894 through methods not unlike those practiced a

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[38]Weekly New Mexican Review, June 14, 1894, p. 2, June 21, 1894, p. 1 and August 23, 1894, p. 2; Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 275.

decade earlier by Colonel Chavez. It is impossible to ascertain how many votes he bought, but he borrowed heavily and depleted his own bank account.[39] Finally, perhaps the most important reason he won was a general rebellion led by Harvey B. Fergusson and Albert Bacon Fall against Antonio Joseph in the Democratic party.[40]

That Catron was unacceptable to many Republicans does not alter the fact that it was he more than any other who brought the party through a second and very important stage of development. It will be recalled that William Breeden had been the prime figure in the first stage. He created a central organization and kept peace among Republicans until the party became firmly entrenched. Catron's special role was to expand local organization across north-central New Mexico, then to other regions by defeating or winning over other factional leaders, until finally by the mid-1890's he had made the Republican party one association of local organizations with a single policy and directed by one set of henchmen. Restless though many Republicans may have been, they nevertheless now belonged to a party at least loosely unified and prepared to command the vast majority of the electorate during the succeeding decade.

As the party thus took the shape of one territory-wide organization through Catron's influence, all it needed to achieve its modern form was official party machinery to replace the highly personal Santa Fe Ring

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[39] Weekly New Mexican Review, June 28, 1894, p. 1 and October 25, 1894, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 143.

[40] Weekly New Mexican Review, September 7, 1893, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican, September 29, 1902, p. 2; Las Vegas Daily Optic, September 25, 1894, p. 2, October 2, 1894, p. 2 and October 25, 1894, p. 2; Rio Grande Republican, October 27, 1894, pp. 1, 3; The Chieftain (Socorro), November 23, 1894, p. 2; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 80-82; Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood, 1895-1912," XVI (January, 1941), pp. 85-86.

of Catron as the unifying force. Freeing the Republican organization from dependence upon Catron, or any individual for that matter, was the contribution of Miguel A. Otero, II.

CHAPTER V

THE GOVERNOR'S RING AND MIGUEL A. OTERO II, 1896-1904

> The revolt against Catron's leadership was climaxed with the appointment of Miguel A. Otero as governor of the Territory [and] although this did not end Catron's political career . . . his influence was greatly diminished by the "little governor."[1]

Governor Miguel Otero was not alone responsible for changes in the New Mexican Republican party around the turn of the twentieth century. To be sure, many factors influenced developments at that time, especially the influx of partisan-minded Anglos. Elements of socio-political change, such as urbanization and the enlargement of patronage, also played no small role. The eclipse of the patrón system greatly enhanced both major parties. But of all the various influences, that exerted by Otero was the most significant. It was he who took what Thomas Catron left--an association of local units held loosely together by the Santa Fe Ring--and changed it into a compact, centralized organization operated through regular party channels. Much because of his influence the party became for the first time a power and an object of loyalty in itself. Indeed, most credit belongs to this remarkable "little Governor"--as Catron derisively called him--for the emergence of a mature, well-disciplined Republican organization before statehood.

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[1]Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 27, 36.

Before discussing Otero, however, we should return to Catron and examine events leading to his downfall. Not only was his overthrow an important episode in territorial Republican history, but the way it happened had bearing upon the ease with which Otero subsequently seized power and directed Republican affairs.

That Catron lost control of the party within approximately four years after he took it over doubtless came as no surprise. In fact many New Mexicans wondered why he lasted so long. Unprincipled in his personal life, he looked ridiculous conducting campaigns. Though he had excelled as a behind-the-scenes organizer and political strategist, he remained unattractive as a leader. Always self-centered and uncompromising, he failed to win real loyalty from other regional leaders. His ruthlessness in controlling Ring members caused them to grow restless.[2] The opposition which Catron brought on himself gave warning that despite the power of the Santa Fe Ring he could last at the head of the party only until something arose to overthrow him.

Such an occasion grew out of the infamous "Borrego affair." Catron's unfortunate relationship with Francisco Gonzales y Borrego began after the election of 1890 due to his determination to get Republicans back into Santa Fe County government. Since Borrego represented the unsavory elements of society in the capital city it seems strange at first glance that Catron became involved with him. Catron's prime purpose at the time was to seize control of the whole territorial Republican party through the Santa Fe Ring, and the acquisition of an unseemly associate could only have placed that purpose in jeopardy. Yet, he nevertheless

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[2]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 149.

risked scandal for the prestige of placing Republicans in Santa Fe County offices.

Political affairs in the County had fallen into the hands of two cliques: the Democratic "button hole" gang and the Republican Alliance League. Catron controlled the League. Among its other leaders were Santa Fe Ring member Ralph Emerson Twitchell and New Mexican editor Max Frost. Hence, the fortunes of the local Alliance League, the prestige of Catron and other Santa Fe Ring leaders, and the probability of the Ring's winning control of the territorial party were closely intertwined. Anything effecting one had an impact upon the others.

It is understandable, therefore, why the disreputable Borrego was welcome when he walked into Catron's office following the election of 1890. Catron was sulking because the Alliance League had lost the county election to the "button hole" gang for a second time, and he now saw a chance to get the League back into local government. Borrego had just been elected county coroner on the Democratic ticket, only to see the office reduced in importance. Consequently he resigned from the Democratic party and expressed a desire to join the League. Catron quickly signed him up and convinced him to withdraw his resignation so as to look after the League's interests at county headquarters. But while he was changing political parties his position already had been filled, whereupon Borrego sought out his successor and killed him. Thus, he inadvertently involved Catron, the League, and the Santa Fe Ring in murder.

Obviously, Catron's prestige suffered, but the damage need not have been permanent. Had he immediately repudiated Borrego's actions and removed him from Republican rolls, he might have avoided disgrace. In the

end Borrego went free for want of proof that he committed the murder intentionally, and the whole incident was officially dropped. Unfortunately Catron continued to associate with him, however, until a second and even worse crime was committed.[3]

In the spring of 1892 Francisco Chavez (not to be confused with Colonel J. Francisco Chavez) was shot to death in the streets of Santa Fe. This time there seemed to be little question either of the killer's intention or of Catron's involvement. For one thing, Chavez had been head of the Democratic party in Santa Fe and had helped defeat the Alliance League in 1888 and 1890. Also, as Sheriff of Santa Fe County, Chavez had been in charge of the arrest of Borrego the previous year and everyone in Santa Fe knew Catron had been trying to prove him responsible for the murder of a witness who came forth to testify in Borrego's behalf. It required little imagination to conclude that if Catron himself had not planned the crime, the League at least was involved.

Democrats across the territory accused Catron of having Chavez murdered as a political maneuver through which to regain control of Santa Fe County. No arrests were made during Governor Prince's administration, but when Democrat William T. Thornton became Governor in 1893 he ordered an investigation. Several ultimately were arrested, including Borrego, and all of whom belonged to the League.[4]

Catron's fateful relationship with Borrego thus placed him in the middle of a well-publicized criminal plot, and soon it caused still

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[3]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 510-11.

[4]Ibid., p. 512.

other developments which further disgraced him. First, because he agreed to defend Chavez' accused murderers and the trial took place between 1894 and 1896, he was able to achieve little as Delegate to Congress. Moreover, suspicions were substantiated when his clients swore before they were executed that Catron paid them to kill Chavez. Finally, he faced charges for unprofessional conduct at the trial and avoided disbarment only because one judge conveniently left the territory in time for an acquittal.[5]

Even after all of this, Republican officials attempted to whitewash their leader by electing him President of the Territorial Bar. The damage was irreparable, however, for Catron was so vulnerable that neither honorary recognition nor denials could make him presentable.

The situation was not lost on Republicans who had joined Catron in 1892 but who now drew away to save face. Obviously if they publicly rejected him at the next opportunity his power could be almost completely destroyed and one of them could rule the party. That opportunity arose when Republican leaders assembled prior to the presidential nominating convention of 1896. What transpired in preparation is difficult to determine except that plans were made to defeat Catron in much the same way that he had defeated Governor Prince and William Rynerson prior to the previous presidential nominating convention. Miguel A. Otero II took charge, with the ready assistance of patrón Pedro Perea and Solomon Luna,

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[5]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 512, 518-19; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 143; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 11-14; Catron to Elkins, July 13, 1896, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIII, p. 216; Catron to Elkins, August 24, 1895, Catron Papers, personal Correspondence, XII, p. 447; Catron to Elkins, August 24, 1895, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XII, p. 448; Catron to Elkins, January 23, 1895, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XI, p. 49; Catron to Kerens, January 23, 1895, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XI, p. 51

now the leading Republican in Valencia County. Luna replaced Catron as National Committeeman. He, Perea and John S. Clark, a friend of Otero from Las Vegas, headed the delegation to represent the party at St. Louis, while Catron stood by watching his own demise.[6]

Stripped of partisan office, Catron's right to lead the party now rested solely upon his holding the office of Delegate. The Otero-Luna-Perea coalition needed a way to remove him from that office to insure his complete downfall. This proved impossible, because Santa Fe Ring leaders still commanded a majority of Republican county organizations and Catron won renomination in the fall of 1896. What Otero and his friends could not do for themselves, however, Democratic nominee Harvey B. Fergusson did for them by subsequently winning the congressional race.

Though he tried to forestall total disaster by explaining his defeat in terms of Populism and the silver issue, Catron had only himself to blame. Populism never won widespread support in New Mexico. Moreover, Republican defections resulting from the silver issue were fully offset when William B. Childers led a group of Gold-Democrats into the Republican party. Undoubtedly, the most important cause for his defeat was the Borrego affair. Next was that his influence rested upon sheer force, and at the first sign of weakness his supporters deserted in large numbers. There was also the fact that the Republican press could never find anything good to say about him, and with this unsavory past he simply could not compete with Fergusson on the political stump.[7]

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[6]Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 15.

[7]The Chieftain (Socorro), October 29, 1896, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 520-23; Otero: My Life on

What previous claim he had to leadership among Republicans practically vanished in that election. This he learned readily in the spring of 1897 when he attempted to convince President William McKinley that he spoke for most territorial Republicans in opposing the selection of Miguel A. Otero II for the governorship. His inability to stop Otero's appointment cannot be attributed solely to his loss of power in the party. McKinley's refusal to hear Catron and his determination to appoint Otero resulted much from previous developments for which ironically Catron himself was responsible.

Back in 1892 when he invited Otero to join him in defeating Governor Prince's efforts to select a delegation for the Minneapolis convention, Catron unknowingly set in motion a series of events which probably had as much to do with Otero's landing in the Governor's Mansion as any other factor. Otero was appointed to the committee at Minneapolis to inform Benjamin Harrison of his renomination. The Chairman of that committee was William McKinley, and the two became acquainted on the train ride to Washington. There McKinley entertained Otero at his home. Later Otero recalled pledging his new friend the support of the New Mexican Republican delegation for the presidential nomination in 1896, and he faithfully kept that promise.[8] Accordingly, when McKinley won the presidency,

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the Frontier 1882-1897, p. 283; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 95; Catron to Elkins, July 30, 1896, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIII, p. 282; R. Hudson to Catron, November 7, 1896, Catron Papers, box labelled Political Campaigns-New Mexico, 1878-1906; Jess Bello to Catron, October 28, 1896, Catron Papers, box labelled Political Campaigns-New Mexico, 1878-1906; F. Parker to Catron, November 6, 1896, Catron Papers, Political Campaigns, box labelled Political Campaigns-New Mexico, 1878-1906.

[8]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 261-62 and My Nine Years as Governor, p. 1.

nothing Catron could have done would have altered Otero's favorable position at the White House. Nor could Catron have said anything to make himself acceptable to the President, because in 1896 he had actively supported the nomination of House Speaker Thomas B. Reed.[9]

Catron realized, nevertheless, that McKinley could not appoint anyone unacceptable to the territorial Republican party. Therefore he gathered other disgruntled Republicans around him to force McKinley to appoint Pedro Perea as Governor, Solomon Luna as United States Marshal and himself as United States Attorney. Obviously his purpose was to draw Perea and Luna out of Otero's camp, hoping thereby to bolster his own, but the effort proved futile. McKinley learned that Catron no longer represented the majority of New Mexican Republicans and promptly awarded the governorship to Otero. Moreover, he appointed William B. Childers United States Attorney for bringing Gold-Democrats into Republican ranks, and consulted with the new Governor regarding other federal appointments.

Following this unmistakable rebuff Catron tried once more, offering the President his personal slate for the territorial Supreme Court. After that failed he reluctantly accepted a diminished role, however, and finally recognized Otero as his successor at the head of the party.[10]

Catron's disgrace and fall from power in 1897 contributed significantly to Otero's success in Republican affairs during the next nine

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[9]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 278-83 and My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 7, 143-44.

[10]Otero: My Life on the Frontier 1882-1897, pp. 285-92; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 44-46, 49-56; Catron to Elkins, June 7, 1897, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIV, p. 10.

years. Previously, every change in leadership had been accompanied by feuds which impaired the effectiveness of the victors to make party policy, but Otero took charge under almost ideal circumstances. His appointment and rise to the head of the party came at a time when most Republicans wanted new leadership, and when no one possessed the power to oppose him effectively. Once in control he had only to defend against periodic attacks, leaving ample time to reshape the party's organization and rebuild its membership.

This did not mean that Otero's success as Republican leader was mainly accidental. On the contrary, what he achieved for the party resulted even more from the application of his own talents. Schooled by Thomas Catron himself, Otero was an artful political strategist and possessed a natural flare for leadership. He understood the New Mexican people and knew the peculiarities of their politics as well as any man in the territory. Circumstances notwithstanding, it was chiefly through methodical application of these personal attributes that he transformed the imperfect association he inherited from Catron into a mature organization.

While he used numerous methods, two amply illustrate how he drew ever increasing numbers of voters together into a single, compact organization. One was the judicious distribution of patronage. It is appropriate to conclude that Otero was New Mexico's first real partisan spoilsman. Unlike his predecessors, who frequently distributed public offices to meet personal obligations, Otero rarely made an appointment without improving discipline and unity in Republican ranks. He gave patronage new meaning by using it generously and making unwavering loyalty to the Republican party, rather than to any individual, the prerequisite

for acquiring public office. He created vacancies in wholesale fashion and freely forced Democrats out of office to make room for faithful Republicans. Even the most influential Democrats, whom Catron would doubtless have left in office for the price of cooperation, were fired. The summary discharge of Albert B. Fall as Attorney General and the appointment of Edward L. Bartless, faithful Republican and a capable spoilsman, serves as an example.

Another method was in acquiring favorable publicity for the party by courting territorial Republican newspaper editors, who hitherto had seldom agreed regarding party leadership. Otero went out of his way to appease them until he had support from more important newspapers than any partisan leader in the territorial period. Most significant was the loyalty of Max Frost, of the New Mexican, whom he lured away from Catron. He also enjoyed support from the Rio Grande Republican of Las Cruces and The Chieftain of Socorro, while the only noteworthy Republican newspaper that opposed him consistently was the Albuquerque Journal.[11]

Because of Otero's political acumen and techniques the party acquired a whole new complexion during his administration. People now flocked to the Republican banner with enthusiasm and not out of fear of reprisal from some patrón and regional politician as they always had. They joined out of respect for the "little Governor," for patronage, social prestige and the mere privilege of belonging. Indeed, giving New Mexicans new incentive to support Republicanism was Otero's greatest contribution as the party's leader.

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[11] Santa Fe New Mexican, December 5, 1905, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years As Governor, pp. 2, 16-17, 19-21; L. Bradford Prince: A Concise History of New Mexico, p. 214.

Moreover, Otero displayed a singular determination to prevent the kind of open rifts within the party which hitherto had frequently torn it apart. Unlike previous Republican governors, he did not separate his role of administrative leader from that of partisan leader. His whole administration revolved around Republican affairs, and to maintain himself in the office of Governor he recognized the need to sustain general support as a partisan leader. Hence he never jeopardized party unity for a personal whim. Rather, he always protected the Republican organization against the kind of disruption characteristic of its earlier history by refusing to engage other leaders openly until it became impossible to do otherwise. Even then he saved the party from disaster by a display of political craftsmanship unprecedented in New Mexico.

During the nine years Otero was Governor his position at the party's head was in serious danger twice. The first challenge came with an attack from Catron which lasted until 1901; the second was an uprising of the so-called Hubbellites from western and southern New Mexico in 1903-04. In each instance Otero chose a different defense, but in both the results were the same. The party survived intact, little worse for the struggle.

Catron challenged Otero's leadership because he still had not lost his influence in Santa Fe County and he continued to occupy a seat in the territorial Council. Moreover, it was no secret that he resented Otero for replacing him as Republican leader and he attracted others who felt inadequately compensated for their efforts in the party's behalf. With them formed a sizeable coalition of dissident lesser leaders which, though bound loosely together only by common jealousy of the Governor,

could rally troublesome opposition.

One leader in this new Catronite coalition was Eugene A. Fiske, a former associate of Governor Prince. Fiske joined Catron after the two men unsuccessfully competed for the office of United States Attorney in 1897. Another was Frederick Muller, never a foremost Republican but always a power around Santa Fe. Two others were William Berger, Editor of the Santa Fe Capital, and L. Bradford Prince who had fought Catron for nearly eight years, but now rejoined him in hopes of getting back into high party councils.[12]

These and other lesser leaders opposed Otero periodically during his first four years as Governor by any means available. Catron usually concentrated on discrediting him in the Council by trying to block his nominations for territorial offices and his use of public funds to swell the ranks of the Governor's Ring.[13] Catron and his followers likewise opposed Otero at every Republican convention, and they spent liberally and often collaborated with Democrats to defeat his friends in elections. They scandalized him in the territory at every opportunity and brought charges against him in Washington in hopes of causing his discharge from the governorship.[14]

Had this group of malcontents stood in opposition to a Colonel Chavez or a Prince who would engage them openly, they could have altered

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[12]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 146-48; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 189.

[13]Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 56; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 75, 81; Santa Fe New Mexican, November 5, 1904, p. 2.

[14]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 132-33; 240-45.

territorial Republican history significantly, for they had considerable support in certain constituencies, especially around Albuquerque. They made little headway against Otero, however, because he would not step forth and fight. Instead he awaited the chance to disperse them unceremoniously, and meanwhile gave them such wide berth that for the first two years even Catron was uncertain whether to treat him as friend or foe. Though Otero replaced officials during these years, they were never important Catronites.[15] He voiced opinions regarding nominations, but compromised at the first sign of trouble. In 1898 he went to the congressional nominating convention committed against Pedro Perea, whom the Catronites supported. Upon learning that Catron's favorite had strong support, he dropped his own candidate, helped nominate Perea, and then shared the credit for his election.[16] In fact, the little Governor was so flexible that not until the spring of 1899 did the old Ring leader finally decide for certain that any attempt to bargain for political advantage would be fruitless and that he should have been fighting him as a personal enemy all along.[17]

During the legislative session of 1899 Catron concentrated upon

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[15]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 245-48; Catron to Elkins, June 3, 1897, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIII, p. 678; Catron to Elkins, November 18, 1897, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIV, p. 375; Catron to Elkins, December 13, 1897, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIV, p. 439.

