THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

ROBERT S. KERR—A STUDY IN ETHOS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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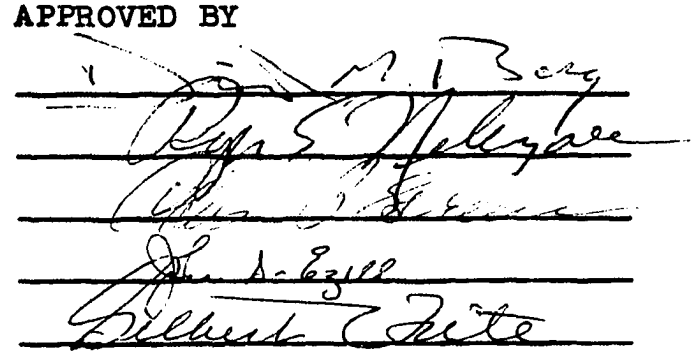
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ROBERT S. KERR—A STUDY IN ETHOS

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DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express thanks to Professor David M. Berg and members of the dissertation committee for their guidance during the preparation of this study. A special word of thanks should go to two teachers of speech—Mr. E. L. Blair who introduced me to my first speech activity in high school and Professor David L. Matheny who encouraged me to pursue graduate study. Space does not permit thanking individually all to whom I am indebted, but to all of them I am indeed grateful. To my wife, Sandra, however, must be given my deepest gratitude, for her assistance, understanding, and encouragement has made this project worthwhile. Words are indeed inadequate messengers to express my gratitude to her.

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ROBERT S. KERR—A STUDY IN ETHOS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Justification of the Study

"A giant has fallen,"[1] editorialized the Daily Oklahoman in reference to Robert Samuel Kerr's death on January 1, 1963. This statement appeared to summarize the attitudes of thousands of Oklahomans. Both public officials and private citizens expressed feelings of disbelief, shock, and grief. Said D. H. Grisso, president of the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District, "Yesterday was a black day for Oklahoma. If the state had a billion-dollar life insurance policy on Senator Kerr, it would still be the loser."[2] Majority leader of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, Carl Albert, claimed Kerr was "absolutely irreplaceable,"[3] and, in agreement, Buck Cook, Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, said, "I just don't know

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[1] Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), January 2, 1963, p. 1.

[2] As cited in ibid.

[3] Ibid.

who can take his place."[4]

In Congress, Robert Kerr was known as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate."[5] President Kennedy remarked that in the last two years alone, "almost every major bill enacted bore the mark of his leadership."[6] Washington knew him as the powerful "pork barreler" who usually got what he wanted. Said Newsweek of the Senator, "Not only does Kerr have power but he exercises it—through cajolery, wheedling, invective, threatening, and bludgeoning."[7] On the floor of Congress, the "Uncrowned King" offered warning to his adversaries: "I ask no quarter and give none."[8] Kerr remained true to this promise throughout his Senate tenure and was well-known for his venemous attacks. He was described as being "as poisonous as a scorpion's tail"[9] by one, and another exclaimed, "You think twice before crossing Robert Kerr."[10]

To Oklahomans, however, Kerr was neither a "pork

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[4]Ibid.

[5]Joe Lastelic, "Bob Kerr Gets Things Done for Oklahoma," Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[6]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 1.

[7]"Oklahoma's Kerr—The Man Who Really Runs the U. S. Senate," Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 15.

[8]U. S., Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 2nd Session, 1962, CVIII, part 13, 17860.

[9]As cited in Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

[10]Ibid.

barreler" nor a villain. In Oklahoma, Kerr was a United States Senator; the man who had developed the state's natural resources; a man of the people. Most Oklahomans felt as if they knew him personally. "He knows the language of Aunt Min,"[11] remarked one man, and another said, "He was a friend to all."[12] Kerr wasn't known in Oklahoma for his invective and sarcasm, and there he neither cajoled, wheedled, nor threatened to get his way. Instead, he was simply the humorous and wittily persuasive farm boy who loved his state and the people who lived there.

In Oklahoma, the Senator was "just Big Bob Kerr."[13] An associated press release said, "He was Mr. Democrat in Oklahoma. And to many, he was simply Mr. Oklahoma."[14] Perhaps Tom Rucker best summarized the feelings of all Oklahomans when he said, "They just don't make men like that anymore."[15]

To be sure, people in Oklahoma and Washington perceived Kerr differently. Perhaps the Daily Oklahoman recognized this when it said, "He was feared by many,

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[11]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 3.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 3.

[14]Ibid.