[16]Santa Fe New Mexican, January 9, 1900, p. 3 and February 1, 1900, p. 2; The New Mexican Review, November 24, 1898, p. 1; Rio Grande Republican, August 19, 1898, p. 2; The Las Vegas Daily Optic, October 1, 1898, October 19, 1898, p. 1 and October 31, 1898, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 134-35.

[17]Catron to Elkins, April 8, 1899, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XV, p. 763.

the Governor's misuse of public funds, and most vigorously opposed his nominees for appointment. He erased all doubt about his intentions that year when he prevented the confirmation of Otero's nominee for the office of Territorial Treasurer, supported the reappointment of the Democratic incumbent, and offered the latter free legal advice if he would remain in office.[18]

The next year Catron and his allies kept up the assault.[19] Evidently their goal was to create enough opposition to provoke an eruption at the nominating convention in the fall of 1900, split the party, and either force Otero to include them in the Republican inner circle or surrender control completely. Had Otero responded to their challenge the Catronites might have succeeded, for as the various county delegates arrived at the convention Catron's strategy was the main topic of conversation. But when the selection of a congressional nominee finally came to the floor, Otero acted much as he had in the previous election year. Catron gave him a chance to quarrel when he proposed a change in nominees and suggested the replacement of Pedro Perea by Bernard S. Rodey at the head of the ticket. Instead of fighting, Otero agreed to despoil Perea of the office of Delegate. He gave wholehearted support to the nomination of Rodey, campaigned in his behalf, and subsequently claimed his victory

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[18] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 23, 1902, p. 2 and September 29, 1902, p. 2. This of course comes from the pro-Otero press amid the Catron-Otero struggle. It seems valid, nevertheless, because Catron subsequently crossed party lines frequently to serve his own ends.

[19] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 20, 1900, p. 2, February 26, 1900, p. 2, March 17, 1900, p. 1, July 10, 1900, p. 2, August 2, 1900, p. 2; Catron to Elkins, February 10, 1900, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVII, p. 315; Catron to Elkins, March 28, 1900, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVII, p. 447; Catron to Pedro Perea, January 29, 1900, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVII, p. 276.

over Octaviano S. Larrazolo by some 3,700 votes as a personal mandate and irrefutable evidence of party unity.[20]

Because Otero thus refused to engage Catron and his followers, their attempt to undermine his power failed. Most Republicans readily turned from politics to their usual daily pursuits hardly aware of the trouble in high party councils. Pro-Otero newsmen occasionally referred to altercations between the Governor and the Catronites, but in such a way as to imply that they were no more serious than the petty quarrels characteristic of all New Mexican campaigns and elections.

Beneath the facade of peace trouble continued, however, and not so much for Otero as for the Catronites. Throughout the campaign and election Otero continued to display forbearance in the face of criticism and seemed determined not to fight. Yet, he not only successfully warded off attacks from the Catronites, but also took steps to disperse them. His most obvious maneuver was to deprive them of effective leadership.

He despoiled Catron of his seat in the Council and left the Catronites no one with enough political stature to represent them. First, he ordered Oteroites in Santa Fe County to run a second Republican in competition with Catron and thereby caused the election of Democratic nominee Charles F. Easley. Then, when Catron tried to contest the election, Otero engineered a change in election rules and made it impossible for

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[20] Santa Fe New Mexican, October 4, 1900, p. 1 and October 13, 1900, p. 1; Dona Ana County Republican, October 6, 1900, p. 4; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 58-62; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 136-41, 224; Catron to Perea, October 17, 1900, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 274; Catron to Elkins, January 13, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 429.

him to present his case to the legislature.[21]

Less obvious but even more effective was the Governor's handling of the press. Realizing that Catron and his friends could not undermine his position without publicity for their cause, Otero urged newsmen to ignore them. In doing so he not only curbed their attempt to build up a larger following by criticizing his administration, he also deprived them of just credit for Republican victories. Had the truth been known, Catronites would have gained considerable popularity for their role in the elections of 1898 and 1900. As it was, both Pedro Perea and Bernard Rodey were nominated through Catron's efforts and won their largest majorities in Valencia and Bernalillo Counties where Catronites were in control.[22] By overlooking these important facts, pro-Otero newsmen deprived them of recognition and reason for existence. Thus, stripped of effective leadership and publicity, the Catronites quietly dissipated.

By 1901 four years had lapsed since Otero's appointment, and the President and the United States Senate had to review his past performance. Catron, Prince, Berger, Muller and several others went to Washington in a desperate effort to explain why New Mexico needed a new governor and the party another leader. They accused Otero of unfitness as an administrator,

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[21] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 15, 1902, p. 2, September 29, 1902, October 10, 1900, p. 2, October 25, 1900, p. 2, October 27, 1900, p. 2, and November 13, 1900, p. 4; The Chieftain (Socorro) November 24, 1900, p. 2; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 62; Catron to Elkins, December 5, 1900, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 372; Catron to Elkins, January 30, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 498.

[22] Santa Fe New Mexican, July 28, 1900, p. 2, October 6, 1900, p. 1, October 16, 1900, p. 2, October 31, 1900, p. 1, November 9, 1900, p. 2, November 13, 1900, p. 2, November 19, 1900, p. 2, November 22, 1900, p. 1, and November 23, 1900, p. 2; The Chieftain (Socorro) October 6, 1900, p. 1 and November 24, 1900, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 543.

charged him with misuse of patronage and of collaborating with Democrats. They argued that if he were not removed the administration of the territory would fall into confusion and its Republican party would disintegrate.[23]

Otero had little to fear because McKinley was no more inclined to believe them than he had in 1897. But McKinley's assassination occurred before the Senate confirmed Otero's reappointment. This gave Catron and his friends new hope because President Roosevelt showed more concern about the territorial party than had McKinley, and it was well known that he did not like Otero. Yet, after hearing all viewpoints, he finally concurred with McKinley's judgment. He felt obligated to Otero for the recruitment of Rough Riders in New Mexico during the Spanish American War. Moreover, Otero had many friends whose exodus from New Mexico apparently exceeded that of his adversaries. At least a dozen important figures from both major parties spoke sufficiently in his behalf to convince Roosevelt and the Senate.[24]

The prestige Otero gained from surviving this onslaught was the death knell of the Catronites. Subsequently they vanished completely, leaving him free from effective opposition. Those few friends of Catron who did not immediately take cover soon received a push in that direction. L. Bradford Prince, for example, who resisted political obscurity, was fired from the Board of Regents at the College of Agriculture and Mechanic

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[23]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 179-89; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 64-73; Catron to Elkins, November 15, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIX, p. 249; Catron to Elkins, October 18, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XIX, p. 177; Catron to Elkins, January 13, 1901, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XVIII, p. 434.

[24]Santa Fe New Mexican, August 13, 1901, p. 2; August 17, 1901, p. 2 and August 22, 1901, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 86, 179, 314, 318-19; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 76, 80.

Arts by the Governor. Otero insisted that he had removed Prince for cause, but everyone outside the Governor's Ring recognized the removal as a portentous gesture and gave up the struggle.[25]

With Catronites absent from the scene Otero enjoyed a peaceful interlude of two years in which he had a free hand in the party. This gave him a chance to tighten its central organization. His following constantly grew larger as would-be defectors joined his Ring for want of other leadership. Prosperity and the rapid development of the territory enhanced his popularity. By the end of the year 1903 his political power exceeded that of any other man in territorial history.

This proved fortunate for Otero, because he was soon to need all the power he amassed. While he enjoyed two peaceful years, the Hubbells of Albuquerque built a substantial following, presented the second challenge to his leadership, and nearly caused his downfall. The Hubbell coalition was related to the Catronite alliance which fought Otero earlier, for Catron and many of his colleagues joined it. However, it differed in leadership, issues, and in geographic scope. Opposition to the "little Governor" now gathered around Frank Hubbell, one of the last of the great patrones, ruler of the powerful Bernalillo County Republican organization and current Chairman of the Republican Central Committee. Now interests of communities overshadowed personal vendettas and the influx of immigrants revived old antagonisms between Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Moreover, such issues as economic predominance and the location of the capitol entered in, with each region speaking emphatically through the columns of the

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[25]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 248.

Santa Fe New Mexican and the Albuquerque Journal.[26]

This complicated sectional quarrel gradually brought to the surface a movement against Otero in the Republican party. Numerous leaders from southern and western New Mexico joined Frank Hubbell in the endeavor to curb the "little Governor's" power. They hoped to prevent him from seizing complete control of the legislature through the judicious use of patronage, and from gaining further popularity by false claims to sole responsibility for Delegate Rodey's record success at the polls. Also, they intended to bolster Chairman Hubbell's power in high party councils, for he was their only hope of averting complete submission to northern New Mexican Republicans in party affairs.[27]

After a year of threats and accusations by both sides the quarrel between Hubbell and Otero resulted in the most sensational intra-party power struggle since the Catron-Chavez fight twenty years earlier. It culminated at the congressional nominating convention of 1904 where Otero faced the alternatives of either removing Frank Hubbell from the chairmanship of the Central Committee or stepping down from the head of the party. There he was pitted against a coalition of leaders, which, among others, included Frank and Thomas Hubbell, Delegate Rodey, Catron and Ralph Emerson Twitchell. The only important Republicans who did not oppose him were William H. Andrews, a young man who arrived in New Mexico in 1902, and Holm O. Bursum, a stock-grower whose career in high party

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[26] Santa Fe New Mexican, August 16, 1901, p. 2 and May 8, 1907, p. 2; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 63; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 191.

[27] Santa Fe New Mexican, July, 1902 to June, 1904, passim; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 224-26; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 543.

councils barely had begun.

Otero quickly discovered that he could not remove Hubbell without first blocking the renomination of Delegate Rodey. As congressional nominee, Rodey had the power to choose the Central Committee Chairman for the next two years and he had agreed beforehand to reappoint Hubbell. Rodey was extremely popular and a substantial majority of county delegations came prepared to support him. Even to Otero this must have seemed an almost impossible undertaking.

As usual the "little Governor" did not want for ingenuity, however, and before the first session his victory already was assured. In his address to each county delegation as it arrived he held out the tempting bait of patronage. By the time the last delegation had left his suite for the convention hall, Otero had more than enough support to defeat Rodey. A member of the Governor's Ring nominated Andrews for Congress, and each delegation voted with a minimum of deliberation. Otero then left, accompanied by congressional nominee Andrews, and the new Central Committee Chairman, Holm Bursum.

Thus, for a second time Otero saved himself from overthrow and the party from disruption. So effective was his political craftsmanship that further opposition on the part of Hubbell and his friends at the time was hopeless. They returned to Albuquerque, called a second convention and nominated Rodey for Delegate on an Independent Republican ticket. Their purpose, like that of previous Independent groups, was the hollow satisfaction of defeating the regular Republican candidate by drawing off votes for the Democratic nominee. But years of careful organization, the distribution of offices and favorable publicity bore fruit for Otero.

Though Rodey carried Bernalillo County, Andrews won the election by a margin of approximately 2,000 votes.[28]

Andrews' victory was the capstone of Otero's partisan career and symbolized his triumph over all opponents. Despite determined efforts, first by the followers of Catron, then by Frank Hubbell and his friends, the "little Governor" maintained control over the large majority of Republicans. He succeeded in bringing the party through its final stage of development by taking over Catron's loose association of local Republican machines and binding them firmly together into a smooth-operating, centralized organization. He built up the party's membership to a point where its preponderance was no longer in question. During remaining territorial years Republican leaders would continue to vie for power and the enormous constituency created by Otero would be reduced to a slight majority. But subsequent events could not alter the fact that the Republican organization reached maturity during his administration.

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[28] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 3, 1904, p. 1, September 8, 1904, p. 2, September 10, 1904, p. 1, September 12, 1904, pp. 1, 2, September 13, 1904, pp. 1, 2, September 17, 1904, p. 2 and November 11, 1904, p. 2; Rio Grande Republican, August 19, 1904, p. 2 and September 23, 1904, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 226-33; 237-38; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 544-45; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 191; Catron to Rodey, December 16, 1903, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XXII, p. 377.

CHAPTER VI

REPUBLICAN UPHEAVAL AND REUNIFICATION, 1904-10

> Then came the volatile George Curry. . . whose administration calmed the angry political sea.[1]

In numerous ways Governor Otero's administration was the political highlight of the New Mexican territorial period. The previous chapter revealed his talent for leadership and how he enhanced the development of the Republican party. While he was Governor, parties eclipsed the politics of tradition, and in this he played no small part. Otero also possessed singular administrative ability. Ralph Emerson Twitchell praised him for the "excellent condition of finances" during his administration. He commended Otero for fostering railroad construction, irrigation enterprises, industrial growth and a score of other improvements.[2] Of course such factors as immigration, outside investment and congressional legislation contributed, but in each important change his role was considerable.

Surprisingly, he was not allowed to retire from the Governor's Mansion voluntarily. Friends and foes alike recognized his many contributions and by the end of 1904 he enjoyed enthusiastic support from a large majority of the New Mexican electorate. At the same time he

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[1] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 15, 1812, p. 4.

[2] The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 546-48.

had the confidence of President Roosevelt and other Washington officials. Yet, approximately a year after his power reached its summit he lost the governorship, and as a result he no longer was the leader of his party.

Circumstances which forced Otero to surrender leadership of Republicans in general bore little similarity to those which had caused Catron's downfall a decade earlier. Otero never disgraced himself, nor did his power diminish due to open conflict with other territorial leaders. However, there was one likeness in the demise of the two men: each in part lost control of Republican affairs for being too successful. Just as Catron's personal dictation of party policy produced resentment in Republican ranks, so did Otero's untrammeled power cause other party leaders to grow restive. That a word from Otero was tantamount to presidential approval for federal appointment annoyed them. They grew jealous as Democrats defected to his Ring for political favors. And they sulked because of a new election code, which promised to give the Governor's friends further advantage in succeeding elections.[3]

Many Republican leaders also feared reprisal as the Governor took revenge on his fallen foes in 1905. After he removed Frank Hubbell from the Central Committee chairmanship, it doubtless appeared that no one could safely oppose the Governor's Ring. Otero attempted to allay their fears by calling his attack on the "Hubbell gang" of Albuquerque a "war on corruption," but even though it was true it failed to appease them.

The Hubbells ran public affairs in Bernalillo County like a private fiefdom during most of Otero's administration. The brothers Frank

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[3]Santa Fe New Mexican, September 20, 1904, p. 1, April 22, 1905, p. 2; December 6, 1905, p. 1; December 13, 1905, p. 1; December 27, 1905, p. 1.

and Thomas, along with Eslavio Vigil, controlled the county Republican machine and divided the best local offices among themselves.[4] As County Treasurer and Tax Collector, Frank employed public funds to operate his private enterprises. Thomas profited as Sheriff of the County by overlooking vice and by padding prisoner allowance records, while Vigil in the office of County School Superintendent allegedly stole educational appropriations.

Until 1904 no one questioned the activities of the "Hubbell gang," but after the nominating convention that year Otero resolved to drive them out of office and make them justify past behavior. In the next county election followers of Otero incited rebellion among Bernalillo County Republicans and collaborated with the local Democratic party. Meanwhile, the Governor also ordered an investigation which ultimately discredited Frank Hubbell and Vigil and brought the arrest of Thomas Hubbell for fraud.[5]

Under the circumstances Otero's investigation was justifiable, but it was unduly ruthless and untimely as far as his position in the party was concerned. Republican leaders who already despised him became sympathetic with the "Hubbell gang." The so-called "War on corruption" caused each of them to fear that he might be its next victim. Consequently, most of the leaders who opposed him at the previous nominating convention drew together in defense of the Hubbells, and unloosed the attack which subsequently led to Otero's demise.

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[4]Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 227; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 191.

[5]Santa Fe New Mexican, August 31, 1905, p. 1, September 1, 1905, p. 2 and October 6, 1905, p. 2; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 192.

The Hubbells inaugurated this new war in the fall of 1905 with a vicious "smear campaign" against the Governor and his fellow administrators. They charged Otero with misuse of official prerogatives against them and amassed evidence to show that District Attorney Frank W. Clancy, who directed the prosecution of Thomas Hubbell, was guilty of inefficiency in office. Editors of the Albuquerque Journal joined the so-called crusade with an investigation of Delegate William Andrews which produced "irrefutable evidence" of his involvement in a bank scandal in Pennsylvania. Thomas Catron again spoke out against the "little Governor" in the Council in much the same way as he had six years previously. Moreover, nearly every noteworthy dissident Republican in the territory hurried to Washington to undermine Otero's position there.[6]

The latter action proved most effective, for Otero's opponents had a real issue in which to cloak their assault. They concurred with Theodore Roosevelt that New Mexico should accept joint statehood with Arizona, while Otero led the movement for single statehood. Since Roosevelt hoped for immediate admission of New Mexico and Arizona as a single state, he listened attentively to reports that Otero intended to block the plan unless New Mexico could enter the Union alone. These reports in turn made him receptive to other appeals for a change of governors, especially the assertion that if Otero remained in office a revolt soon would occur in the territorial Republican organization.[7]

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[6] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 9, 1905, p. 2, November 7, 1905, p. 2, November 29, 1905, p. 2, December 2, 1905, p. 2, December 6, 1905, p. 1 and January 4, 1906, p. 2.

[7] Santa Fe New Mexican, October 4, 1905, p. 2, December 23, 1905, p. 2, December 29, 1905, p. 2 and 1906 passim.

At the same time Roosevelt heard little favorable comment because the only important leaders who spoke in Otero's behalf were Delegate Andrews and Holm Bursum. Naturally this confirmed his suspicion that the "little Governor" had become unpopular, and he harbored picayunish grievances which further induced him to believe the worst. For example, at the first reunion of Rough Riders in Las Vegas, New Mexico, Otero deliberately stood in the way so Roosevelt could not have his picture taken alone. These and various other factors convinced the President that a change was necessary, and finally in November, 1905 he called for Otero's resignation.[8]

When Roosevelt removed the "little Governor" he precipitated the very crisis he hoped to prevent, since he deprived Republicans of the firm hand which held them together. Immediately the party began to disintegrate. Because Otero no longer controlled patronage, he lost his influence among local leaders, and in turn his hold on the Republican electorate. Likewise, he lost control over high party councils and every major leader was now free to express his views about Republican policy without fear of reprisal.

Almost equally devastating to the party was Roosevelt's subsequent refusal to spare the "little Governor's" feelings. To avoid humiliation Otero announced his intention to step down. Later he explained that he "had enough of politics for awhile" and "deserved a vacation."[9]

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[8] The Rio Grande Republican, December 1, 1905, p. 1; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, pp. 62-63, 314-19, 321, 325-26, 329-31; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 525-26; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 192.

[9] Santa Fe New Mexican, March 14, 1905, p. 2 and November 21, 1905, p. 1; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 335.

Had the President indeed allowed him such satisfaction, he doubtless would have retired peacefully, for he wanted more time with his family. New Mexicans soon learned of his actual dismissal, however, when Roosevelt bragged to newsmen that he fired Otero to save the territorial Republican party. It was part of a scheme to quiet the turbulence which had characterized the territorial Republican party since its creation. But this indiscretion naturally embittered Otero and his friends, and inadvertently changed the Governor's Ring into a militant minority.

Thus in a few days Roosevelt wrecked the machine which had effectively ruled the party for nine years. This rash act reduced Republican politics once again to a contest between antagonistic factions. But the President believed that if he replaced Otero with an outsider who knew something about New Mexican politics, but who was uncommitted to any one faction, all Republican leaders would accept him as a pacificator and the party's problems would be solved. Unfortunately, it did not work out that way.

Considering the peculiarities of New Mexican politics, it seems unlikely that any outsider could have succeeded, but Roosevelt believed he had in Herbert J. Hagerman the right man for the job. Hagerman had grown up in Wisconsin, attended Cornell University and immediately after graduation became a foreign diplomat. He seemingly knew something about New Mexican politics, for his father had been a railroad promoter in the Pecos Valley. Therefore, when Roosevelt recalled him in January, 1906 to replace Otero as Governor, he confidently expected him "to clean up the mess" in the party.[10]

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[10]The Rio Grande Republican, December 1, 1905, p. 1; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 192-93.

Hagerman had ample opportunity to carry out these instructions, for he was better received than any governor in the territorial period. New Mexican newsmen almost unanimously hailed his appointment as the salvation of territorial Republicanism. Since no one Republican leader had the power to dominate the others, they all agreed to accept him as a titular leader. At first a conciliatory mood reigned in high party councils and both the Republican Central Committee and the Republican Executive Committee included leaders from all factions who worked peacefully together.[11] Though the conciliatory mood that existed was an uneasy one, it was broken only once during Hagerman's tenure when Otero's friends in the legislature redistricted the territory and despoiled Catron of his seat in the Council.[12]

Under these circumstances Hagerman could have been the most successful party leader in the territorial period if he merely had accepted the role of peacemaker and remained aloof from partisan affairs. He failed completely, however, because he took Roosevelt's instructions as a command to reform New Mexican politics single-handedly. His strategy evidently was to replace all existing territorial officials without regard for faction or party affiliation in hopes of creating a nonpartisan order which he could control completely.

Inevitably, Hagerman's reform program turned every major

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[11] Santa Fe New Mexican, December 5, 1905, p. 2, January 4, 1906, p. 2, January 17, 1906, p. 2, January 18, 1906, p. 1, September 29, 1906, p. 1, October 10, 1906, p. 1 and May 20, 1907, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 551.

[12] Santa Fe New Mexican, March 29, 1906, p. 1, April 4, 1906, p. 1, May 17, 1906, p. 2, September 26, 1906, p. 1 and October 24, 1906, p. 1; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 91.

Republican leader in New Mexico against him. The Hubbells drew away because he appointed Thomas' prosecutor, Frank W. Clancy, to the Board of Regents of the University. He annoyed them further when he appointed Democratic Central Committee Secretary Charles F. Easley to a vacancy on the Board of Penitentiary Commissioners. This act raised Catron's ire especially, since it was Easley who had replaced him in the Council following the controversial election back in 1900. Hagerman also antagonized Otero's friends with an order that no individual could hold more than one public office at a time, and some had to surrender patronage they had held for years. He made a bitter enemy of Chairman Holm Bursum when he removed him from the superintendency of the Penitentiary. And he almost caused a revolution in the party when he removed the entire membership of the Bureau of Immigration which Republicans had controlled since 1880, and packed it with Democrats.[13]

Indeed, had the new governor deliberately planned to destroy support from every quarter, he could not have done better. Leaders in each faction gloated as he offended others, but in the end they all cooperated to discredit him. Otero's friends led the way because they controlled patronage when Hagerman had taken office and consequently suffered most from his reforms. Holm Bursum, for example, practically devoted full time to fighting Hagerman. New Mexican editors ran a series of articles pointing out that if he remained in office the Democrats soon would take over the territory.[14]

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[13] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 8, 1906, p. 2, February 21, 1906, p. 2, April 5, 1906, p. 2, May 18, 1906, p. 1, September 5, 1906, p. 2 and April 26, 1907, p. 2; Otero: My Nine Years as Governor, p. 98; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 193-95.

[14] Santa Fe New Mexican, April 19, 1907, p. 2 and July 25, 1907, p. 2; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 194-95.

Delegate Andrews went to the White House to talk to Roosevelt, and was followed by a whole procession of other critics. Naturally they emphasized Hagerman's collaboration with Democrats and produced evidence to prove it. Indeed, like every previous territorial governor Hagerman had promised favors to Democratic and Republican Councilors alike to win approval for his nominees.

Roosevelt also heard a one-sided version of the Governor's involvement in a land swindle. A group of speculators had bargained with the previous administration for a large tract of territorial land at a ridiculously low price, but Otero had failed to approve the sale. Consummation of the deal fell to Hagerman who realized that it was not in the best interest of the territory. Yet, because it seemed legal, he signed the papers. This evidently was the extent of his participation, but by omitting certain details, such as the fact that Hagerman did not profit personally, his adversaries placed him in a bad light.[15]

At any rate, Roosevelt's visitors planted sufficient seeds of doubt, which combined with other factors caused the President to reconsider his choice of governor. Just as personal grievances had influenced Roosevelt to discharge Otero, they likewise hastened his decision to fire Hagerman. The President expected the Governor to appoint a former Rough Rider, Captain George Curry, to the office of Secretary of the Territory. Hagerman instead proposed the menial job of game warden. This, plus a rumor that Hagerman might not send a delegation to the forthcoming

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[15] Elmo R. Richardson: "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," New Mexico Historical Review, XXXIII (October, 1958), p. 278; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 549-55; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 195-99.

Republican National Convention amenable to Roosevelt's instructions, convinced the President that he had made a mistake. In April, 1907, he called for Hagerman's resignation.[16]

Again dissident Republican leaders celebrated the demise of a dominating governor, but when they turned back to partisan affairs their delight soon changed to gloom. At no time since Catron's downfall had the party been in so bad a condition. For sixteen months it had gone without effective supervision because a dozen different leaders had tried to fashion policy at the same time. Now with Hagerman out of the way old antagonisms reappeared. In the succeeding five months New Mexico was without a governor and tension mounted in high party councils. Each member wanted to take charge but did not have sufficient power to overshadow the others. Meanwhile, Roosevelt had sent agents to the territory to determine what could be done to "clean up the mess," so even if all had agreed to follow one leader there was no certainty that he would be allowed to manage the party. Moreover, what if the next Governor proved as determined as Hagerman to run politics by himself?

The Republicans also faced the problem of diminishing majorities at the polls. Democratic ranks had grown steadily from immigration into eastern New Mexico and from hundreds of disenchanted Republicans. This trend became evident in the congressional race in 1906, when Andrews won by only 300 votes. Even then he was hard pressed to convince a congressional committee that his victory was legitimate.[17]

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[16] Santa Fe New Mexican, April 25, 1907, p. 2, May 2, 1907, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 550, 554-56.

[17] The Rio Grande Republican, April 20, 1907, p. 2; Santa Fe New Mexican, October 17, 1902, p. 2, November 10, 1906, p. 1, May 24, 1907, p.

Then came the final blow to Republican morale when word arrived that George Curry was to succeed Hagerman. New Mexicans remembered Curry from earlier days when he was a Democrat, and everyone knew how he had achieved political prominence. Soon after his arrival in 1879, he launched his political career as a member of the ruthless "Whitlock gang" in Colfax County. From there he moved to Lincoln County to work for James J. Dolan of Lincoln County War fame. Dolan and his friends secured his appointment to several local offices, and eventually his election to the territorial Council. The appointment of a man with such a background to restore harmony in the Republican party seemed to Republicans like plain lunacy.

But Roosevelt saw Curry in a different light. He remembered him as a sound party man whom he had influenced to join the Republican party during the Spanish American War. Moreover, he served as a regional governor in the Philippines and had received high praise from William Howard Taft for his administrative ability. Also he seemed to have the qualities Roosevelt at first believed he saw in Hagerman. Curry possessed considerable knowledge about New Mexican politics, yet he was unassociated with any faction because of long absence from the territory. Thus, ignoring protests from the territory, Roosevelt appointed Curry with confidence that he would succeed where Hagerman had failed.

This time the President was not disappointed, for Curry displayed all of the above attributes and more. Doubtless much of his success as Governor resulted from his close friendship with Roosevelt and Taft, and

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2, July 3, 1907, p. 2 and July 27, 1907, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 545-46; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 198-99; Richardson: "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," pp. 277-78.

that he consequently enjoyed unreserved cooperation from the White House.[18] However, as a party leader he succeeded through his own acumen. He excelled primarily because he accepted the role of appeaser and made no attempt to dominate party affairs or to use his office for self-aggrandizement.[19]

Curry set the pace for his administration even before he returned to New Mexico. In a telegram he assured party leaders that they need not fear his collaboration with the opposition, for he now was thoroughly Republican. He also said he would not take sides in existing disputes. Rather, it would be his purpose to get all Republicans to work together in order to revive the party's power.[20]

Once in office, he acted accordingly and went out of his way to befriend major leaders of all factions. He tried especially hard to convince Catron and Otero to work together, for at the time they were the most troublesome. To achieve this he selected a delegation to the Republican National Convention of 1908 which included Catron and Spiess from the one faction, and Otero and Bursum from the other. He also invited Otero and his friends to participate in his administration and he held Catron in check through personal favors and flattery. For example, when General J. Franklin Bell came to New Mexico to attend the Territorial Fair in 1908, Curry judiciously chose Lieutenant Thomas Catron, Jr. as the General's

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[18]Otero: My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882, pp. 106-07; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 126-27; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 562-63.

[19]Santa Fe New Mexican, January 7, 1908, p. 2.

[20]Ibid., August 5, 1907, p. 2.

aid. When Curry accompanied President Taft to his famous meeting with Porfirio Diaz in El Paso, he invited Catron along. Through such gestures he acquired great influence over the old Santa Fe Ring leader. On Curry's request, Catron even went so far as to personally move in the Council for Otero's appointment as Territorial Treasurer.

Nor was it only by convincing others to forgo personal preferences that Curry excelled as a party leader. He compromised his own desires when partisan harmony was at stake, especially at the congressional nominating convention in the fall of 1908. It was no secret that he personally disliked Delegate Andrews and was determined to oppose his renomination. When Central Committee Chairman Bursum asked the Governor to reverse his position to avert upheaval, however, he turned his whole energy toward assuring Andrews' renomination and campaigned vigorously in his behalf.[21]

One by one Republican leaders accepted Curry until he had practically the entire party under control. During his two year tenure he faced serious opposition only from one small group--Hagerman's disgruntled followers. And even they eventually agreed to support him, and made approval of his administration practically unanimous in the party. After that, only the "Hubbell gang" opposed him, but they counted for little. During the last few territorial years they concerned themselves chiefly with the recovery of lost influence in Bernalillo County.[22]

Thus, had it been left to territorial Republican leaders, Curry

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[21] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 18, 1906, p. 2; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 106-08; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 202-36, 246.

[22] Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 198, 208.

doubtless would have remained in office until statehood. Though he made many friends, he unfortunately made one enemy in Washington who forced him to give up the governorship in the fall of 1909. As a cattleman with land adjoining the Lincoln National Forest, Curry opposed federal conservation projects as unnecessary encroachments upon the freedom of stockgrowers and an impairment of territorial development. During his first months in office, he nearly clashed with Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot over this policy, but yielded out of regard for the President's friendship. Later, he stood his ground, when Public Land Commissioner R. A. Ballinger ordered a group of homesteaders around Clovis to relinquish lands upon which they had already filed claims and made improvements. Ultimately, Curry went to Washington to appeal their case, and when he received no satisfaction from the Public Land Office, he convinced Roosevelt to rescind the order. This triumph naturally enhanced his popularity in the territory, but it proved his undoing. When Taft succeeded Roosevelt he appointed Ballinger Secretary of the Interior and thus made him Curry's direct superior. Curry lived with the tense situation for approximately a year, then resigned because he believed his inability to work with the Secretary adversely effected New Mexican interests.[23]

Unfortunate as this was for Curry, it did not nullify his contribution to the party. He had already cemented the various factions, which continued to cooperate as a close-knit organization until statehood. William J. Mills, the last territorial Governor, did nothing to disturb

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[23]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 566-68; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 225-27, 242-46; Richardson: "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," pp. 278-83.

Curry's achievements. But his role in the party was insignificant, for by the time he took office Republican leaders were too preoccupied with forthcoming changes in government to notice the change of governors.[24]

Curry is remembered as the last prominent figure in territorial Republican history. He stands out with Breeden, Catron and Otero among the major architects of the modern New Mexican Republican party. He took charge when the party was on the verge of disintegration, tied it together, and thereby preserved the fruits of their efforts.

Furthermore, he had great influence upon the lives of New Mexicans after statehood, for his reunification of the party assured Republicans of the privilege of writing the constitution. During his two years in office Republican ranks continued to swell and consequently party leaders had little difficulty packing the Constitutional Convention with men amenable to their philosophy. Accordingly, for better or worse, it was much because of Curry's influence that New Mexico was to embark on its statehood course under conservative organic law.[25]

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[24] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 15, 1912, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 566, 568; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 247, 249.

[25] The Rio Grande Republican, November 14, 1908, p. 1; Santa Fe New Mexican, March 23, 1907, p. 2, March 25, 1907, p. 2, April 2, 1907, p. 2, October 23, 1908, p. 4, November 23, 1908, p. 1, November 25, 1908, p. 4, February 15, 1910, p. 1, February 28, 1910, p. 4 and January 15, 1912, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 545-46; Richardson: "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," p. 277.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

> With the Republicans in the overwhelming majority [at the Constitutional Convention of 1910], the Democrats could not do much but argue and vote "no," which they did on issue after issue, thus establishing a record on some important features of the constitution which were to react disastrously against the Republican party.[1]

The New Mexican Republican party had developed through four major steps. First, William Breeden established a Central Committee. Then Thomas Catron fostered local organizations and drew them together under one leadership and a single policy. Next, Miguel Otero II increased the party's membership, coordinated local and central machinery, and fashioned a tightly disciplined unit out of its major wing. Finally, George Curry appeased dissident leaders, lured them into the main organization left by Otero, and for the first time drew all factions together into a unified whole.

By the time Curry had left office the final touches had been given to the party's machinery and the whole complexion of Republican affairs had begun to change from top to bottom. Management of policy by a single individual now became a thing of the past, for hereafter leadership emanated from the Central and Executive Committees. Internal wrangling lessened in intensity, as most of the important leaders obtained

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[1]Curry: An Autobiography, p. 255.

a place in the organizational hierarchy, and unity of purpose supplanted divergency of aims. Thus, the full force of the party finally could be channeled into competition with the Democrats for control of the state government.

Though Curry's influence and the inclusion of most leading Republicans in the inner circle played a major role, there were other factors which contributed to party unity. Foremost was the rapid growth of the Democratic party during the last few territorial years. Previously, Republican leaders had felt little incentive to cooperate with one another since success at the ballot box was a foregone conclusion. Not only did they win the majority of county offices in every election, they also dominated both houses of the legislature except during the years 1894-98. Moreover, as the table on the following page indicates, they maintained control of the governorship all but eight of the forty-five years of territorial history. During the same period they controlled the elective office of Delegate to Congress all but sixteen years.

This predominance had allowed for intra-party feuds and defections, but the rapid growth of the Democratic party portended a more equal division of governmental control unless Republican leaders could stick together. Even more compelling was the prospect of statehood, the primary integrative force of the party for several decades. Always when talk of a constitutional convention occurred, Republican leaders instinctively drew together. The obvious reason was to dominate the proceedings of a constitutional convention, not only for prestige but also to insure a conservative document. Since most Republicans were socially and economically prominent--lawyers, miners, bankers, merchants and ranchers--they naturally opposed

Period	Governor	Delegate to Congress
1867-69	Robert Mitchell-R	J. Francisco Chavez-R
1869-71	William Pile-R	J. Francisco Chavez-R
1871-73	Marsh Giddings-R	Jose Gallegos-D
1873-75	Marsh Giddings-R	Stephen Elkins-R
1875-77	Samuel Axtell-R	Stephen Elkins-R
1877-79	Samuel Axtell-R	Trinidad Romero-R
1879-81	Lewis Wallace-R	Mariano Otero-R
1881-83	Lionel Sheldon-R	Tranquilino Luna-R
1883-85	Lionel Sheldon-R	F. A. Manzanares-D
1885-87	Edmund Ross-D	Antonio Joseph-D
1887-89	Edmund Ross-D	Antonio Joseph-D
1889-91	L. Bradford Prince-R	Antonio Joseph-D
1891-93	L. Bradford Prince-R	Antonio Joseph-D
1893-95	William Thornton-D	Antonic Joseph-D
1895-97	William Thornton-D	Thomas Catron-R
1897-99	Miguel Otero-R	Harvey Fergusson-D
1899-01	Miguel Otero-R	Pedro Perea-R
1901-03	Miguel Otero-R	Bernard Rodey-R
1903-05	Miguel Otero-R	Bernard Rodey-R
1905-07	Herbert Hagerman-R	William Andrews-R
1907-09	George Curry-R	William Andrews-R
1909-11	William Mills-R	William Andrews-R

any form of western liberalism which threatened their historic privileges. Even during the bitterest factional wars they readily cooperated with

one another to curb liberal ideas.[2]

Likewise, the prospect of immediate statehood regularly instilled peace in high councils because each leading Republican hoped to induce others to help him capture an important post in the new government. For all the energy Thomas Catron expended on immediate aims, for example, he always considered election to the United States Senate by the first state legislature as the primary end of party membership. This was true even in the years that he sought election as Delegate to Congress, when control of the party was at stake. He confided to Stephen Elkins that his candidacy in 1892 and 1894 was essentially "preparatory to statehood." If he were to "get anything under statehood," like a "Senatorship," he felt it necessary to display the ability to win first place on the territorial Republican ticket.[3]

Otero was no different. The prospect of statehood underlay his determination to conceal from the public any opposition to his administration. Indeed, one of his chief preoccupations was to remain popular so that pressure from the electorate ultimately would force other Republican leaders to choose him as the first United States Senator from northern New Mexico.[4]

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[2]Rio Grande Republican, September 16, 1910, p. 2; Reuben W. Heflin: "New Mexico Constitutional Convention," New Mexico Historical Review, XXI (January, 1946), p. 62; Thomas C. Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution--The Constitutional Convention of 1910," New Mexico Quarterly, XII (November, 1942), pp. 437, 439-49; T. B. Catron to R. Fulton Cutting, October 25, 1911, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, XXXI, p. 291.