[15]As cited in ibid.

hated by a few. He was loved by others and respected by all."[16]

Purpose and Scope

The speaker's image has long been recognized as an important factor in achieving desired audience reaction. The ancients used the term ethos to refer to this concept. Even today, rhetoricians agree in declaring that the image of the speaker is instrumental in facilitating the acceptance of belief.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, for example, recognized the importance of ethical proof when he said, "The reason why anyone refuses his assent to your opinion, or his aid to your benevolent design, is in you. He refuses to accept you as a bringer of truth, because, though you think you have it, he feels that you have it not."[17]

While rhetoricians are in agreement concerning the importance of ethical proof in persuasion, they have not always agreed concerning those factors which contribute to the speaker's ethos. Sandford and Yeager point to this problem when they refer to ethos as a "broad, almost omnibus, term."[18] In agreement, Thonssen and Baird state,

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[16] Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 1.

[17] As cited in Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), p. 383.

[18] As cited in Winston L. Brembeck and William S. Howell, Persuasion (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), p. 248.

"Any attempt to present an inclusive catalog of ethical attributes or manifestations would be futile."[19] In short, only broad guidelines can be established concerning those factors which contribute to a speaker's image. For this study, Minnick's discussion of this concept appears to be acceptable.

> The nature of ethos can be clearly understood if it is conceived as arising from three sources: (1) the tangible attainments or known reputation of the speaker which the audience acquires before the delivery of the speech, (2) the character and personality revealed by the speaker as he utters the speech, and (3) the coincidence of the speaker's proposals with the rigid beliefs and attitudes of the audience.[20]

This is the study of a United States Senator and the image that he projected to two audiences. The purpose of this investigation is to (1) examine the image that Robert Kerr established (a) before his Washington audience and (b) before his Oklahoma audience and (2) analyze Kerr's communications before these audiences for the presence of ethical proof used as a persuasive device. Finally, a comparison of the two facets of Kerr's image will be made.

The communications analyzed in this study are limited as follows: (1) For the Washington audience the analysis has been limited to Senate speeches that appear in the Congressional Record and (2) For the Oklahoma

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[19]Thonssen and Baird, p. 387.

[20]Wayne Minnick, The Art of Persuasion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), p. 113.

audience, two different types of communications have been examined: (a) weekly press releases from Kerr, both while governor and United States Senator ("Governor Kerr Speaks" and "Senator Kerr Speaks" respectively); and (b) Kerr's statewide campaign speeches while running for governor and U. S. Senator.

Previous Research

Careful investigation has revealed that no research has been done in the subject area of this dissertation, except a Master's thesis by this author entitled "An Analysis of the Modes of Proof in Robert S. Kerr's Senate Speeches on Conservation."

However, shortly before the Democratic National Convention in 1952, an article entitled "Political Speaking in 1952: A Symposium," appeared in the October issue of the Quarterly Journal of Speech. This study was an attempt to understand and analyze contemporary public speaking. John W. Keltner and R. Victor Harnack, then teaching at the University of Oklahoma, contributed a brief evaluation of Kerr's political speaking to the symposium.[21] This paper apparently represents the only published attempt to analyze the late Senator's rhetoric.

There is no definitive biography of Kerr's life,

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[21]"Robert S. Kerr," in "Political Speaking in 1952: A Symposium," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 295-297.

although a member of Kerr's staff is in the process of writing one. Biographical sketches of the Senator's early life, however, appear in Who's Who in America, XXXVI (1950-1951) and the fourth edition of Current Biography: Who's News and Why (1950).[22] Other sources which shed light on Kerr's life and speaking include Marquis W. Childs's article "The Big Boom From Oklahoma,"[23] "Senator Bob Kerr, The Oklahoma Gusher," by Daniel Seligman,[24] and "The Tall Teetotaler from Indian Territory," by Arthur Krock.[25]

Availability of Materials

In 1948, Senator Kerr selected the manuscripts division of the University of Oklahoma library as the repository for his papers and documents. Upon Kerr's election to the Senate, the division received the Senator's papers, which ranged from 1909 until 1946 when he completed his term as Governor of Oklahoma. This material has been classified and stored. Shortly before Kerr's death, the manuscripts division began receiving the remainder of

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[22]The best biographical sketch of Kerr appears in Current Biography: Who's News and Why. The earliest biographical sketch of Kerr is by Otis Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, edited by J. T. Salter (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1946), pp. 415-427.

[23]Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 22-23, 118-120.

[24]Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 136-138, 179-188.

[25]New York Times, February 7, 1952, p. 26.

the Kerr papers. At this date, they have received the entire Kerr Collection.[26] Permission has been granted this author to work in the official Kerr Papers.

The other sources necessary for this project are available and in print. These include national magazine articles regarding Kerr's Senate tenure and political philosophy, the Congressional Record from 1949-1963, the Daily Oklahoman 1941-1963, and the New York Times 1941-1963.

Method of Organization

The following division of material represents the method of organizing this study.

Chapter II presents an historical examination of the concepts of ethos beginning with the ancients and concluding with the modern rhetorical theorists. The purpose of this chapter is to offer a definition of the concept of ethos and show its importance to the public speaker.