[3]Elkins to Catron, August 19, 1892, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, Box 15, letter 8606; Catron to Elkins, October 3, 1894, Catron Papers, Personal Correspondence, X, p. 619.

[4]Dargan: "New Mexico's Fight for Statehood 1895-1912," New Mexico Historical Review, XIV (January, 1939), p. 32.

The same was true with other principal Republican leaders during the last few territorial years, as statehood seemed "just around the corner." As a result the party's inner circle assumed the character of a congenial society of friends, and once Congress passed the Enabling Act the members campaigned together, cooperated to apply maximum pressure on local leaders, and thus won control of the Constitutional Convention. The pre-convention election was a Republican landslide; out of one hundred delegates chosen, seventy-one were Republicans, twenty-eight were Democrats, and one was a Socialist.[5]

Because of this majority, Republican leaders saw no reason to include the opposition in drafting New Mexico's constitution. Proceedings revolved chiefly around a "coterie of six": Republican veterans Thomas Catron, Solomon Luna, Holm Bursum and Charles Spiess, and future leaders Albert Fall and Charles Springer. These half dozen men took complete charge, divided the work among themselves and wrote the document practically without assistance.

The means used were simple. First, Spiess won the convention chairmanship to assure favorable decisions in case of controversy on the floor. Then the "coterie of six" took control of the important Committee on Committees, the chief function of which was to appoint twenty-seven standing committees. Naturally, they chose themselves to head the ones of greatest importance. For example, Albert Fall became chairman of the Committee on the Legislative Department, Bursum dominated the important Committee on Corporations, and Springer ran the Committee

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[5]Thomas J. Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making--Reminiscences of 1910," New Mexico Historical Review, XIX (April, 1944), p. 170.

on Constitutional Revisions.

Technically the Constitution had to run the gauntlet of popular referendum, and since the electorate was unschooled and highly vulnerable to suggestion, issues counted little in territorial politics. Naturally Democratic liberals, hostile because of the shabby treatment they received by the conservative majority, planned to attack each provision of the constitution in hopes of defeating it. The "coterie of six" therefore had to devise means to shut off the Democrats and at the same time to keep the public in the dark as much as possible. They therefore required that all standing committees submit their respective recommendations to the Republican caucus for approval. Once before the floor they could be voted upon without unnecessary delay. Moreover, the Republicans allowed no roll call except by request from thirty members--one more than the total non-Republican delegation. This was designed to prevent embarrassment to individual delegates when the time came to sell the finished document to their constituents. For similar reasons, only committee reports and total votes appeared in official records.[6]

Subsequently Republican leaders mingled with constituents and told them how to vote. Because of such tactics, the electorate obviously responded when called upon to accept the Constitution. Though some opposition existed in the eastern counties, seventy-five percent of the voters expressed approval on referendum day.

Thus, through mutual cooperation and practical politics, Republicans brought about the crowning achievement of their party's history.

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[6]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 584; Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution," pp. 439-49.

As most of them saw it, not only had they as a party received a mandate to set up the first state government, they likewise had won public endorsement of conservatism. Leaders such as Catron and Bursum jubilantly predicted the collapse of the opposition and a sweep of the forthcoming election.

Some prominent Republicans did not share this confidence, however. Ralph Emerson Twitchell warned that public endorsement of the Constitution might have stemmed from other causes, and that once New Mexico became a state, voters might re-examine the principles it contained and resent the means by which it was forced upon them. He felt that many approved only as an expression of gratitude to Delegate William Andrews, through whose influence with Senators Matthew Quay and Boies Penrose the New Mexico Enabling Act had been passed. Others saw race as the crucial factor. There was not a single "native" among the twenty-eight Democratic delegates at the Convention, while out of seventy-one Republicans, thirty-five bore Spanish names. Perhaps the "natives" accepted the Constitution in return for this recognition. Still others believed a substantial percentage of voters realized the reluctance of President Taft and numerous Congressmen from the Atlantic seaboard to endorse statehood under a constitution any less conservative than the one drafted.[7]

Even the "coterie of six" must have had some doubts that approval for the Constitution would be tantamount to victory in the first state election. At the Convention they carefully gerrymandered the new state to assure domination of the first legislature, and hence the first United

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[7]Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 546, 575-78, 588-89; Beck: New Mexico, pp. 298-99; Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution," p. 444; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 256.

States Senatorships. For purposes of representation in the state legislature they attached Democratic Lincoln and questionable Otero Counties to Republican Dona Ana County. Socorro County, which was also safely Republican, received its own state Senator, and in addition was combined with surrounding counties in "shoe-string" districts to assure Republican control over three other seats.[8]

Once the Constitution was approved by the electorate, however, most of the principal party leaders ignored the small but determined group of liberals. This was a mistake, for under the leadership of Harvey Fergusson the liberals made good use of every opportunity to assail their opponent's high-handed methods, denounce conservatism, and to publicize the advantage of popular government. By the time the pre-convention election ended, everyone knew the meaning of initiative and referendum. Though pressure from local Republican chieftains and the desire for statehood would determine the choice of delegates, the voters were schooled in appropriate means to liberate themselves in the future from these political overlords.[9]

Where possible Fergusson Democrats got their views across to the public from the Convention floor. Frequently, their arguments were cut short, and they did not get into official records, but the convention was open to the public and newsmen reported parts of the debates. At least everyone learned of the eighteen "irreconcilables" who held out to the end

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[8]Edward D. Tittmann: "New Mexico's Constitutional Convention: Recollections," New Mexico Historical Review, XXVII (July, 1952), p. 179; Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making," p. 174.

[9]Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution," p. 436.

because they believed the constitution was an indefensible encroachment upon popular prerogatives.[10]

Later when the constitution went before the public for approval, Fergusson and his apostles followed Republican constitutional promoters from constituency to constituency.[11] Soon after the voter had heard a favorable speech in behalf of the constitution, he then learned of some of its shortcomings, such as unreasonable apportionment, expensive governmental machinery, favoritism to corporations and illegal land laws. The Fergusson group also protested vigorously against the exclusion of election and corrupt practices acts and among other things the initiative, referendum and recall.[12]

As the first state election drew near in the fall of 1911, the importance of this liberal indoctrination became increasingly evident. George Curry saw its significance when he cautioned Chairman Bursum that New Mexican voters now were "thinking for themselves," and no longer could be counted upon to submit to "iron hand" tactics. It was in response to a new mood in the electorate that Herbert Hagerman threatened to lead an

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[10]Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution," p. 440; Heflin: "New Mexico Constitutional Convention," pp. 64-67; Tittmann: "New Mexico's Constitutional Convention: Recollections," pp. 181-82; Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making," pp. 173-74, 177-79; Harvey B. Fergusson and Frank W. Clancy: Addresses on the Making of a Constitution (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico; 1910), pp. 6-15.

[11]Donnelly: "The Making of the New Mexico Constitution," p. 446; Tittmann: "New Mexico's Constitutional Convention: Recollections," p. 177; Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making," p. 171; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 586.

[12]Rio Grande Republican, November 11, 1910, p. 2; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 415; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 586-88; Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making," pp. 170-71.

uprising in the party unless it "kept up with the times." Editors of the powerful Rio Grande Republican recognized the trends when they predicted disaster for the party unless it became "more progressive."[13]

Republican leaders should have taken new stock of the situation when a bolt occurred in Bernalillo County. There W. H. Gillenwater formed a separate County Republican Central Committee and launched a Hagerman-for-Governor movement. Danger also existed from the fact that Fergusson's followers were growing rapidly from immigration. During the month of March, 1911 alone approximately 3,000 Anglos moved into the eastern counties, and most of these were liberal Democrats.[14]

Any one of these signs should have induced the "coterie of six" to act more democratically when they made up their ticket, but they still deluded themselves into thinking that victory would be theirs regardless of high-handed tactics. New Mexican editors encouraged this belief with assurance that public approval of the Constitution had reduced the Democratic party to a conglomerate of factions, and that men like Hagerman and Gillenwater eventually would fall in line. Republican leaders also received encouragement from the defection of Democratic chieftain Octaviano Larrazolo in August, 1911. Larrazolo seemingly controlled the "native" bloc of the Democratic party. He spent the entire fall campaigning against race prejudice among former associates, urging all Spanish-Americans to

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[13] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 23, 1911, p. 2, September 27, 1911, p. 4 and November 28, 1908, p. 4; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 271-72.

[14] Santa Fe New Mexican, April 8, 1911, p. 4, August 31, 1911, p. 3, September 9, 1911, p. 3, September 12, 1911, p. 3, September 28, 1911, p. 7 and February 28, 1917, p. 2; Rio Grande Republican, September 9, 1910, p. 2 and November 10, 1911, p. 2.

join him in the Republican party.[15]

The "coterie of six" concluded that there was no great discontent among the rank and file. Bursum immediately seized the gubernatorial nomination for himself, and awarded other choice positions to favorites of the inner circle. He then called a nominating convention to ratify his actions.[16]

However, a rebellion occurred at the convention which would prove the most important partisan event of the constitutional period. Herbert Hagerman quickly collected a bloc of delegates, all of whom agreed beforehand to bolt unless the Old Guard changed its ways. They then decided upon the gubernatorial nomination as a test case and announced that they would leave the party unless someone other than Holm Bursum headed the ticket. Accordingly, they issued an ultimatum when proceedings opened. Hagerman received no response and withdrew his following to organize another convention under the name Republican Progressive League of New Mexico.[17]

At first the Old Guard ignored the Progressive movement as another temporary phenomenon like the Independent uprisings of territorial years. For a time their attitude seemed justifiable because the League's membership was scattered in small groups all over the territory and floundered for lack of coordination and direction. Soon it became more

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[15] Santa Fe New Mexican, March 31, 1911, p. 4, August 31, 1911, p. 3 and August 25, 1911, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 596-99.

[16] Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 597-98.

[17] Charles B. Judah: Governor Richard C. Dillon: A Study in New Mexico Politics (Albuquerque: Division of Research, Department of Government, University of New Mexico; 1948), p. 11.

serious, when two other ex-governors lent their support. Miguel Otero joined in hopes of recovering his lost political fortunes, and quickly became New Mexico's foremost Progressive. George Curry, though he did not actively participate as a member, likewise gave his support because he believed in the League's principles. With Hagerman, Otero and Curry behind it, the Progressive movement swelled rapidly. Numerous lesser leaders who had benefitted from the administrations of these three men brought in additional members, and by election time the Progressives commanded several thousand votes.[18]

By themselves they posed no immediate threat to the Old Guard and stood little chance of upsetting the powerful Republican ticket as a third party. Yet, simple arithmetic showed that if they were to join forces with the Democrats and present the best candidates from both parties on the same ticket, they had a good chance to win a substantial percentage of administrative posts, and even to defeat Holm Bursum in the Governor's race. Naturally the Progressives had qualms about fusion with their former adversaries, but the stakes were high.

Due to gerrymandering at the Constitutional Convention, regular Republicans were assured of control over the legislature. By capturing the administrative branch, as well, they could continue the predominance they enjoyed in territorial times. In anticipation of a sweep of the first state election the "coterie of six" had fixed the terms of the first

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[18] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 10, 1912, p. 4, August 2, 1912, p. 6, October 11, 1912, p. 6 and July 15, 1916, p. 2; Rio Grande Republican, November 17, 1911, p. 2; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 10; Richardson: "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," p. 283.

state administrative officials at five years.[19] Thus, Progressives eventually concluded that they had to collaborate with the Democrats. If they failed to make a mark in the first state election, their chances of survival as an independent group appeared remote indeed.

Forming a Democratic-Progressive ticket was problematical because of Harvey Fergusson. Foremost among leaders at the joint nominating convention, he was the logical one to compete with Republican Holm Bursum for the governorship. Still because of his radical views, many in attendance abhorred the prospect of his running the state government. The wealthy Hagerman must have winced at the thought, for although he posed as a liberal, he was in the Progressive movement mainly to get revenge on the Old Guard--not to foster a veritable social and economic revolution. Numerous other moderates in both the Democratic and Progressive parties felt the same, and there were many dissident Republicans ready to defect to the Democratic party if offered leadership which would respect the existing order. Since Fergusson obviously could not carry these moderates, he was persuaded to become a candidate for the United States House of Representatives. His acceptance was the result of a desire to return to Washington, plus the fact that he realized that William C. McDonald had a better chance in the governor's race. An affable, conservative businessman, McDonald had a wide appeal, and the liberals were certain to follow

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[19]Republican leaders claimed to have fixed administrative terms at five years because of uncertainty as to when the first state election would be held. Their confidence of victory was probably more important to that decision, however. The original constitution also provided for a four year term for the Governor, but this was reduced to two years by amendment in 1914. As for state legislators, they always have served terms of two years. Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 496.

Fergusson's lead anyway.[20]

Together the Democrats and Progressives carried out a highly effective campaign, with McDonald attracting moderates from all three parties. As for Fergusson, no one except Albert Fall could compete with him as a campaigner. Otero, the Progressive candidate for the state Senate from Santa Fe County, as usual attracted a large following. Hagerman also contributed immeasurably, for he now owned an interest in the Albuquerque Journal and used it to popularize the Progressive League.[21]

The Democratic-Progressives centered the attack chiefly upon Republican machine bossism. Holm Bursum bore the brunt, but the so-called "Blue Ballot controversy" received considerable attention as well. This controversy took its name from a blue ballot whereby the voters were called upon by the United States House of Representatives to reconsider their total acceptance of the Constitution. The House, when it saw that amendment precedures made future constitutional revision impossible, rewrote the article on amendments and ordered that their revisions be submitted to the New Mexican voters in the first state election. This enabled Progressives and Democrats to remind the electorate of the "iron hand" methods used by the "coterie of six" at the Constitutional Convention. In addition, they sharpened their criticisms of stalwart conservatism, and demanded the overthrow of the autocratic machine which had ruled

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[20] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 27, 1917, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 599; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 258-59.

[21] Santa Fe New Mexican, October 6, 1911, p. 3, October 13, 1911, p. 6, October 14, 1911, p. 4, October 17, 1911, p. 3 and October 19, 1911, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 600-01; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 260.

New Mexico for so long.[22]

Election day proved a devastating blow to Republicans when the people accepted Fergusson's advice regarding the Blue Ballot. Whereas some seventy-five percent of the voters had voted for the Constitution previously, now more than sixty percent endorsed easier amendment procedures. This revealed that acceptance of the Constitution had not been so much a Republican mandate after all. Rather it indicated the desire for statehood, and with statehood a certainty the voters more accurately expressed their feelings on Republican tactics and conservatism by demanding more voice in governmental affairs.[23]

State election returns likewise reflected a partial rejection of Republican leadership. The Old Guard claimed a triumph when their candidates won two-thirds of the 367 offices filled, but more careful analyses indicated otherwise. Republican interpretations failed to show that their greatest success was in the legislative election, which they had "rigged" through gerrymandering. Moreover, they passed over the fact that many of their candidates were Republican in name only. George Curry, for example, won a seat in the national House of Representatives on the Republican ticket, but he belonged philosophically to the Progressive party.

At the same time the Republicans suffered defeat in several very important races, especially for the gubernatorial office. Democratic candidates also won the lieutenant governorship and the offices of State

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[22]Santa Fe New Mexican, October 17, 1911, p. 4 and November 9, 1911, p. 4; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 257.

[23]Curry: An Autobiography, p. 261.

Treasurer and Superintendent of Public Instruction. Progressives Richard H. Hanna and George A. Van Stand were elected to the Supreme Court and Corporation Commission. Indeed, the fact that the Republican party was at the peak of its power prior to the election would seem to indicate that a triumph required a complete sweep at the polls.[24]

This last point was of considerable importance, and failure to win all offices spread disillusionment up and down the ranks. The Progressive-Democratic campaign had concentrated successfully upon Holm Bursum as a symbol of Republican bossism. Likewise, Republican strength was greatly damaged by the Progressive-Democratic victory on the Blue Ballot issue. Fergusson Liberals had proved popular with the electorate. Progressives were on the ascent, and Republicans were destined to fall unless their leaders heeded the warnings "to keep up with the times."[25]

Republicans did find some consolation in the prospects of selecting United States Senators, since they now controlled the state legislature. Yet, even this had its discouragement for the unity they formerly enjoyed at the Constitutional Convention had been shakened by the election. Bursum's defeat weakened confidence in party leadership and forced each to look to his own interests. The senatorial contests therefore quickly turned into an "every-man-for-himself" affair.

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[24] Santa Fe New Mexican, November 25, 1911, p. 4, December 28, 1911, p. 6 and March 16, 1912, p. 4; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, p. 602; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 261-62; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 496-97; Mabry: "New Mexico's Constitution in the Making," p. 175.

[25] Santa Fe New Mexican, November 13, 1911, p. 4, February 15, 1912, p. 4 and March 7, 1912, p. 4; Rio Grande Republican, November 3, 1911, p. 2; Twitchell: The Leading Facts of New Mexico History, II, pp. 552-53; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 23; John T. Russell: "Racial Groups in the New Mexico Legislature," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CXCV (1938), p. 67.

Former Delegate Andrews and Bursum demanded senatorships in return for their efforts in the statehood movement. William Mills thought he deserved reward for his service to the party while in the Governor's Mansion. Solomon Luna, L. Bradford Prince, Charles Springer and Octaviano Larrazolo likewise entered the race. Moreover, Thomas Catron, Albert Fall and Charles Spiess, believed that they were equally deserving of the honor.

The selection of Fall for one Senatorship was never in doubt. Later Bronson Cutting produced evidence that Fall won the office through bribery, but there were other reasons. For one thing, he was the most popular politician in the party. And, like Curry, he had recently come into the party without the stigma of bossism. Moreover, no one in the state except Fergusson better grasped the proper role of a legislator, or could better present New Mexico's problems and desires on the floor of the Senate.

It was the other seat that caused trouble. Through thirty-five ballots the various contenders fought, and the struggle would not have ended then but for a rumor that Spanish-American Republican legislators were planning to support some Democrat for the office, provided he was a member of their race. Also, there was a meeting in the "smoke filled" hotel room of Thomas Catron. Evidence regarding what took place is not available to this writer, but the meeting resulted in the old Ring leader's ultimate selection.[26]

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[26] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 16, 1911, p. 7, February 20, 1911, p. 3, August 23, 1911, p. 3, December 11, 1911, p. 4, March 27, 1912, p. 1 and August 24, 1914, p. 1; Curry: An Autobiography, pp. 265-66; Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," p. 123; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 14.