Chapter III is divided into two parts: one treating Kerr's image in Washington, and the second examining Kerr's image in Oklahoma. In short, this chapter describes the audience's impression of the speaker before he comes to

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[26]The Kerr Papers include legislative materials primarily concerning military affairs, agriculture, conservation and water projects, fiscal policy, and the petroleum industry. Other papers include Kerr's general correspondence, campaign materials, speeches, services to constituents and veterans, letters from constituents, the original typed manuscript of Kerr's book Land, Wood and Water, pictures, and newspaper clippings.

the platform. Two general sources are examined to determine the Kerr image. First, pertinent biographical material is consulted as contributing to an understanding of Kerr's personality. Second, testimony of members of Kerr's audiences is presented to complete the picture of the audience's impression of the speaker before he spoke. The two sections of this chapter are organized by image attributes. For the Oklahoma audience, Kerr is presented as a man of the people and the developer of Oklahoma. For the Washington audience Kerr is presented as a "pork barreler," debater, and the "Uncrowned King of the Senate."

The next two chapters are divided into two parts: (1) an analysis of the audience to which Kerr directed his communications and (2) an examination of Kerr's communications for ethical proof used either to alter or reinforce the image held by his audience.

Kerr generally reinforced his Oklahoma image as a developer of the state by pointing to legislation he secured in the Senate that benefited the state. Too, he reinforced his image as a man of the people through the use of wit and humor and emphasis on his frontier background and religious training.

Kerr attempted to alter his image as a "pork barreler" by justifying the legislation he supported as serving the best interests of the country. He reinforced his image as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate" by

employing invective and sarcasm. On other occasions, however, he attempted to soften the blow of this technique by using wit and humor and appealing to the virtuous.

The concluding chapter compares Kerr's use of ethical proof in the two audience situations. It demonstrates that both indirect and direct evidence point to Kerr's realization of, and attempt to reinforce, different aspects of his image before two audiences. Finally, the chapter discusses the value of these different images.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTS OF ETHICAL PROOF

Introduction

"[The speaker's] character," wrote Aristotle, "may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses."[1] Twenty-four hundred years later, Brembeck and Howell claim ethical proof "is one of the vital factors in determining responses to persuasive stimuli."[2] Many writers, both ancient and modern, have assigned the term ethos to the concept of the speaker's character as a mode of proof. This form of proof allegedly makes the utterance more believable because of the force inherent in the authentic and credible manner in which the speaker recommends himself as worthy of being believed.

The term ethos is derived from the Greek word for custom or habit. In its earliest usage, ethos referred to the habits and traditions that distinguished one social group from another. The Latin word mores is similar in

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[1]Rhetoric, translated by W. Rhys Roberts, The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), 1356a. Later cited as Rhetoric.

[2]Winston L. Brembeck and William S. Howell, Persuasion (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), p. 252.

meaning. Mores is a standard of morally approved conduct encompassed in the Greek term ethos. Ethos, then, in its derived sense, may be defined as characteristic traits of the speaker received from the traditions, habits, or moral standards of his particular society.[3]

Sattler indicates that the principle of ethos in rhetorical theory is found in two basically different forms. One form is "subjective"; the other, "objective".

> One interpretation of ethos is that the speaker exhibits qualities of a personal nature—intrinsic goodness and honesty, sound judgment, an interest in the well being of the audience, together with respected traits of a non-ethical nature—which induce listeners to approve the arguments given in a speech. . . . We may label this type of ethos subjective ethos. A second meaning . . . is the portrayal of the character traits of others by means of description or possibly impersonation (objective ethos).[4]

The key terms of Sattler's analysis are "exhibits" referring to "subjective" ethos and "portrayal" referring to "objective" ethos. This study, while recognizing the basically different forms of ethos, is concerned only with "subjective" ethos as defined by Sattler.

Rhetoricians have often found it difficult to distinguish between ethical (ethos), emotional (pathos), and logical (logos) proof. As Thonssen and Baird have

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[3]William Martin Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos in Rhetoric" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Speech, Northwestern University, 1941), p. 5.

[4]Ibid., pp. 6-7.

stated, "The distinction . . . is not always clear; and in some instances it may be virtually nonexistent."[5] Supporting this position, Bauer writes:

> [Ethos, pathos, and logos] are not as individual or separate as the classification might lead one to believe. They are bound up together, and at times cannot be separated. For instance, a speaker's attempt to make himself appear credible might arouse strong emotion in the hearers, or his very arguments might establish his character or arouse emotion.[6]

In other words, the orator may relate a story which logically substantiates his contention (logos), emotionally arouses his audience (pathos), and reveals the speaker as a credible source (ethos).

While proofs often do not fall into distinct and separate categories, the isolation of Kerr's ethos is essential to this study, and thus a separation of the proofs is attempted. Edward Pross suggests that this separation of proofs is possible when he states:

> Students of rhetoric may take a speech delivered by a speaker of another era, and upon securing a thorough insight into the nature of the audience, occasion, and speaker, can make a reasonably good analysis and differentiation of the forms of proof in that address.[7]

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[5]Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), p. 386.

[6]Marvin G. Bauer, "Persuasive Methods in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XIII (February, 1927), 30.

[7]Edward L. Pross, "Practical Implications of the Aristotelian Concept of Ethos," Southern Speech Journal, XVII (May, 1952), 258.

The problem of separating the modes of proof suggests that not all rhetorical theorists have shared similar interpretations concerning the components of ethos. A historical treatment of this rhetorical concept is necessary both to become better acquainted with the subject and to provide limitation of the analytical tools used in the study.

Pre-Aristotelian Concepts of Ethical Proof

While Aristotle was the first to give ethos specific recognition as a mode of proof, indirect references to this rhetorical principle are found in the writings of logographers, Corax and Tisias, the Rhetorica Ad Alexandrum, and Plato.

Athenian law, requiring litigants in legal suits to plead their own cases before a jury, gave rise to a group of professional speech writers known as logographers. The law allowed litigants to consult advisors concerning the case in question. Skilled speakers enjoyed definite advantages, and parties involved in legal entanglements quickly recognized the benefits that could be obtained from an expert in legal oratory. Legal disputes were numerous, and logographers flourished during the period from c. 450 to 320 B. C. "Seven of the Attic Orators, Antiphon, Lysias, Isseus, Dinarchus, Isocrates, Hyperides, and Demosthenes, were professional speech writers."[8]

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[8]R. C. Jebb, The Attic Orators, II (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1962), 8.

The fact that logographers were aware of the principle of ethos is evidenced by their concern that the speech match the personality of the client. Kennedy writes:

> Ethos is especially marked in Lysias, who is fond of developing the characters of the litigants to show that the jury should favor his client. Indeed, the regular structure of Lysianic proof is: (1) direct evidence, (2) proof or refutation by probability, (3) proof by character.[9]

Further evidence is provided by William L. Devries who reports Lysias as saying, "To be appropriate to the speaker, an oration must be adapted by his age, race, training, persuits, mode of life, and other characteristics."[10] According to the professional speech writers of this period, ethos was a means of adapting the speech to the character of the speaker, the audience, and the subject.

In a different sense, Corax and Tisias implied the doctrine of ethos in the "principle of probability."[11] Both Corax and Tisias reportedly wrote treatises explaining the "principle of probability," but their works are not extant. Their rhetorical doctrines are interpreted, therefore, through comments made about them by later writers.

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[9]George Kennedy, The Art of Persuasion in Greece (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 91-92.

[10]William L. Devries, Ethoporia: A Rhetorical Study of the Types of Character in the Orations of Lysias, as cited in Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 16.

[11]Bromley Smith, "Corax and Probability," Quarterly Journal of Speech, VII (February, 1921), 21.

Aristotle reported the probability theory and attributed it to Corax.

> If the accused is not open to charge—for instance if a weakling be tried for violent assault—the defense is that he was not likely to do such a thing. But if he is open to the charge—i.e. if he is a strong man—the defense is still that he was not likely to do such a thing, since he could be sure that people would think he was likely to do it.[12]

Thus, the speaker argues from that which is probable and implies truth. He who speaks the truth, or appears to do so, generally possesses high character.

Corax and Tisias further advised that the speaker should gain the good will of the audience in the proem. Muller and Donaldson state:

> All that we know of this "art" is that it laid down a regular form and regular divisions for the oration; above all, it was to begin with a distant proem, calculated to put the hearers in a favorable train; and to conciliate their good will at the very opening of the speech.[13]

Sattler believes that the proem, as discussed by Corax and Tisias, would frequently include material which had little direct bearing on the case at issue and whose sole purpose was to make the speaker's task easier to accomplish by gaining the audience's respect and good will.[14]

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[12] Rhetoric, 1402a.

[13] K. O. Muller and John W. Donaldson, A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece, II (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1881), 99.

[14] Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 15.

The Rhetorica Ad Alexandrum is the only extant rhetorical treatise representative of rhetorical theory as it was taught at the time of its most complete development by the Greek sophists before Aristotle. While the unknown author of this treatise does not use the term ethos, he does treat those things which will enhance the speaker's character. "If you wish to write a pleasing speech, be careful as far as possible to adapt the character of your speech to that of the public. You will achieve this if you observe their character—noble, petty, or average."[15] Analysis of the audience is here suggested by the author of the Ad Alexandrum. This, however, is not the only reference to the principle of ethos. The personal character of the speaker plays a significant role: "One must also be careful not only about one's speech but also about one's personal conduct . . . because one's manner of life contributes to one's powers of persuasion as well as to the attainment of a good reputation."[16] The Rhetorica Ad Alexandrum further states that the speaker is respected and thought to be of high character when he is able to present evidence on his own authority. "Such virtues shown by the personal testimony of the speaker are considered

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[15] Rhetorica Ad Alexandrum, translated by H. Rackham (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1937), 1434a.