It gratified many Republicans to send Catron and Fall to the Senate, but they all knew that the change from territorial status to statehood had had a ruinous effect upon the party. Prospects for the future were dim, for New Mexican voters had made it clear that they no longer would support dictatorial leaders of tolerate "iron hand" tactics. The democratic party on the other hand was obviously growing stronger. Republicans faced additional threat from the Progressive League, which promised to grow into a full-fledged party. Less than two years before at the Constitutional Convention the Republicans seemed unbeatable, but now they were in a state of confusion and decline, if not destined for total extinction.

CHAPTER VIII

PROGRESSIVES AND THE BALANCE OF POWER, 1912-1930

> The Republican party needs /Bronson/ Cutting a darned sight worse than Cutting needs the party.[1]

Fears of additional setbacks soon proved valid. Immigrants continued to flock into eastern counties, and by 1912 the Democratic party lacked only a few thousand votes of overtaking the Republicans. At the same time the Progressive party grew to more than 8,000 members, a figure large enough to maintain a balance of power at the polls. As a result this third party would determine the outcome of all but two elections over the next twenty years.

One reason for the remarkable upsurge of Progressive strength was mounting opposition to Republican bossism. Another was more efficient internal organization. In July, 1912 the Progressive League became the Progressive party and soon emerged as a full-fledged political movement. Miguel Otero, Chairman of the first Central Committee, perfected party machinery at every level and schooled local leaders on liberal objectives. He also instilled discipline, enlisted scores of new members, and in a short time did for the Progressive movement many of the same things he had accomplished for the Republican party a decade and a half earlier.[2]

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[1] Santa Fe New Mexican, August 23, 1928, p. 4.

[2] Ibid., September 4, 1911, p. 4, July 29, 1912, p. 1, July 30, 1912, p. 1, August 16, 1912, p. 2, March 10, 1913, pp. 1, 8, September 3, 1914, p. 2 and July 15, 1916, p. 2.

Even more important was the appearance of a new leader. Bronson Cutting became active in the Progressive movement soon after he arrived from New York in 1911. First he was an officer in the League, then he became the party's Treasurer in 1912. Two years later he replaced Otero as Progressive Central Committee Chairman, and from that time forward his leadership went unchallenged.

The acquisition of the New Mexican in the summer of 1912 was the key to Cutting's political success, and in turn to the success of the Progressive movement. Not only did this deprive the Republican party of its best organ, it also gave the Progressives the advantage of reaching practically every literate voter in the state, for Cutting greatly improved the New Mexican. Circulation soared almost immediately because of its more extensive local and national news coverage, attractive advertisements, and broadened classified section. The paper's popularity also was enhanced because it provided concise information on how the voter could free himself from Republican bosses who had ruled so long. Subsequent editorials by one of New Mexico's foremost newsmen, E. Dana Johnson, explained the whole Progressive platform in terms understandable to the average reader.[3]

Johnson proved almost as important to the Progressive party as Cutting because he knew New Mexico's people better than his employer did, and he understood which of the various Progressive platform planks would be most attractive to them. As chief editor of the Albuquerque Journal he had fought the Old Guard during the Constitutional Convention. He also spoke for the dissident Gillenwater Republicans of Bernalillo County, and

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[3]Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 11; Santa Fe New Mexican, September 4, 1914, p. 1.

he had popularized the Progressive League for Hagerman in the fall of 1911. Accordingly, Cutting found in him a worthy partner in the Progressive crusade which he launched in 1912 and continued through the New Mexican for more than twenty years.[4]

Nor did Cutting and Johnson limit the New Mexican to the role of liberal organ. Under their joint supervision it continued as New Mexico's most influential campaign instrument. In the election of 1912 it played an important role, as the Progressives proved that the returns of the previous year had not been an accident. Moreover, the Republicans could expect more of the same. Due to congressional reapportionment, only one seat in the United States House of Representatives was at stake that year. This was fortunate for the Progressives since it afforded them a chance to put their strength to an unequivocal test. At first it appeared they might falter, what with two strong liberals available, Curry and Fergusson. A clash between these two incumbents would have meant a clear-cut Republican victory, but luckily Curry declined the Progressive nomination to allow Fergusson's election. Both Republicans and Progressives then ran unknown candidates, and although the Progressives polled only twelve percent of the total vote, they drew support from traditional Republican strongholds. As a result, Democrat Fergusson was re-elected by a plurality.[5]

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[4] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 12, 1912, p. 3, July 2, 1912, p. 7, July 8, 1912, p. 6 and October 30, 1920, p. 1; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 12-13, 31; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 12; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 271.

[5] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 11, 1912, p. 4, September 14, 1912, p. 6 and November 12, 1912, p. 4.

The Old Guard experienced another catastrophy that same year when Solomon Luna died in an accident on his Valencia County ranch. Luna's power in his own county, and his persuasive influence among Spanish-Americans in general had outlasted that of all other patrón. His passing now freed the "natives" almost completely from the traditional restraint which so long had benefitted the Republican party, for it removed all but a trace of political feudalism.[6]

Encouraged by these events, Cutting and Johnson augmented their attack against the Old Guard through the columns of the New Mexican in 1913. Otherwise it would have been a bad year for the Progressive party in New Mexico, since interest in politics had shifted from state and local to national and international levels. Throughout the year the New Mexican promoted liberal ideas, and in the fall it waged a vicious assault on the Republicans for their method of choosing a United States Senator. Albert Fall, who had drawn the short term the previous year, was automatically reappointed by the Republican legislature. This gave Cutting and Johnson opportunity to create a minor sensation over the so-called "steamroller" tactics employed. Thus, they kept alive the Progressive movement through an otherwise arid period.[7]

When both state legislators and New Mexico's Congressman ran for re-election the next year, Cutting had a chance to present the Progressive philosophy again because public attention returned to local politics. He also took complete charge of his party and personally organized the

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[6] Ibid., August 8, 1912, p. 4, August 29, 1912, p. 6, August 30, 1912, p. 1 and September 14, 1912, p. 6.

[7] Ibid., January to October, 1913, passim.

Progressive nominating convention in 1914, and worked hard all year in the belief that the Old Guard's power continued to diminish. Neither the Progressives nor the Democrats expected to upset Republican candidates for control of the state legislature. But it was generally believed that Progressive candidate Francis C. Wilson would again draw off enough Republican votes to enable Democratic Congressman Fergusson to win re-election.[8] This, of course, was Cutting's goal, since the Progressive party was far too small to elect Wilson.

The conjecture seemed all the more tenable as the Republicans met to select their candidate. In the previous election Progressives had turned the balance of power in favor of Fergusson when the Republicans were united, and now the latter engaged in an intra-party battle which was reminiscent of territorial times. It began prior to the state nominating convention, when a veritable race war developed in Bernalillo County. There Sheriff Jesus Romero redistricted the County and packed the local convention with "native" delegates who would support his friend, Elfego Baca, for the Congressional nomination. When Anglo leaders protested, Romero ordered his deputy sheriffs to drive them from the convention. The local party then split along race lines, and the Anglos subsequently called a separate convention.[9]

Two Bernalillo County delegations appeared at the state convention. Catron, Spiess, Bursum, Charles Springer and all their cohorts immediately sided with the Anglos. It seemed that Romero and Baca would

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[8] Ibid., August 17, 1914, p. 1, September 3, 1914, p. 1 and September 4, 1914, p. 1.

[9] Ibid., July 28, 1914, p. 1, August 10, 1914, p. 1, August 14, pp. 1, 2 and September 7, 1914, p. 2.

capitulate, and that the session would quiet down, until still other uprisings occurred. Encouraged by existing tensions, land and mining barons from the northern counties insisted upon their favorite for the nomination. Then ex-Delegate Rodey brought further chaos with the demand that all existing candidates withdraw and that the nominee be selected by state-wide primary.[10]

It appeared there would be at least three Republican candidates, or none at all, until major leaders cooperated with each other to prevent disaster. Ultimately, all but Romero and Baca agreed that the crucial race was for the legislature, and since the party needed support from the Republican barons of northern New Mexico, they were allowed to run Benigno C. Hernandez.[11] Thus, peace was restored, but even most Republicans assumed Hernandez would lose to Fergusson.

The Republicans were as surprised as Fergusson and Cutting when they both retained control of the legislature in 1914 and elected Hernandez to Congress with a safe majority. His victory was attributed primarily to a decline in Progressive strength at the national level following Theodore Roosevelt's defeat in 1912. This caused many New Mexican Progressives to return to the Republican party in the belief that the movement was dead. Also, wool-growers in New Mexico voted unanimously for Hernandez because of the tariff controversy in Congress. Catron accomplished little in the Senate, but he had introduced several bills to raise the tariff on wool. Harvey Fergusson, on the other hand, had worked vigorously for

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[10] Ibid., June 20, 1914, p. 2, July 6, 1914, p. 2, August 24, 1914, p. 1 and August 26, 1914, p. 1.

[11] Ibid., October 30, 1914, p. 6 and November 1914, p. 5.

tariff reduction. These facts convinced voters from the wool industry that their place was in the Republican party.[12]

Cutting was disappointed because of Hernandez' victory. The Republicans soon nullified their gains, however, by passing a bill during the ensuing legislative session to increase salaries of county officials. Realizing the bill would arouse opposition, they nevertheless pushed it through, for their power in state government depended upon control of the legislature, and in turn upon continued support from county leaders who kept the lower class in line. Though the salary bill did strengthen their hold on county officials, many voters considered it an unjustifiable raid on public funds.[13]

Cutting gained confidence from this dissatisfaction, and as he began preparations for the election of 1916, even Theodore Roosevelt could not convince him that his Progressive following had diminished or that he should lead it back into the Republican party.[14] In the summer of 1916 he grew still bolder because nearly every newspaper editor in New Mexico was distracted from politics and lined up behind him to fight against encroachment upon the freedom of the press by Old Guard Republican leaders.

The Old Guard intended only to quiet Cutting and Johnson when

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[12] Santa Fe New Mexican, August 23, 1913 to November 21, 1914, passim; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 12.

[13] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 23, 1915, pp. 1, 4, February 23, 1915, p. 6, February 26, 1915, p. 1, February 27, 1915, p. 6 and March 30, 1915, p. 5. The running battle between Governor McDonald and the legislature is related in the Santa Fe New Mexican, 1912 to 1915, passim.

[14] Santa Fe New Mexican, March 22, 1916, p. 2, March 27, 1916, p. 4, July 11, 1916, p. 4, July 25, 1916, p. 4, October 13, 1916, p. 1; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 20-24. In 1916 Theodore Roosevelt urged Cutting to join forces with the New Mexican Old Guard to prevent Woodrow Wilson from winning the state's electoral vote.

Frank Hubbell brought suit against the New Mexican Publishing Company for alleged damage to his career back in 1905, seven years before Cutting became its owner. But all newsmen felt endangered. They were even more alarmed when Old Guard leaders hired one of Holm Bursum's friends, Henry Dreyfus, to initiate another suit after Hubbell's had failed. Presumably, sometime before Cutting came to the Southwest a New Mexican editor had accused Dreyfus of abusing the American flag. Handpicked jurymen from Valencia County found Cutting--as owner of the New Mexican--guilty. Republican Judge Merritt Mechem ordered him to pay more than $10,000 for damage he could not possibly have done to Dreyfus' reputation.[15]

These cases failed to accomplish their purpose. It was well-known that if anyone was guilty it was the owner of the New Mexican in territorial times, Old Guard spokesman Max Frost, now deceased. By attacking the New Mexican in the courts, the Old Guard only aroused sympathy for Cutting, alienated their own newsmen, and diminished their already slight chances for victory in the forthcoming election. In 1916 they faced an intra-party crisis even worse than that of two years earlier.

This time a group of moderate Republicans, led by Central Committee Chairman Ralph C. Ely, warned that they would bolt if Bursum, Fall, Frank Hubbell, Charles Spiess and Charles Springer did not let them participate in the selection of a ticket. When the Republican nominating convention met it was obvious to Ely and his friends that their demand would not be heard. Consequently, Ely called the convention to order and announced his refusal to submit to further machine domination. He then led a

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[15]Santa Fe New Mexican, September 4, 1916, p. 3 and March 12, 1917, p. 3; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 18, 26.

contingent of delegates out of the hall and into the Progressive convention, where he delivered the keynote address on the evils of bossism before finally calling his own convention and forming a fourth party--the Republican Independents.

Meanwhile, the battle continued at the Republican convention. W. H. Gillenwater succeeded Ely in the Chairmanship, whereupon Frank Hubbell threatened to bolt. Aspiring to the senatorial nomination, Hubbell needed a friend in the Chairmanship and Gillenwater was one of his worst enemies. The two men had disagreed back in 1911, and since then they frequently had exchanged insults. For a time it seemed that Hubbell would follow Ely into the Independent party. His price to remain loyal was the senatorial nomination. No one knew whether Catron would relinquish it, and if so, whether Gillenwater would support Hubbell as his replacement.[16]

Stripped of practically all newspaper support, accused of looting the public treasury, and uprooted by factional feuds, the Old Guard rapidly lost ground. In almost every issue of the New Mexican E. Dana Johnson gleefully predicted the rapid demise of the Republican party. Suddenly Republican leaders rallied to stave off impending disaster by promising Frank Hubbell that he could replace Catron as senatorial nominee. This proved a wise move, for practically everyone in the party agreed that the old Ring leader had outlived his usefulness anyway. Senatorial candidates now had to face popular election, and Catron represented everything the voters had come to despise. Also, he had been sick most of his stay

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[16] Santa Fe New Mexican, August 11, 1916, p. 3, August 23, 1916, p. 1, August 24, 1916, p. 1, August 31, 1916, p. 1, October 3, 1916, p. 1 and March 2, 1917, p. 5.

in Washington and unable to represent the state properly. Catron was even more a liability because of his determination to lead the state into the camp of Charles Evans Hughes. Albert Fall, on the other hand, insisted that New Mexico support Roosevelt for the Republican nomination for President in 1916. The rift between the two Senators forced Republicans to choose between them, and after nearly a half century of party service, Catron's career came to an end.[17]

Once Hubbell received the senatorial nomination the convention faced no further upheaval. Selection of a gubernatorial candidate passed without incident. Holm Bursum, who demanded a chance to erase the humiliation of his defeat five years earlier, was unanimously nominated for Governor. Likewise, Hernandez received renomination to Congress without difficulty, for the party needed support from Republican barons in the northern counties. Choosing a candidate for the lieutenant governorship, though it provoked no controversy, did entail lengthy deliberation. The Old Guard suddenly realized the need to appease moderates who had not bolted with Ely, and they went to considerable trouble to find someone acceptable. This group was flirting with Progressivism, and there was additional danger that some would defect to the Democratic camp because of Miguel Otero. The "little Governor" had left the Progressives when Cutting replaced him as Central Committee Chairman, and now appeared on the Democratic slate as nominee for State Auditor. He still possessed the personal magnetism for which he was famous and threatened to draw many moderate votes away from the Republicans. To prevent him from doing so, the Old

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[17] Sluga: "The Political Life of Thomas Benton Catron," pp. 127, 149-50; Curry: An Autobiography, p. 281.

Guard chose ex-Progressive Washington Lindsey to run for the lieutenant governorship.[18]

Republicans honed this strategy would hold their party together. Perhaps Lindsey's presence on the ticket would even lure back Independents and attract Progressives. It might have, had the Republicans enjoyed editorial support. But many newsmen failed to return to Republican ranks that year, so this change in tactics received little publicity. Most Republican editors either remained quiet or supported the other ticket. They could do so with a clear conscience, for the Democrats presented the best slate in the history of their party, one which appealed to all voters except Old Guard supporters. For the two top state offices they simply reversed the ticket of 1911 and nominated Ezequiel Cabeza de Baca for Governor and William McDonald for Lieutenant Governor. McDonald had been chosen originally as the rich man's candidate, while Lieutenant Governor Cabeza de Baca also had been acceptable to moderates. In addition, the latter had great prestige among "native" voters because he claimed direct descent from explorer Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Baca.

The Democrats then added bait for Progressives. To run against Frank Hubbell in the senatorial race they chose Anson A. Jones, best remembered as a Fergusson "irreconcilable." He also was an object of pride to all New Mexicans because he had served as Assistant Secretary of the Interior in Woodrow Wilson's administration.[19]

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[18] Santa Fe New Mexican, March 6, 1916, p. 3, April 10, 1916, p. 4, August 22, 1916, p. 1, August 24, 1916, p. 4, September 19, 1916, p. 4 and October 4, 1916, p. 1.

[19] Santa Fe New Mexican, September 1, 1916, p. 1, September 2, 1916, p. 4 and October 9, 1916, p. 4; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 25.

Considering all the trouble the Old Guard brought on themselves in 1916, it would have been miraculous had they defeated this excellent ticket. They made a desperate effort because winning seemed the last chance to justify their control over the party. Defeated in 1911, embarrassed in 1912 and victorious by accident in 1914, they had to show significant improvement or give way to more moderate leaders. But despite their efforts, and the popularity of Albert Fall and Washington Lindsey, the electorate would not listen. Independents, moderate Republicans, Progressives and Democrats combined at the polls and sent Jones to the Senate, Cabeza de Baca to the Governor's office and Democrat William Walton to Congress. The Democrats also won their share of the top dozen administrative posts and picked up some seats in the state legislature. The only Republican victory of importance was ex-Progressive Washington Lindsey's narrow win over Democratic nominee William McDonald for the lieutenant governorship.[20]

The election of 1916 underscored the decline of Old Guard Republicanism and the growth of Progressivism in New Mexico after statehood. In the absence of outside influence, voters made a clear choice between machine rule and the Progressive ideals of Cutting. When Cabeza de Baca died a short time after taking office and Lindsey moved up to the governorship,[21] some Republicans hoped this might revive their fortunes. But

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[20] Santa Fe New Mexican, November 23, 1916, p. 1 and November 24, 1916, p. 4; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 497; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 23.

[21] Santa Fe New Mexican, February 14, 1917, p. 5 and February 19, 1917, pp. 1, 3; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 23.

Old Guard leaders realized that Lindsey had been elected only because he formerly was a Progressive. Moreover, he now was a problem to them because he proved ineffective as Governor. Hence they had no intention of awarding him first place on the state Republican ticket in the next election.