[16] Ibid., 1445b.

to have a persuasive force because the audience respects the character of the speaker."[17]

Two considerations relevant to ethos as a rhetorical factor are found in the writings of Plato. In the Phaedrus, Plato attacks sophistic rhetoric because, in his opinion, it represents a dangerous philosophy of life. He refuses to accept the doctrine of probability advanced by Corax and Tisias as being ethically sound and offers a new definition for this rhetorical construct—"resemblance to the truth."[18] To Corax, Plato argues, probability means only "what the crowd believe[s]."[19] Plato wanted a truer and more philosophical rhetoric, and in the Phaedrus he outlines the noble rhetoric in which the concept of ethos, although not specifically mentioned, plays a most significant role. In this rhetoric, good characteristics (not merely appearance, but possession of admirable traits) are essential. The aim of this rhetoric is to influence people to accept proposals which will lead to a better life. Plato's outline for the noble rhetoric requires that the speaker: (1) possess good character, (2) be informed and intelligent, (3) adapt his arguments to the audience, and (4) consider the good

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[17] Ibid., 1438b.

[18] Phaedrus, in Plato, translated by Lane Cooper (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1955), 273.

[19] Ibid.

will of the audience.[20] Thus, Plato argues, the speaker's character will be admired if the audience accepts his arguments and if they are just.

Of the earlier writers, Plato comes closest to a mature consideration of ethos as a rhetorical principle. Even he, however, does not offer a detailed account of this doctrine. Two conclusions may be drawn concerning pre-Aristotelian concepts of ethos: (1) the persuasive effect of ethos operates largely through the introduction of the speech and (2) the orator who speaks the truth, or appears to do so, possesses high character which adds to the persuasiveness of the speech.

Aristotle's Concept of Ethical Proof

Aristotle was the first to give the rhetorical principle of ethos full and systematic attention. He perceived ethos as one of the three types of artistic proofs.

> Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself.[21]

Theoretically, Aristotle believed that a case should be argued only with facts, ignoring emotional and ethical

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[20] Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," pp. 65-66.

[21] Rhetoric, 1356a.

appeals. However, he recognized that this theory had little practical value.

> We ought in fairness to fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts: nothing, therefore, should matter except the proof of those facts. Still, as has been already said, other things affect the result considerably, owing to the defects of our hearers.[22]

Thus, Aristotle recognized that rhetoric depends on more than factual data. Moreover, he observed, "It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses."[23] Aristotle claims that ethos can be an effective mode of persuasion because, "We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided."[24]

To Aristotle, ethos was an artistic proof to be invented by the speaker. By inartistic proofs, Aristotle meant "such things as are not supplied by the speaker but are there at the outset—witnesses, evidence given

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[22] Ibid., 1404a.

[23] Ibid., 1356a.

[24] Ibid.

under torture, written contracts, and so on."[25] Aristotle's definition of artistic proofs encompassed things "we can ourselves construct by means of the principles of rhetoric."[26] Inartistic proofs were merely used by the speaker, while artistic proofs had to be invented.

Because Aristotle conceived ethos as an artistic proof he maintained that the audience's concept of the speaker's personality prior to the rhetorical situation (an inartistic achievement) should not affect the orator's persuasiveness.

> Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. . . . This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak.[27]

To Aristotle, therefore, what people thought of the speaker before the rhetorical act was outside the realm of artistic proof.

While the Aristotelian treatment of ethos is not complicated, it is lengthy. An overview of Aristotle's concept of this rhetorical principle is offered by Sattler in diagram form. (See diagram on next page.

According to Aristotle, the ethos of the speaker is derived from the orator's good sense, good moral character,

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[25] Ibid., 1355b.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 1356a.

TABLE 1

ETHOS

Intelligence	Character	Good Will
Virtues		Friendship
1. Liberality	6. Magnificence	1. Genuine interest in the welfare of listeners.
2. Justice	7. Prudence	
3. Courage	8. Gentleness	2. Also an inclusive term for all respected qualities discerned in the speaker.
4. Temperance	9. Wisdom	
5. Magnanimity		

Manifested in Choice Through

Invention, Arrangement, Style, Delivery

Such Choices Are

1. Dedicated by what the speaker believes to be:	2. Tempered by Adaptation to the Audience:
Viewed as constant factors:	
(1). Expediency	(1). Ages
(2). Justice	(2). Forms of Government
(3). Honor	(3). Fortune
	(4). Wealth
	(5). Power[28]

[28]Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 76.

and good will. Aristotle claims these things "inspire confidence in the orator's own character."[29] Good sense and good character are achieved by the possession of certain virtues. "We now have to consider Virtue and Vice, the Noble and the Base, since these are the objects of praise and blame. In doing so, we shall at the same time be finding out how to make our hearers take the required view of our own characters."[30] More specifically, in reference to virtue, Aristotle writes:

> The forms of Virtue are justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, wisdom. It Virtue is a faculty of beneficence, the highest kinds of it must be those which are most useful to others, and for this reason men honour most the just and the courageous, since courage is useful to others in war, justice both in war and peace. Next comes liberality; liberal people let their money go instead of fighting for it, whereas other people care more for money than for anything else. Justice is the Virtue through which everybody enjoys his own possessions in accordance with the law; its opposite is injustice, through which men enjoy the possessions of others in defiance of the law. Courage is the Virtue that disposes men to do noble deeds in situations of danger, in accordance with the law and in obedience to its commands; cowardice is the opposite. Temperance is the Virtue that disposes us to obey the law where physical pleasures are concerned; incontinence is the opposite. Liberality disposes us to spend money for others' good; illiberality is the opposite. Magnanimity is the Virtue that disposes us to do good to others on a large scale. . . . Magnificence

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[29] Rhetoric, 1378a.

[30] Ibid., 1366a.

> is a Virtue productive of greatness in matters involving the spending of money. The opposites of these two are smallness of spirit and meanness respectively. Prudence is that Virtue of the understanding which enables men to come to wise decisions about the relation to happiness of the goods and evils that have been previously mentioned.[31]

These virtues, therefore, if possessed by the speaker, enhance persuasiveness. He gains the confidence of the audience by demonstrating these traits. But Aristotle warns:

> Do not let your words seem inspired so much by intelligence, . . . as by moral purpose: e.g. "I willed this; aye, it was my moral purpose; true, I gained nothing by it, still it is better thus." For the other way shows good sense, but this shows good character; good sense making us go after what is useful, and good character after what is noble.[32]

In treating the third component of *ethos*, good will, Aristotle discusses friendship.

> We may describe friendly feeling towards anyone as wishing for him what you believe to be good things, not for your own sake but for his, and being inclined, so far as you can, to bring these things about. . . . It follows that your friend is the sort of man who shares your pleasure in what is good and your pain in what is unpleasant, for your sake and for no other reason.[33]

Aristotle then explains those character traits which demonstrate friendship and enhance the speaker's good will to his audience.

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[31] *Ibid.*, 1366a-1366b.

[32] *Ibid.*, 1417a.

[33] *Ibid.*, 1380b-1381a.

> We feel friendly to those who have treated us well. . . . To our friends' friends, and to those who like, or are liked by, those whom we like ourselves. . . . To those who are willing to treat us well where money or our personal safety is concerned. . . . The just we consider to be those who do not live on others; . . . those who work for their living . . . and others who work with their own hands. We also like temperate men, . . . those well thought of by every one, . . . those who are not too ready to show us our mistakes, . . . those who have the tact to make and take a joke, . . . those who praise such good qualities as we possess, . . . those who are cleanly in their person, their dress, and all their way of life. And towards those who do not reproach us with what we have done amiss to them or they have done to help us, . . . those who do not nurse grudges or store up grievances, . . . those who do not try to thwart us when we are angry or in earnest, . . . those who have some serious feelings towards us, . . . those who are like ourselves in character and occupation.[34]

By possessing certain virtues and displaying the qualities of friendship, the audience recognizes the speaker's good moral character, good sense, and good will which results in ethical persuasion.

Underlying the Aristotelian principle of ethos is the concept of choice. "We shall learn the qualities of . . . individuals, since they are revealed in their deliberate acts of choice; and these are determined by the end that inspires them."[35] Choices the speaker makes in matters of invention, arrangement, style, and delivery also demonstrate ethos.

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[34] Ibid., 1381a-1381b.

[35] Ibid., 1366a.

Ethos is discussed principally as a function of invention in the Rhetoric and is achieved by selecting arguments which conform to the aims of the three kinds of speaking. In the case of deliberative speaking, the orator is to choose that which is most expedient in achieving happiness. Ethos has its greatest potential affect in the realm of deliberative speaking, for it is here that the orator has the greatest number of choices. In the case of forensic speaking the aim is justice, as obtained through arguments in conformity with the aim of justice. In epidectic oratory the aim is to establish honor with the choice of arguments found through a study of virtues.

Concerning invention, Aristotle treats one form of argument, the maxim, as being especially relevant to the character because it deals with "questions of practical conduct, courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided."[36] A maxim is defined as "a statement; not about a particular fact, . . . but of a general kind; nor is it about any and every subject . . . but only about questions of practical conduct."[37] Aristotle further states, "If the maxims are sound, they display the speaker as a man of sound moral character."[38] Aristotle also recognized that in some cases

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[36] Ibid., 1394a.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., 1395b.

the orator would not possess strong arguments. Concerning this he wrote, "Now if you have proofs to bring forward, bring them forward, and your moral discourse as well; if you have no Enthymemes, then fall back on moral discourse: after all, it is more fitting for a good man to display himself as an honest fellow than a subtle reasoner."[39] In short, the orator is to rely on his own character in the absence of strong arguments.