The only thing about which the Old Guard was certain regarding the next election was that Albert Fall would be renominated for the United States Senate. As for the gubernatorial nomination in 1918, both Lindsey and Bursum wanted it, but it seemed unlikely that either could win. Perhaps Old Guard leaders would have considered Bursum, despite his previous defeats, had they known what the Progressives would do. Indeed, Cutting's followers demonstrated in the next election that while they could affect Republican defeat, they likewise could assure Republican victory. With little warning Bronson Cutting left for England to serve as military attaché in the American embassy. In his absence Justine Ward, his sister, handled his personal affairs, supervised editorial policy for the New Mexican, and acted as ex-officio head of the Progressive party. Surprisingly, her admiration for handsome Albert Fall prompted her to bring the New Mexican behind the Republican ticket, and despite vehement protests from E. Dana Johnson, her brother refused to interfere.[22]

Perhaps Bursum could have won due to this turn of events, but it is doubtful. The Progressives were hesitant to accept Justine's dictation, and might have refused had there not been radical change in both the Democratic and Republican tickets. Democratic candidates in 1918,

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[22] Santa Fe New Mexican, October 10, 1918, p. 4 and October 12, 1918, p. 4; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 28.

on the one hand, were much less attractive than previously. Harvey Fergusson had retired from leadership, and as the party reorganized, a group of young Democrats seized choice positions on the ticket. The only attractive candidate among them was Felix Garcia, whose principal asset was general acquaintance among the "natives."[23] More important to the Progressives, the Republican party nominated Octaviano Larrazolo for Governor that year, who by inclination belonged in Cutting's party.[24]

Without Larrazolo on the Republican ticket, it is doubtful the Progressives would have backed the Republican ticket, but his nomination made it easy for them to obey Justine. Albert Fall, through his outspoken opposition to Woodrow Wilson, also eased their consciences once they had made the change. In a vigorous campaign against the President's domination of Congress, he convinced numerous New Mexican voters that Republicans had inaugurated America's participation in World War I and therefore they should be allowed to direct war policy. This created reaction against the Democratic party in the state, and an effective excuse for Progressives to support Republican candidates.[25]

The Republicans could hardly have lost, what with the Progressives supporting them. They also received support from Ely's Independents, who had returned to regular Republican ranks by 1918. Senator Fall and Republican congressional nominee Begnigno Hernandez won, Larrazolo defeated

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[23]Santa Fe New Mexican, April 11, 1918, p. 3, July 26, 1918, p. 3, July 31, 1918, p. 3, September 19, 1918, p. 3 and September 28, 1918, p. 1.

[24]Ibid., April 10, 1918, p. 3, April 19, 1918, p. 4, July 13, 1918, p. 2, August 10, 1918, p. 3, September 30, 1918, p. 3 and October 3, 1918, p. 1.

[25]Ibid., September to November, 1918, passim.

Garcia for the governorship and Republicans took all state legislative and administrative contests by comfortable margins. The Democrats were totally defeated. They retained nothing of importance but one seat on the state Corporation Commission, held over from the previous election.[26]

Nevertheless, Old Guard leaders knew the election did not indicate a revival of their popularity. Without the war issue and Progressive support it is probable that only Albert Fall would have been successful at the ballot box. Obviously the Republican party was at the mercy of Bronson Cutting. This fact spread gloom through the ranks when the publisher ultimately returned from England. Their only hope now was that he would pursue his sister's policy out of respect for Larrazolo. But Cutting soon was busy defending Spanish-American veterans against discrimination in the American Legion and thereby challenging Larrazolo's leadership of the "native" bloc.[27]

Doubt that Bronson Cutting would pursue Justine's policy kept Old Guard leaders on edge for more than a year. At first they worked harmoniously with Governor Larrazolo because he put down labor unionism in the mines with a declaration of martial law in 1919. But they drew away from him when he subsequently proposed some costly educational reforms. He shocked them further with a suggestion that New Mexico adopt the direct primary system and a graduated income tax. Following the latter proposal Old Guard leaders condemned him in legislative caucus as a dangerous

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[26] Santa Fe New Mexican, December 5, 1918, p. 4; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, p. 497.

[27] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 3, 1919, p. 4; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 31, 34-35.

radical and resolved to get him out of the Governor's Mansion.[28]

This was a wreckless move because it broke a link in the chain that tied them to the Progressive party. Without Larrazolo on the ticket there was no reason for Cutting or any other Progressive to vote Republican. Realizing this, Albert Fall hurried back from Washington to try to keep Larrazolo in the party with the promise of the congressional nomination. Larrazolo refused, and since Republican leaders could not accept his radical state legislative program they read him out of the party completely and sought a new candidate for the governorship.[29]

If this was not disastrous enough, Republicans further weakened their chances in the next election by choosing Judge Merritt Mechem as their new candidate for Governor. Indeed, the Judge was anathema to everyone but Old Guard Republicans; moreover, his nomination again raised the issue of the free press. Immediately E. Dana Johnson filled New Mexican editorials with warnings that Republican victory in 1920 would bring back "iron hand" rule, and that newsmen would lose freedom of expression with Mechem in the Governor's Mansion.[30] Throughout the campaign of 1920 everything pointed to another Democratic-Progressive victory. But surprisingly, the Old Guard defeated the combined forces of the Democrats, Progressives, and dissident Republicans. Every administrative office went

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[28] Santa Fe New Mexican, January 5, 1920, p. 4, July 23, 1920, p. 1, July 24, 1920, p. 1, July 26, 1920, p. 4, August 12, 1920, p. 1, August 13, 1920, p. 4 and August 21, 1920, p. 1; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 13.

[29] Santa Fe New Mexican, August 1, 1920 to September 9, 1920, passim.

[30] Santa Fe New Mexican, October 11, 1918, p. 3, August 26, 1920, p. 1, September 15, 1920, p. 4 and November 1920, p. 1; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 13.

to the regular Republicans, and they also retained control of the legislature. The next year they reaffirmed their triumph when President Warren Harding called Albert Fall to his cabinet and Holm Bursum won the vacant seat in the United States Senate.[31]

But like the previous election, these victories did little to restore the party's prestige because they were won for the wrong reason. The returns showed that New Mexico simply had voted against Woodrow Wilson, and not for Old Guard Republicanism. Due to Albert Fall's persistent campaign against Wilson, Warren Harding received a majority of 11,000 in the state, while Republican candidates for the twelve leading administrative offices in Santa Fe won by only approximately 2,000 votes.[32] Republican leaders recognized the significance of these figures, and in addition they soon discovered Mechem had been a poor choice. While in office he supported interstate water compacts, tax exemptions for veterans and widows, and prohibition of alien land ownership in New Mexico. Otherwise his administration had little to recommend it.

While Republicans had won successive victories, both were somewhat accidental and offered small cause for optimism. Cutting and E. Dana Johnson quickly recognized this and in the columns of the New Mexican they heaped ridicule upon Mechem throughout his term. Meanwhile, the Democrats were far from discouraged. Although their party had not fully recovered from the loss of Harvey Fergusson, reconstruction was in progress. During the early 1920's Arthur T. Hannett emerged as the party's new leader and was building a machine based on mine workers' support.

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[31] Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 497-500.

[32] Santa Fe New Mexican, November 23, 1930, p. 1.

Realizing how vulnerable the Republicans were, he cooperated with Cutting and Johnson in repeated attacks against the current administration.[33]

Throughout 1921 and the spring of 1922 these three liberal leaders worked relentlessly to prevent the Republicans from repeating their victory of 1920. Democrats James F. Hinkle and Arthur T. Hannett did win the governorship respectively in 1922 and 1924, thanks to Progressive support. Moreover, Democrats were elected to the United States Senate and House of Representatives. In addition they won nine of the twelve highest state administrative offices, and control of the lower house of the state legislature for the first time.[34]

After 1922 the power of the Old Guard rapidly diminished. The Democrats temporarily lost control of the state in 1926, when Bronson Cutting returned to the Republican camp for the last time. His defection was caused by Governor Hannett's refusal to carry out campaign promises, especially in relation to fostering child labor laws, old age assistance, workman's compensation, banking regulations and equitable taxation. The Governor's inaction proved embarrassing to Cutting, since it was common knowledge that he alone was responsible for Hannett's nomination. In the

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[33]Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, p. 34; Robert Thompson and Charles Judah: Arthur T. Hannett: Governor of New Mexico (Albuquerque: Division of Research, Department of Government, University of New Mexico; 1950), p. 4; For an appraisal of Governor Merritt Mechem's achievements see Edwin L. Mechem folder, Hurley Papers, Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library.

[34]Santa Fe New Mexican, November 7, 1920, p. 2; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, pp. 13, 15, 28, 38 and The Republican Party in New Mexico (Albuquerque: Division of Research, Department of Government, University of New Mexico; 1949), p. 7; Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 104; Coan: A History of New Mexico, I, pp. 497-98, 500-01; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 24; Thompson and Judah: Arthur T. Hannett, pp. 5, 6, 8, 12, 13.

Democratic convention of 1924 he manipulated proceedings in such a way as to prevent Hinkle's renomination and affect the nomination of Hannett.

Cutting's coolness toward Hannett may also have stemmed from suspicion that the Governor was not as popular as the returns suggested; rather he won because of Albert Fall's infamy. Furthermore, the two men quarreled over patronage. Cutting wished only to reward good liberals, while Hannett wanted to use his appointive power to build up a following among moderates, regardless of their party affiliation.

In the spring of 1925 Cutting announced his break with Hannett by resigning from the office of Commissioner of the State Penitentiary.[35] From that day forward it became increasingly obvious that the Democrats could not win in 1926. Cutting effectively attacked the Governor through the pages of the New Mexican with the charge that the so-called Hannett Election Code was designed to disfranchise "natives." This was untrue, for the Code actually was designed to reduce corruption by making it illegal for party workers to assist illiterate Spanish-Americans in marking their ballots. As Cutting described it, however, Hannett's objective was to prevent "natives" from voting in order that he might diminish their power and somehow win re-election by support of mine workers.[36]

Enough voters believed Cutting's interpretation of the Code to defeat the Democrats in 1926. Hannett not only lost to Republican Richard

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[35]Thompson and Judah: Arthur T. Hannett, pp. 7-9; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 36-37.

[36]Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 15; Russell: "Racial Groups in the New Mexico Legislature," p. 68; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 24; Armstrong: Portrait of Bronson Cutting, pp. 37-38.

C. Dillon, but Republicans captured all but three of the top dozen administrative posts. Furthermore, they retained control of the state Senate and won back the House of Representatives. The only important Democratic victory in 1926 was the election of a Congressman, but even so, the Democrats were not demoralized. With full support from the Progressives, Dillon led his ticket by a margin of only 4,000 votes.[37]

Doubtless this also influenced Cutting's thinking as he kept the Republicans in power during the succeeding four years. All the while New Mexican editorials implied that the Progressive leader considered his sojourn into the Republican camp a temporary one. Attacks upon the Democratic party were conspicuously absent. At the same time he never let Republicans forget that they enjoyed power at the grace of his support. Another fact which bothered Cutting was that although the Republicans won again in 1928, it was generally believed the combined force of the Republican and Progressive parties would not have been sufficient had it not been for the popularity of Governor Dillon. Accordingly, he saw a clear danger to his own fortunes, knowing that by constitutional provision Dillon could succeed himself in office but once.[38]

Cutting stood by the Republicans through the election of 1928, however, chiefly because of his admiration for Dillon. In many ways the Governor was as "progressive" as he was. More important, it was Dillon

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[37]Thompson and Judah: Arthur T. Hannett, p. 33; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 17; Jennie Fortune, Secretary of State: The New Mexico Blue Book or State Official Register, 1926-27 (Santa Fe: n.p.; n.d.), pp. 51-52.

[38]Thompson and Judah: Arthur T. Hannett, pp. 30-24; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, pp. 16-17; Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 24.

who started him on the road to national fame when United States Senator Anson A. Jones died in 1927, and the Governor appointed him to the vacant seat.[39] These factors made Cutting agreeable to the point of acceding to anything Dillon suggested. He even campaigned in 1928 beside ultra-conservative Republicans like Charles Springer to help Old Guard candidates win their state legislative contests. With Progressive support and the popular Dillon running for re-election, the Republicans did not lose a single important race that year.[40]

But since Dillon could not head the ticket again, Cutting became highly critical of the Republican party following the election, and called for sweeping reforms. How much he was influenced by personal ambition and how much by realization that the Republican party might turn reactionary when Dillon retired in 1930 is impossible to ascertain. Whatever his reasons, he broke with the party in 1929, and while so doing he thrust a wedge between its moderate and conservative wings to make sure it could not win the next election. He achieved this by asking his friends in the state legislature to introduce a bill to create the office of State Labor Commissioner. Obviously the Old Guard could not submit, for implicit in the bill was recognition of the right of workers to bargain collectively. Charles Springer quickly organized resistance in the state Senate and stopped its passage. Immediately all Progressives broke with the Republican party and took many moderate Republicans with them.

Inevitably, the feud carried over into the campaign of 1930

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[39]Fortune: The New Mexico Blue Book or State Official Register, 1926-27, p. 51.

[40]Santa Fe New Mexican, September 12, 1928, p. 1 and November 19, 1928, p. 3; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, pp. 13, 28; Russell: "New Mexico: A Problem of Parochialism in Transition," p. 287.

and afforded the New Mexican the opportunity to condemn the Republican Old Guard for keeping the lower class in a state of serfdom.[41] Meanwhile, Cutting Progressives and moderate Republicans allied with the Democrats to drive Springer Republicans from the state legislature. The result was not only the defeat of all Republicans, but also the total alienation of the Old Guard and moderate wings of their party.[42]

The election of 1930 was a turning point in New Mexican partisan history, for the Republicans would never again return en masse to Santa Fe. There was more to their demise than the influence of Cutting and the Progressives. One was almost perpetual intra-party warfare, which had been going on since territorial days. Republicans had set aside their differences to write the Constitution, but had begun to fight each other again at the first opportunity. Also, Charles B. Judah, a Professor of Government at the University of New Mexico, believes that the seeds of destruction had existed in the Republican party since the rapid influx of Anglos began back in the 1880's. These new settlers furnished the basis for ultimate industrialization and urbanization and all their related problems, not to mention the impulse for reform. Among their leaders was Harvey Fergusson, who was determined to change New Mexico's society as it had existed since Spanish colonization. Hence, the rebellion against Old Guard Republicanism in the late 1920's was really a culmination of a movement against machine rule which had been long in the making.[43]

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[41] Santa Fe New Mexican, February through March, 1929, passim.

[42] Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," pp. 25, 27; Judah: Richard C. Dillon, pp. 14, 37.

[43] Richard C. Dillon, p. 38.

But Cutting and his New Mexican had carried on the reform crusade begun by Fergusson liberals at the Constitutional Convention. He kept the Republican press on the verge of defection much of the time with reminders of Republican attacks upon editorial freedom in 1916. And since his Progressives held the balance of power at the polls, he consistently prevented the Republicans from becoming permanently entrenched in office. Their accidental victories in 1914 and 1920 brought them little prestige, and their victories in 1918, 1926 and 1928 obviously resulted from Progressive support. Thus, Cutting's role was paramount in the reduction of the power of the Republicans between statehood and the election of 1930, and in turn he was partly responsible for the arid years which lay ahead for their party.

CHAPTER IX

REPUBLICAN STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL, 1930-1952

When Governor Dillon retired in 1930 the party "was not merely beaten, it was shattered."[1]

Most New Mexican Republicans were unconvinced of the gravity of their circumstance following the election of 1930. Richard Dillon especially did not realize how thoroughly his party was shattered. Though a capable administrator, he knew little about partisan affairs because he always had refused to participate for fear his reputation would suffer. Nor did he think the election returns of 1930 lessened his own chances in the next governor's race. Since his administration had been a productive one and he generally had remained aloof from the Cutting-Springer fight, he reasoned that he could lead the party to victory. Accordingly, he agreed to the request by Republican leaders that he head the ticket a third time in 1932.[2]

Dillon's candidacy awakened the Republicans to the hopelessness of their condition because he lost the election by a substantial margin. If their most popular candidate could not come close to victory, there seemed little chance for any of them to win in the foreseeable future.

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[1]Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 38.

[2]Theil: "New Mexico's Bilingual Politics and Factional Disputes," p. 25.

Soon other developments intensified this feeling, and made it appear almost pointless to keep the Republican party in operation. One was the realization that lower income Republicans, the bulwark of the party's strength from its inception, had defected because of the depression. Many of these voters literally faced starvation, because they had no reserves to fall back on. Lacking a better explanation, they blamed political leaders in power prior to the depression for their misery, and now turned en masse to the other party for help.

Since it was impossible to win without support from the lower class, and the Republicans controlled no patronage, their only chance lay in the hope that the depression soon would end and defectors would return to their traditional party. But the depression grew worse and economic recovery was not forthcoming. Not only did distressed New Mexicans draw closer to Democratic leaders at home, they also turned more and more to the new Democratic administration in Washington as it became evident that local officials lacked the resources to help them.

This was not a surprising development, because New Mexicans had always maintained close ties with Washington. During territorial days the role of the federal government was evident in almost every facet of their existence, a situation that carried over into statehood. With the federal government owning considerable land in the state, ranchers had depended upon the Forest Service for cheap grazing lands. The federal government had saved many farmers along the Rio Grande from bankruptcy by its liberal expenditures on reclamation. Roads built with federal funds likewise were crucial to the state's tourist business. Even in trivial matters, such as the killing of coyotes and other predatory animals,

national agencies had been exceedingly helpful. Indeed, as Harvey Fergusson observed, New Mexicans had grown up with the attitude that their representatives in Washington were "no more than dairymaids to milk the treasury cow."[3]

By 1931 average farm income around Albuquerque approximated $117 per year. At the same time incomes of New Mexican sheep-ranchers declined by more than fifty percent, and many were forced on relief. Cattle prices also dropped sharply and small operators, who sold out to corporations, were left without means of livelihood. Oil workers in Eddy and Lea Counties and mine workers in Colfax, McKinley and Santa Fe Counties joined the unemployed by the hundreds. Businessmen dependent upon the tourist trade went broke all over the state as everything continued to decline except debts and relief rolls. By 1935 at least one-third of the total population of the state was receiving some form of federal assistance.[4]

Since Roosevelt appeared to stand between lower income New Mexicans and starvation, they continued to vote for him, and for all the candidates of his party. Accordingly, Republicans saw their chances of returning to power grow increasingly more remote. Their hopes were further dashed by a new wave of immigration into the eastern counties during the early 1930's. Scores of poverty-ridden outsiders, most of whom were Democrats, sought unused lands in New Mexico upon which to eke out a living.[5]

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[3]"Out Where Bureaucracy Begins," pp. 113-14.

[4]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, pp. 223-27, 243-44; Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 105.

[5]Personal interview with Earl Stull, June 19, 1965; Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, p. 14; Russell: "New Mexico: A Problem of Parochialism in Transition," pp. 286-87.