In regard to arrangement, Aristotle considers ethos as a function of the proem, narrative, and epilogue. Ethos in the proem, Aristotle believed, was designed primarily as an attention-getting device.

> You may use any means you choose to make your hearer receptive; among others, giving him a good impression of your character, which always helps to secure his attention. He will be ready to attend to anything that touches himself, . . . and you should accordingly convey to him the impression that what you have to say is of this nature.[40]

About the narration, Aristotle stated:

> You may also narrate as you go anything that does credit to yourself, e.g. "I kept telling him to do his duty and not abandon his children," or discredit to your adversary. . . . The narration should depict character; to which end you must know what makes it do so. One such thing is the indication of moral purpose; the quality of purpose indicated determines the quality of character depicted and is itself determined by the end pursued. . . . This end will also be gained by describing the manifestations of various types

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[39] Ibid., 1418a-1418b.

[40] Ibid., 1415a-1415b.

> of character, e.g. "He kept walking along as he talked", which shows the man's recklessness and rough manners.[41]

Aristotle viewed the epilogue as having four parts. The first part, Aristotle advised, should be devoted to making the audience well disposed to the speaker and ill-disposed to his opponent.

> Having shown your own truthfulness and the untruthfulness of your opponent, the natural thing is to commend yourself, censure him, and hammer in your points. You must aim at one of two objects—you must make yourself out a good man and him a bad one either in yourselves or in relation to your hearers.[42]

Aristotle treats ethos as a function of style and delivery only briefly. Concerning style, he points to the importance of appropriate language to successful persuasion. "Your language will be appropriate if it expresses emotion and character, and if it corresponds to its subject."[43] More specifically, Aristotle explains how appropriate language expresses the speaker's character.

> The aptness of language is one thing that makes people believe in the truth of your story: their minds draw the false conclusion that you are to be trusted from the fact that others behave as you do when things are as you describe them; and therefore they take your story to be true, whether it is or not. . . .
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> Furthermore, this way of proving your story by displaying these signs of its genuineness

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[41] Ibid., 1417a.

[42] Ibid., 1419b.

[43] Ibid., 1408a.

> expresses your personal character. Each class of men, each type of disposition, will have its own appropriate way of letting the truth appear. . . . If then a speaker uses the very words which are in keeping with a particular disposition, he will reproduce the corresponding character; for a rustic and an educated man will not say the same things nor speak in the same way.[44]

In short, the speaker's sincerity is revealed by his style. On delivery, Aristotle recommends naturalness.

> We can now see that a writer must disguise his art and give the impression of speaking naturally and not artificially. Naturalness is persuasive, artificiality is the contrary; for our hearers are prejudiced and think we have some design against them. . . . We can hide our purpose successfully by taking the single words of our composition from the speech of ordinary life.[45]

Unlike Plato, Aristotle did not believe that the speaker actually had to possess good character in order to be held in high esteem by his audience. He recognized that rhetorical principles could be used alike by both good and evil orators. However, Aristotle did believe that justice would naturally prevail over injustice and that a speaker who offers worthy proposals built on moral purpose would more likely succeed than one who did not. Clark fittingly summarizes this Aristotelian concept: "The philosophical scientific view of Aristotle . . . tried to see the thing [rhetoric] as in itself it really was . . .

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 1404b.

[and] endeavored to devise a theory of rhetoric without moral praise or blame for it."[46]

Thus, the concept of ethos as a rhetorical principle received its first complete and comprehensive treatment in Aristotle's Rhetoric. Viewed as one of the three great modes of persuasion and comprised of the speaker's good sense, good moral character, and good will, ethos was treated as an artistic endeavor involved with choices made by the speaker in matters of invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. Finally, only what the speaker did while uttering the speech resulted in ethical proof—not what the audience thought of the speaker before he spoke.

Roman Idea of Ethical Proof

Following the establishment of Macedonian rule in Greece, rhetoric was no longer of value in solving political and judicial cases. Rhetoric, because of this limitation, reverted to the oratory of display. "It was oratory known as Asianism and it was characterized by affected and extravagant diction."[47] The orator's former place of importance in the state disappeared, and emphasis was placed upon stylistic devices aimed at effect. As Sattler comments, "In order to give rhetoric a vital

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[46]Donald Lemen Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), p. 24.

[47]Jebb, p. 441.

function, an entirely new setting was required. Rhetoric did not again become a subject with both cultural and practical significance until the Roman Republic offered a place for the orator-statesman."[48]

The basic concept of ethos as defined by Aristotle appears in the writings of both Cicero and Quintilian. The concept, however, is somewhat modified by Cicero and even more so by Quintilian. The earlier writings of the Roman period deal with the concept of ethos in much the same way as do the early writings of the Greeks. This category of early extant Roman works, including Cicero's De Inventione and the Rhetorica Ad Herenium, deals with ethical proof primarily in the introduction of the speech.