In addition, state Democratic administrations enlarged their employment rolls during the depression to more than 5,000, and thus controlled an estimated 25,000 votes. Accentuating the impact of all these factors, unprecedented numbers of New Mexicans went to the polls to express gratitude for Democratic benevolence. In the election of 1936, for example, a record eighty percent of all eligible voters turned out.[6]

Understandably, Republicans grew increasingly apathetic while their shattered party lay dormant. Since it was nearly impossible for any member of the party to win election, whether he ran for local, state, or national office, conventions became ritual and seldom even produced a full slate of candidates. The most talented leaders disassociated themselves from politics completely for fear they would ruin their chances in the future. Usually those who ran for office were unknowns who drifted back into obscurity after one defeat. For example, in 1938 Albert M. Mitchell ran for Governor and Pearce Rodey ran for Congress, neither of whom would play a significant role in politics again.[7]

As the Republicans party continued to decline, it practically went unnoticed by the predominant Democrats. More capable leaders reentered politics in the late 1930's, but even then they posed little threat because their party operated as two antagonistic wings. Moderates, who had remained loyal to Bronson Cutting until his death in 1935, operated as a separate group under the name "Cutting Republicans." Likewise, the Old Guard went its own way under the name "anti-Cutting Republicans." No

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[6]Fincher: "Spanish-Americans as a Political Factor in New Mexico," p. 105; Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, p. 230.

[7]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, pp. 244-45, 248-49.

Republican candidate could hope to win as long as these two factions refused to cooperate with each other.

Nevertheless, the feud between them restored interest in the party. During the late 1930's and early 1940's, when there seemed small hope of winning elections, "Cutting" and "anti-Cutting Republicans" fought for party control in anticipation of better days. When Maurice Miera, spokesman for the pro-Cutting faction, claimed leadership of Republicans in 1939 he was vigorously challenged by Albert G. Simms. Amid threats, charges, and countercharges Miera won the gubernatorial nomination in 1940 and for the first time in several years Republicans showed signs of recovery from their apathy.[8]

Their interest also was enhanced because by this time the New Deal had lost momentum, memories of the depression had faded, and international affairs had become paramount. Meanwhile, Anglo Democratic leaders of southern and eastern New Mexico had grown jealous of the power of "native" Democratic leaders along the Rio Grande. In 1938 they pushed a law through the legislature which provided for the direct primary, and the next year they corrected abuses in voter registration. These two reforms were promising for Republicans because they made politics more responsive to popular desires. Hence, they reduced the effectiveness of the whole Democratic machine.

Even more significant were the feuds within high councils of the Democratic party. After the Democrats had gained predominance in 1930,

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[8]Judah: Richard C. Dillon, p. 14; Albuquerque Journal, April 12, 1940; Santa Fe New Mexican, November 4, 1951. Newspaper citations appearing without page numbers are taken from the news clipping files of the Hurley Papers.

their leaders had fought each other for control of the state. Among them were Congressman John J. Dempsey (1934-40), Governor John E. Miles (1938-40), and Senator Dennis Chavez (1936-40). The popular Chavez, it will be remembered, was a former Congressman who had been appointed to fill Cutting's unfinished term in the United States Senate. By 1940 each of the three men seemed determined to ruin the others, and when Dempsey opposed Chavez' re-election, the Senator formed a political alliance with Republican Miera.[9]

Though Miera failed to win the governorship as a result, the Democratic split enhanced the enthusiasm of Republicans. They went unrewarded throughout World War II, for the Democrats gained further advantage in those years from federal spending on atomic research and development in New Mexico. Still, most Republicans reasoned that the divided Democratic party could be beaten once peace was restored and federal spending was reduced. All they needed was one good candidate who could draw "Cutting" and "anti-Cutting" Republicans together and recapture some of the lower income support lost back in 1932.

Finding a candidate who could accomplish these aims was difficult, for existing leaders such as Miera and Simms were too much identified with one faction or the other. The individual to reunite the party needed to be an outsider. Yet he had to be known across the state because lower income New Mexicans might reject anyone with whom they were unfamiliar. These factors excluded most possible candidates, but near the end of the

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[9]Donnelly: Rocky Mountain Politics, pp. 219, 240-41; Ralph Trigg: "The Program of the State Merit System Commission," The New Mexico Quarterly Review, XI (May, 1941), p. 186; Russell: "Racial Groups in the New Mexico Legislature," pp. 68-69; The New York Times, May 2, 1946, III, p. 16 and June 6, 1946, III, p. 15; Santa Fe New Mexican, November 4, 1951.

war Republican leaders believed they had the right man in Patrick J. Hurley. His neutrality between the two factions was unquestioned. Hurley admittedly had little interest in state politics because he envisaged himself an experienced national leader. The main reason he took special interest in the New Mexican Republican party was that he maintained residence in Santa Fe and considered it his best avenue to a high office in Washington. At the same time, he was generally acquainted across the state because he had campaigned briefly in behalf of its Republican candidates in 1940. Moreover, party leaders felt him attractive because lower income groups could identify with him. Though now a millionaire, he had been a poverty-stricken cowhand, oil field worker and coal miner in his youth in the Choctaw Nation of Indian Territory.

In addition, Hurley showed promise of general appeal because of his record of public service. He first gained national prominence as Secretary of War under President Herbert Hoover, and since that time he frequently had made national headlines. During the presidential campaigns of 1932 and 1936 he traveled from coast to coast as a spokesman for conservative Republicanism. His name again appeared in headlines in 1938 when he represented American companies during the Mexican oil expropriation controversy. Finally, during World War II he rose to the rank of Major General in the United States Army and served as Minister to New Zealand and as United States Ambassador to China.[10]

Satisfied that he was fully qualified, state Republican leaders

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[10]Edmund L. Souder: Patrick J. Hurley (Santa Fe: Santa Fe Press; 1948), p. 7; Las Cruces Sun-News, January 30, 1952; Chicago Daily Tribune, October 5, 1948, p. 18.

chose Hurley as the man to reunify the party and win back the lower income vote, and to defeat Dennis Chavez in the senatorial race in 1946.[11] For a time Hurley hesitated because a senatorship was not exactly what he had in mind. After World War II he was obsessed with a personal mission to warn the American public of the threat of international Communism. The presidency would better serve his purpose, and he hoped that it somehow might become available to him. Back in 1940 numerous "Hurley for President" clubs had grown up in the Southwest and several of his friends now offered to revive them. More promising than that was a possible deadlock at the Republican National Convention of 1948 between Thomas E. Dewey and Robert A. Taft. Both wanted the presidential nomination, and if neither yielded, perhaps Hurley could win as a "dark horse candidate." He avoided a decision until it finally became obvious that both Dwight Eisenhower and Douglas MacArthur stood a better chance for the nomination. He then reluctantly agreed to accept the nomination for the Senate from New Mexico. At least he would have a public forum from which to denounce the "Crime at Yalta" and to expose subversives in the State Department. Perhaps the presidency would become available at some future date.[12]

Thus, the Republicans found their candidate and the two wings of the party got behind him with unqualified support. At the time the party consisted chiefly of people from middle and upper income groups, who regarded the General as some kind of a messiah. Cattlemen liked his devotion to "free enterprise," as well as his stand against foreign competition on

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[11]Various letters, March 12, 1946, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

[12]Herald Tribune, April 25, 1940; Patrick J. Hurley to Frederick H. Bartlett, October 7, 1947, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

the domestic beef market.[13] Physicians and dentists were enraptured over his statements denouncing "socialized medicine," and upholding the "sacred character" of the "personal relations of physician and patient."[14] Roman Catholic clergymen praised him from the pulpit as a partner of the Church in its crusade against Communism. Businessmen across the state gave him support because he seemed to personify the virtues of "rugged individualism" and economic conservatism.[15]

All Hurley needed to win was support from the common people, and for a time Republican leaders expected to capitalize upon their candidate's humble origin. They were to be greatly disappointed, however, for Hurley preferred the millionaire-statesman image. Also, stories of his experiences back in Choctaw Territory appearing in Republican campaign literature did not compare to tales of personal hardship recited by Dennis Chavez. Most important of all, Hurley refused to offer the common people anything in his campaign speeches except "free enterprise." In most of his addresses he talked about "secret diplomacy" and "stamping out subversion" in the national capitol, subjects that held little interest for "native" farmers along the Rio Grande or mine workers in the western counties. Instead, they preferred the "bread and butter" promises of Dennis Chavez.

Hurley finally recognized this before the election. Though he would not bend to making "socialistic" promises, he did revise his platform

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[13]Petition from Small Stock Growers Association to Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson, December 16, 1947, Hurley Papers.

[14]Tucumcari News, November 2, 1946; Patrick J. Hurley to Doctor John Conway, September 20, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

[15]Reverend J. P. Linnane to Patrick J. Hurley, September 22, 1948 and Reverend Myron J. Murphy to Patrick J. Hurley, September 24, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

to appeal more to the average voter. Among other things, he launched a smear campaign against Chavez. He told his audiences that the Senator was a disgrace to his office because the only qualification he possessed was the ability to win at the "public pie counter." Moreover, he charged Chavez with being "red," as evidenced by his support of the Political Action Committee, "which everyone knew to be in direct contact with Moscow." But his listeners had known Chavez too long to believe him subversive. Furthermore, Hurley's attacks backfired, for Chavez answered in kind. At political rallies across the state he now characterized Hurley as a self-seeking "Oklahoma carpetbagger" whose only claim to fame was his "money bags," which he had filled at the expense of the poor.[16]

Hurley's strategy and Chavez' countercharges cost him the election and the Republican party a chance to return to power. Though utterly disappointed, he and the party's leaders nevertheless could take solace in the fact that they had lost to the powerful Chavez machine by only 4,000 votes. Accordingly, Hurley's supporters looked with enthusiasm to two years hence when there would be another contest for a Senate seat in New Mexico. In the meantime, they tried to educate him on local needs and desires. One advised him that the case against career men in the foreign service was now a "dead duck," and asked why it was necessary to give a speech on American foreign policy at all.[17] Another wrote that "the voter is in local and state elections for something free. Platforms which

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[16]The New Mexican, October 14, 1946; Portales News, October 11, 1946; Silver City Press, November 1, 1946; Press releases by Patrick J. Hurley, September 29, 1946 and October 14, 1946, Hurley Papers.

[17]Notes by J. V. Murphy on speech by Patrick J. Hurley to the Maryland Bar Association, January 26, 1946, Hurley Papers.

promise benefits to groups as a whole are the vote getters." He suggested that the Spanish-Americans might be appealed to with promises of permanent facilities for their friends and relatives who came annually to the state as migrant workers.[18] Still another suggested an attack upon Truman's civil rights proposals. This, he argued, would gratify the Dixiecrats in southern and eastern counties without alienating those whom he could attract anyway.[19]

Throughout 1947 Republican leaders continued to provide Hurley with similar profusions of good advice, but by the year's end they had become disillusioned. Hurley seemed to show little interest in listening, and remained too occupied with his anti-Communist crusade to consider local problems. Furthermore, he thought he knew what aided the average New Mexican, as well as the panacea for his recovery. The disease was too many governmental benefits. He had been spoiled by New Deal "socialists" to the point where he had lost his "initiative." The good life could only come to those who saved themselves through "self-reliance," "competition," and "free enterprise." No one had the right to interrupt these forces, but only to create a climate in which they could operate. If elected, Hurley could best serve the farm laborer by supporting federal legislation which would bar Mexican nationals from American fields. This would allow New Mexican field workers to compete freely with each other, elevate themselves far above the standard imposed by New Deal oppressors, and enjoy the satisfaction of having bettered their lot through their

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[18]Vaughn C. Daniel to Patrick J. Hurley, July 27, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

[19]Edwin L. Mechem to Patrick J. Hurley, August 14, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

own "initiative."

Immediately, all of this cooled the enthusiasm of Hurley's advisors considerably, and when he shared his ideas with inquisitive newsmen, Republican leaders were aghast. After Edwin L. Mechem read in the El Paso Times the proposal to bar Mexican nationals he was beside himself with anger. In a curt letter to the candidate he informed him that he was a mere office-seeker put on the ticket to help the whole party return to power. As such he was responsible to its dictates, and it was time he listened to advice on local needs. Had he not heard that without both "wet" and contract Mexican labor three-fourths of the 21 million dollar cotton crop of Dona Ana County would have rotted in the fields? Indeed, without Mexican nationals, southern New Mexican agricultural economy would collapse, and farmers across the state would go out of business.[20]

This episode revealed that it was politically dangerous for other Republicans to associate with Hurley. Had there been anyone else to compete with Clinton Anderson in the forthcoming senatorial race, or time to find another candidate, it is unlikely that Republican leaders would have supported his renomination. As it was they had no choice but to put him on the ticket. Few high party council members gave him more than half-hearted support, and this time he lost by more than 26,000 votes.

In his own defense, Hurley singled out apathy among Republican leaders as the major cause. In addition, he accused Anderson of corrupting the polls with "socialistic" promises and the illegal employment of federal

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[20]Edwin L. Mechem to Patrick J. Hurley, August 14, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

workers in his campaign. Also, he claimed that Drew Pearson's "lies" and Communistic slander were important factors in his defeat. Most Republican leaders maintained that his defeat resulted from his own refusal to listen to advice. Hurley had cost them the best opportunity to win since Dillon was elected Governor in 1928. Actually, Hurley had several things working in his favor in the 1948 election. The racial issue was unimportant, since both he and his Democratic opponent were Anglos. Too, Chavez was hospitalized and unable to campaign for Anderson, and many New Mexicans were disenchanted with Truman's civil rights program. Yet, Hurley nullified all these advantages and led his party to disastrous defeat.[21]

Republican party leaders seemingly resolved not to run Hurley again. They did not go so far as to abandon him completely though, since he could not seek election again until 1952. Meanwhile he could be useful, especially with the party treasury almost empty. Hurley had promised a large contribution and party leaders were looking hopefully to his financial support in the forthcoming gubernatorial campaign.[22] Also, the General still commanded loyalty from scores of cattlemen, clergymen, physicians, dentists, and businessmen. To have discarded him now might have shattered the party and assured defeat for Republican candidates in 1950.

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[21]Romero: State of New Mexico Official Returns of the 1948 Elections, pp. 34-50; The New Mexican, November 4, 1951; Greenwich, Connecticut Times, November 15, 1948; The New York Times, October 26, 1948 and November 2, 1948; Bob Caughy to Miss Pickert, September 16, 1948, Personal Corresspondence, Hurley Papers; Patrick J. Hurley to Frederick H. Bartlett, June 10, 1948, Patrick J. Hurley to Doctor H. A. Miller, September 21, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers; Wesley Quinn to Patrick J. Hurley, July 31, 1948, August 26, 1948 and September 9, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

[22]Personal interview with ex-Governor Edwin L. Mechem, June 21, 1965.

With Hurley's disposition left for the future, attention focused upon a likely candidate for the forthcoming gubernatorial race. Hurley had unified the upper and middle class members of the party, but he had failed miserably among lower income groups. In choosing a candidate party leaders therefore concentrated upon finding someone who might capture support from the latter. Charles B. Judah advised that to do so they should avoid a candidate--like Hurley--whose major identification was with "wealth, privilege, and 'country club'." No matter how distinguished he might be otherwise, a man who reflected such an image was a poor candidate in New Mexico. A majority of voters preferred someone from the middle or lower income class. Ideally he should be a prosperous but not wealthy rancher, businessman or professional man. Also, the party should avoid a candidate from the northern counties, since that section of the state already was over-represented. The man at the head of the ticket should come from southern or eastern New Mexico where voters were under-represented and where the Democratic party controlled the largest percentage of the population. Furthermore, the Republicans needed a young man with a progressive appearance, and one who could talk authoritatively on current local problems. "The majority of the people do not remember the good old days," Judah observed. Instead, they wanted to find solutions to their immediate difficulties and to forget the past.[23]

Either by design or accident, Republican leaders found a gubernatorial candidate who fitted Judah's description perfectly. He was Edwin Mechem, a young, progressive-looking, successful attorney from Las Cruces. Having lived in New Mexico nearly all his life, he was cognizant of local

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[23]The Republican Party in New Mexico, p. 36.

needs and could discuss them intelligently, In addition, he possessed a distinguished political heritage. His uncle was ex-Governor Merritt Mechem and his father had been a judge in Dona Ana County. They also found an equally attractive candidate for the lieutenant governorship in Paul Larrazolo. He likewise was a successful, young attorney whose ties and interests were local. And his name was even more an asset than Mechem's, for he was the son of the late Octaviano Larrazolo, whom everyone remembered for his Progressive platform and "native" leadership.

With Hurley to keep upper and middle income Republicans in line, and two dynamic young men to appeal to lower income New Mexican voters, Republican leaders felt confident they had a winning combination. But there still remained a problem of convincing both favorites to run. Larrazolo readily accepted, but Mechem hesitated, evidently because of the fear that obscurity would inevitably follow possible defeat. And most leading newsmen were predicting that no matter how qualified, no Republican could win the gubernatorial race.

Mechem eventually agreed to accept the nomination, after he became convinced that an upset was probable. What changed his mind was factionalism in the Democratic party which had grown steadily more intense throughout the past decade and by 1950 had split it into two parts. One was led by Dennis Chavez and the other by a coalition of Democrats who opposed him. Among them were ex-Governor Dempsey, who had enlarged his following considerably during the 1940's. Another was the incumbent Governor, Thomas Mabry, who was bitter because Chavez had supported his Republican opponent, Manuel Lujan, in the 1948 election. The Senator's motive seemingly was fear that if Mabry won by a broad margin he might be

in position to name his own successor in 1950. This would spoil Chavez' scheme to make New Mexico his personal province by putting his brother, David Chavez, Jr. in the Governor's Mansion at that time.[24]

Chavez' actions also were responsible for the alienation of a third and even more influential Democratic leader, Clinton Anderson. Senator Anderson apparently agreed at first to support David Chavez in 1950, but changed his mind for fear that his senatorial colleague would amass too much power. He then joined Mabry in support of ex-Governor John E. Miles, who ultimately defeated David Chavez by approximately 9,000 votes.[25]

This obvious discord in Democratic ranks was the main reason that Mechem thought he could win. Also, the Democratic party suffered from a long succession of complacent and mediocre governors, a situation which afforded Mechem a readymade platform. Finally, Miles was by now a sickly, pedestrian-looking old man, who recently had been discredited in newspapers across the state because of a domestic scandal.[26]

As the campaign opened Mechem became even more optimistic. The mere fact that he conducted a thoroughgoing "grass roots" campaign brought him popularity among the rank and file. Since 1932, candidates had worked

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[24]Thomas Allyn Donnelly: "The 1950 Gubernatorial Campaign in New Mexico as Interpreted Through the State Press," (Master's Thesis, University of New Mexico; 1952), pp. 2-104; The New Mexican, November 4, 1951; The New York Times, December 31, 1949, May 7, 1950 and June 7, 1950; Patrick J. Hurley to Frederick H. Bartlett, May 5, 1948 and June 10, 1948, Personal Correspondence, Hurley Papers.

[25]Donnelly: "The 1950 Gubernatorial Campaign," pp. 2, 24, 35-37, 71-75.

[26]The New York Times, November 1, 1950; Donnelly: "The 1950 Gubernatorial Campaign," pp. 83-88, 93, 104; Personal interview with James E. Neleigh, former Democratic Mayor of Las Cruces, June 19, 1965.

chiefly through local party leaders, the Democrats because they felt they would win in any case, and the Republicans because they had grown accustomed to defeat no matter what they did. But Mechem toured through every hamlet in the state and made contact with people of all classes. Moreover, his "house cleaning" platform had appeal. Everywhere he went he attracted enthusiasm from those who demanded political reforms. Miles, on the other hand, was placed on the defensive, and for reasons of health barely tried to defend himself.

With so many things working in his favor--warfare among Democrats, an attractive image, vigorous campaign tactics, and a positive platform--it was not surprising that Mechem won a decisive victory. Indeed, it would seem that his 13,000 vote margin should have pulled other Republican candidates through. But aside from the gubernatorial office, Democrats won nearly every city, county and state office, and elected more than two-thirds of the state legislature. Democratic candidates also went to the United States House of Representatives, while Tibo Chavez defeated Republican Paul Larrazolo for Lieutenant Governor by a narrow margin. Republicans were confident that Mechem's ability to use the prestige and power of the governor's office would bring him continued success in the future, however, and that ultimately he would bring the Republican party back to power.[27]

But such optimism was short lived and within a short time several problems appeared. For one thing, Mechem's ability to hold onto the governorship was by no means a certainty. Though he had won easily as a reform

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[27] The New York Times, November 9, 1950, January 2, 1951 and October 29, 1952; Thomas A. Donnelly; "The 1950 Gubernatorial Campaign," pp. 30, 107-08, 110-11.

candidate, he was placed in a defensive position once he was elected. To stay in office he would have to demonstrate honesty and efficiency. With scores of patronage-starved Republicans now encamped on his door step, such a possibility seemed remote. Also, his personal political security, and the expectation that he could bring the party back to full power, broke down with the realization that Hurley had to be dealt with. The old General did not think Mechem's victory should preclude a third try for the senatorship. In fact, he expected it as reward for his role in the 1950 election. Furthermore, with Senator McCarthy on the rampage, he felt more determined than ever to get to Washington to help save the country from Communism. Obviously Hurley had the financial means to run independently if necessary. And he still commanded loyalty from upper and middle income groups across the state.[28]

Mechem and the Republican party stood to lose no matter what they did about Hurley. If denied the Republican senatorial nomination Hurley could bolt, run independently, and drag all Republican candidates down to defeat. On the other hand, Republican leaders already knew that it would be political suicide to endorse him. He was an anathema to lower income groups and he managed to alienate some faction practically every time he met the press.

Had it not been for Hurley, perhaps Republican hopes would have been realized in 1952. Mechem was a popular governor, and might have defended his administration and carried his ticket to power against the confused Democratic party. But because the Governor neither dared oppose nor endorse Hurley, he resorted to practices which placed the whole

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[28]The New Mexican, December 17, 1951.

Republican plan in jeopardy. First, he made a secret political alliance with Dennis Chavez. Then, he plotted to dispose of Hurley--yet hold the Republican party together--by declaring neutrality on the Republican senatorial nomination, but at the same time working "behind-the-scenes" to undermine the old General. Mechem hoped Hurley would lose in the Republican primary election, but even if he won the nomination, Chavez probably could defeat him in the general election and no one would ever know that the plan originated in the Governor's Mansion.

How Mechem thought he could collaborate with Chavez, maintain a neutral facade, and still remove Hurley from the scene without causing defection in the Republican party is difficult to imagine. The details of the whole intrigue are unclear. Even today, New Mexicans who were privy to the arrangement refuse to comment for fear of embarrassing others in both parties. Out of deference for Mechem, it should be said that his intrigues were not necessarily devised for personal reasons. He believed that Hurley's election would hurt the Republican party more in the long run than it would have helped. Furthermore, his alliance with Chavez supposedly included provision that the Senator would support him in the senatorial race against Clinton Anderson in 1954. Under such an arrangement, Mechem then could ultimately name his own successor to the governorship. The party could win two important offices and assure victory for various other Republican candidates. Naturally, the price of cooperation with Chavez and his friends would be high, but the ultimate benefits for the Republican party would be worth it.

But Mechem encountered one difficult problem he should have

anticipated. The success of his plot depended upon his keeping the Republican party intact, and to do so he had to dupe Hurley into believing that he was neutral on the senatorial race in 1952. In this he inevitably failed, if for no other reason than that an alliance with Chavez was impossible to conceal.

At first Hurley did not suspect a plot against himself, despite anonymous rumors that he probably would not seek renomination. But by the end of the summer of 1951, these rumors were linked to the official Republican family in Santa Fe. Newsmen discovered that they were originating with Revenue Commissioner Manuel Lujan, Prison Warden Joe Tondre, Liquor Control Director Elfego Baca and Employment Commissioner Maurice Miera. In September of the same year Governor Mechem tacitly admitted involvement when he opposed Senator Joseph McCarthy as a speaker for the Republican Rocky Mountain and Mid-western state chairman's meeting. The reason given was that the "Communist witch hunt" should not be a paramount issue in the next campaign.[29] Hurley clearly saw the implications in Mechem's statement, as in similar ones dropped thereafter with increasing frequency. All doubt finally vanished when a close friend to the Governor announced that the Republican party could not accept Hurley again. Though the General spoke "learnedly about such far-off places and such vague issues as Yalta and Chungking" he never had given any attention to the "economic destitution of 60 percent of our people at home."[30]

The speaker, Wesley Quinn of Clovis, was the man Mechem had chosen to support for the senatorial nomination at the forthcoming

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[29] Albuquerque Tribune, September 22, 1951.

[30] Ibid., April 20, 1952.

Republican convention in February, 1952. Though the Governor refused to comment upon Quinn's remarks, his commitment to him soon became general knowledge. Hurley was not fooled. After he defeated Quinn at the convention, and ultimately won the nomination in the Republican primary election, he vociferously identified Quinn as the tool of the "Chavez Republicans of Santa Fe."[31]

As the senatorial campaign picked up momentum, the gulf between Mechem and Hurley broadened. The Governor continued to deny that he had ever opposed Hurley or that he had reached any agreement with Chavez. But Hurley attacked him on both counts, and finally by September he had drawn him into the open. At that time the two men clashed over who would officially direct the fall campaign. Mechem eventually took charge of the regular Republican Machine, while Hurley established his own organization. The struggle then boiled down to a fight to the finish between Hurley Republicans on the one hand, and the Mechem-Chavez coalition on the other. By election day party lines had broken down completely, and Mechem easily won re-election, while Chavez defeated Hurley by approximately 5,000 votes.[32]

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[31]Don Lohbeck: Patrick J. Hurley (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company; 1956), pp. 460-61; Albuquerque Journal, July 26, 1951, October 14, 1951, October 25, 1951, April 3, 1952, April 26, 1952, and May 3, 1952; Albuquerque Tribune, February 9, 1952, February 13, 1952, February 19, 1952 and February 21, 1952; The New Mexican, December 17, 1951 and March 2, 1952; El Crepusculo, February 14, 1952; Roswell Record, May 7, 1952; Gallup Independent, May 7, 1952; Sierra County Advocate, March 7, 1952.

[32]Albuquerque Journal, May 30, 1952, August 6, 1952 and September 2, 1952; Silver City Press, August 21, 1952; The New Mexican, April 8, 1952; Roswell Record, May 15, 1952; New Mexico State Record, October 9, 1952; Gallup Independent, October 20, 1952; Carlsbad Current Argus, October 31, 1952; The New York Times, November 6, 1952; United States, Eighty-third Congress, Senate, Second Session: Report of the Subcommittee on Rules and

Both Mechem and Chavez naturally found the returns gratifying, but they spelled disaster for the Republican party. As in 1950, Mechem was the only important victor. Furthermore, the Republicans lost what little unity they had achieved during the previous election. Now Hurley supporters were enraged by Mechem's duplicity, and they soon became further alienated from the Mechem Republicans when their leader unsuccessfully tried to wrest the senatorship from Chavez by a congressional investigation of fraudulent voting.[33]

Though Hurley virtually tore his party to pieces in the process, his unwillingness to accept the returns is understandable. Indeed, his own investigation revealed that hundred of ballots were cast in behalf of persons who either were dead or who had left the state long before the election. The evidence amassed by Hurley forced a Democratically controlled Senate Committee on Rules and Administration to agree that the whole election should be reviewed. Senatorial investigations in turn verified Hurley's charges and added some new ones. Finally, when New Mexico Democratic leaders tacitly admitted guilt by burning the ballots in three counties before they could be examined, the congressional commission recommended that the whole election be nullified.[34]

Administration Relative to the Contested Election of November 4, 1952 (Washington: Government Printing Office; 1954), p. 93.

[33]Silver City Press, April 2, 1952; Raton Range, July 25, 1952; Santa Fe News, July 25, 1952; Albuquerque Journal, September 8, 1952 and September 21, 1952; Roswell Record, September 11, 1952; The New Mexican, September 23, 1952.

[34]United States, Eighty-third Congress, Senate, First Session: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Committee on Rules and Administration on the Contest of Patrick J. Hurley v. Dennis Chavez for a Seat in the United States Senate from the State of New

Even so, the United States Senate would not reject Chavez, for there was evidence of corruption on both sides. Also, there was no proof that Chavez himself had committed a lawless act. Thus, after several weeks of deliberation five Republicans and one Independent joined with the Democrats in the Senate to vindicate Chavez and affirm his election.[35]

This investigation only drove the wedge deeper between Mechem and Hurley Republicans. Insults were hurled by both sides for more than a year during the investigation. Hurley's followers rejected the Governor completely for having placed his own interests above those of the party, and for having made an alliance with a "corrupt Democratic Senator."[36]

The 1952 election and its aftermath affixed discord in party ranks which the Republicans have been unable to overcome. Since that time they have failed to work together harmoniously. Mechem continued to win for a decade, largely through his alliance with Chavez, but other Republicans have had little success.[37] Nor does the immediate future look very promising for the party, especially since Mechem's humiliating defeat

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Mexico; April 27, May 1, 7, 11, 27 and August 12, 1953 (Washington: Government Printing Office; 1953), pp. 1-2, 22-28, 194-99; United States, Eighty-third Congress, Senate, Second Session: Report of the Subcommittee, pp. 1, 42, 83-94; Farmington News, November 5, 1952; Hobbs Sun News, April 12, 1953; The New York Times, September 22, 1953, January 25, 1954 and March 14, 1954, IV, p. 5; United States, Eighty-third Congress, Senate, Second Session: Congressional Record, Vol. 100, Pt. 3, pp. 3624, 3697.

[35]United States, Eighty-third Congress, Senate, Second Session, Congressional Record, Vol. 100, Pt. 3, pp. 3698-3700, 3704, 3732; The New York Times, March 14, 1954, IV, p. 5 and March 28, 1954, IV, p. 2.

[36]Personal Interview with James E. Neleigh, June 19, 1965.

[37]Ibid.

in the senatorial race in 1964 by Democrat Joe Montoya.[38] This, plus the apparent harmony which the Democratic party apparently has enjoyed since Chavez' death, portends continued disappointment for Republican candidates. In the mid-1960's Senator Anderson appears to work comfortably with Montoya and both seemingly are on good terms with Democratic Governor "Smiling Jack" Campbell. All three men in turn enjoy support from a group of rising young, wealthy Democratic leaders.[39] Barring a general return to conservatism or an unanticipated division within Democratic ranks, the prospects for New Mexican Republicans to return to power in 1966, at least, seem exceedingly remote.

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[38] The New Mexican, November 20, 1964, p. 1.

[39] Personal interview with Earl Stull, June 19, 1965.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

The New Mexican Republican party has little to show for the past thirty-five years. Only Edwin Mechem has won important contests, and his defeat in the last election portends more dismal years for the ticket. Recent failures should not obscure the importance of Republicanism in territorial times, however, when the fortunes of the two major parties were reversed.

The reader has seen how the Republicans rose to power immediately following their party's inception in 1867 and continued to dominate politics until statehood. At first they won chiefly on the strength of their wartime association with William Arny's anti-Copperhead Administration party. The "bloody shirt" issue kept them in office until the late 1870's, when they began to benefit from the emergence of a superior leadership. Republican chieftains who took charge of the party at about that time excelled in adapting it to existing socio-political conditions. They used the patrón system to greater advantage than the Democrats did, and they better understood the social significance of political functions. Republican rallies always were gala affairs, colored by lofty oratory, dancing, dining and drinking, which broke the monotony of an otherwise arid existence for most peons and their families. By these means Republican leaders won acceptance among the "natives" and rapidly built up the

size of the rank and file.

Equally important was the organizational ability of key leaders. Republican "father" William Breeden was the first to excel in this respect. While serving as Chairman of the Central Committee he did more than anyone else to hold the party together by virtue of his being the only leader who remained sufficiently aloof from quarrels within the ranks. His most notable effort came in 1871, the year the party nearly disintegrated, but he continued in the role of appeaser until he resigned as Chairman in 1884.

Thomas Catron was the next outstanding Republican. Catron often provoked discord in party ranks. Yet by 1894, when he won election as territorial Delegate to Congress, he had created local party machinery for northern New Mexico and had lured numerous leaders from other parts of the territory into his Santa Fe Ring. Accordingly, he brought New Mexican Republicans together into a loose federation under one policy and a single leadership.

Governor Miguel A. Otero II, who succeeded Catron at the head of the party, then tied the Central Committee and local machinery together. Through the judicious use of patronage, the manipulation of the press, and the application of his talent for leadership he gradually produced a well-disciplined organization. By 1904, when his power reached its peak, the Republican party had achieved its modern form and went practically unchallenged at the polls.

One more problem arose in the remaining years before statehood. As Otero's power increased, so did the animosity of various leaders he defeated. Their protests soon provoked President Theodore Roosevelt to

fire Otero as Governor in hopes of restoring peace in the party. The result was more discord, brought about by lesser leaders who hoped to gain from Otero's demise. Republican affairs were chaotic for nearly two years, but finally order was restored with the appointment of George Curry to the governorship in 1907. Curry's policy of appeasement brought peace and paved the way for the election of an overwhelming Republican majority to the Constitutional Convention of 1910.

The success of the Republican party in territorial times resulted in developments of lasting importance to New Mexico's political history. One was the drafting of a conservative constitution. Even more significant was the political acculturation brought about by Republican leaders. The acceptance of Anglo-Saxon political habits by New Mexican "natives" resulted partly from the inrush of American immigrants and the influence of leading Democrats such as William Thornton and Harvey Fergusson. But most credit belongs to William Breeden, Thomas Catron, Miguel Otero, George Curry and their partisan associates. Largely through their efforts Hispanic New Mexicans received schooling in two-party government and accepted partisanship as the principal guide for their political behavior in place of racial ties, action groups, and the dictates of clergymen and feudalistic patrones. Although the Republican party of New Mexico has had little success since the onset of the Great Depression, these important achievements continue to effect the state's politics and should not be forgotten.

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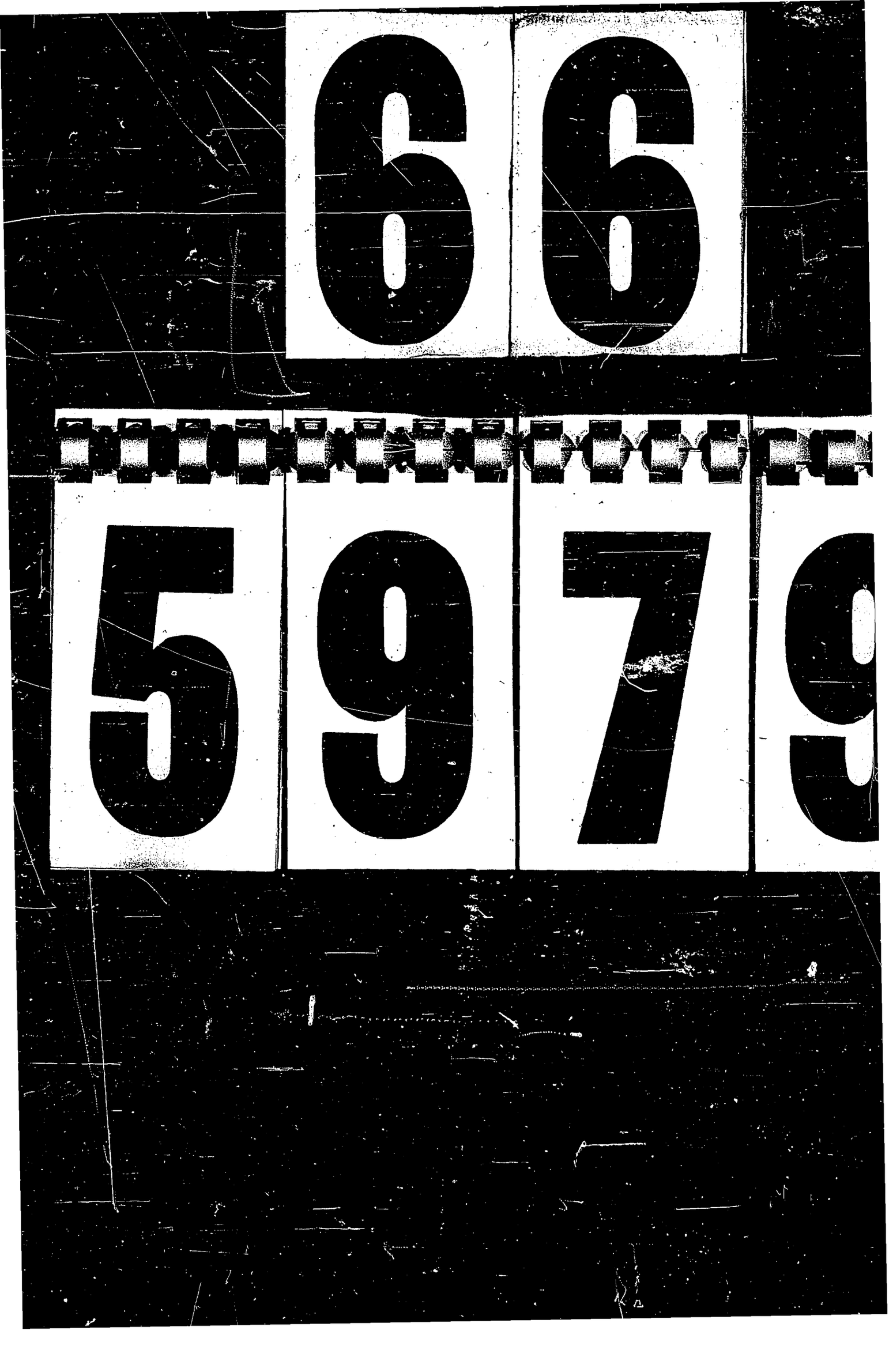
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