Both Cicero and Quintilian delved into the nature of ethical persuasion and contributed to its understanding. Cicero's works De Oratore and Orator both refer to ethos as an instrument of persuasion. Moreover, Cicero places ethos on an equal plane with logos, or rhetorical logical proof. While Aristotle recognized the importance of ethos, he did not consider the proofs equal. Of even greater importance is the fact that Cicero, in discussing the ideal orator, does not clearly associate the speaker with ethical proof proper.[49] The training of the ideal orator,

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[48] Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 117.

[49] Ibid., p. 121.

however, as conceived by Cicero, greatly contributes to the speaker's moral and intellectual qualifications. In De Oratore we find:

> It contributes much to success in speaking, that the morals, principles, conduct, and lives of those who plead causes, and of those for whom they plead, should be such as to merit esteem; and that those of their adversaries should be such as to deserve censure; and also that the minds of those before whom the cause is pleaded should be moved as much as possible to a favourable feeling, as well towards the speaker as towards him for whom he speaks. The feelings of the hearers are conciliated by a person's dignity, by his actions, by the character of his life; particulars which can more easily be adorned by eloquence, if they really exist, than be invented, if they have no existence. . . . It is of particular advantage that indications of good nature, of liberality, of gentleness, of piety, of grateful feelings, free from selfishness and avarice, should appear in him; and everything that characterizes men of probity and humility. . . . The contrary qualities to these, therefore, are to be imputed to your opponents. . . . To describe the character of your clients in your speeches, therefore, as just, full of integrity, religious, unpresuming, and patient of injuries, has an extraordinary effect; . . . that it often prevails more than the merits of the cause. Such influence, indeed, is produced by a certain feeling and art in speaking, that the speech seems to represent, as it were, the character of the speaker; for, by adopting a peculiar mode of thought and expression, united with action that is gentle and indicative of amiableness, such an effect is produced, that the speaker seems to be a man of probity, integrity, and virtue.[50]

Cicero's position in defining ethos is not entirely clear. Rhetorical scholars have accused him of not fully

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[50] De Oratore, in Cicero on Oratory and Orator, translated by J. S. Watson (London: George Bell and Sons, 1909), ii. 43.

differentiating ethical and emotional proof. Irving J. Lee supports this theory when he states:

> The concepts are differentiated on a functional basis. Ethos becomes a way of winning the favor of the audience. When the speech shows the speaker to be generous, merciful, just, and upright, the hearers will be positively disposed and conciliatory.[51]

Sattler disagrees with this interpretation of Cicero and insists that "a more basic concept emerges, for ethos comprehends morals, principles, and conduct."[52] He offers the following explanation: "Cicero knows the value of ethos, but he is more interested in pathos, and he therefore does not choose to treat ethos in a systematic manner."[53]

Most of what Quintilian writes in the Institutes of Oratory is a repetition of Cicero's ideas. Their treatment of ethos differs, however, in one major respect, the scope of the concept, or the distinction between ethos and pathos. Quintilian points out that the Greek term ethos cannot be translated into Latin but is associated with mildness. He conceives the major difference between ethos and pathos to be one of degree. In the Institutes of Oratory he states:

> Pathos and ethos are sometimes of the same nature, differing only in degree; love for instance comes

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[51]Irving J. Lee, "Some Conceptions of Emotional Appeal in Rhetorical Theory," Speech Monographs, VI (December, 1939), 70.

[52]Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 202.

[53]Ibid.

> under the head of pathos, affection of ethos; sometimes however they differ, a distinction which is important for the peroration, since ethos is generally employed to calm the storm aroused by pathos.[54]

Quintilian attempts to modify this definition as he later states:

> The ethos which I have in my mind and which I desiderate in an orator is commended to our approval by goodness more than aught else and is not merely calm and mild, but in most cases ingratiating and courteous and such as to excite pleasure and affection in our hearers.[55]

To Quintilian, the possession of good character was essential to the orator. In fact, Quintilian's definition that an orator was a good man speaking well would prevent those of low moral character from obtaining the title "orator."

> Finally ethos in all its forms requires the speaker to be a man of good character and courtesy. For it is most important that he should himself possess . . . those virtues for the possession of which it is his duty, if possible, to commend his client as well, while the excellence of his own character will make his pleading all the more convincing and will be of the utmost service to the cases which he undertakes. For the orator who gives the impression of being a bad man while he is speaking, is actually speaking badly, since his words seem to be insincere owing to the absence of ethos which would otherwise have revealed itself.[56]

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[54] Institutes of Oratory, II, translated by H. E. Butler (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1921), vi. 2. 12.

[55] Ibid., vi. 2. 13.

[56] Ibid., vi. 2. 18.

In essence, Cicero and Quintilian endorsed the Aristotelian concept of ethos. They actually placed more stress on ethos by considering it on an equal plane with logos, and both Cicero and Quintilian insisted that ethos was derived from previous impression of the speaker as well as the impression of the speaker gained from the speech itself.

Medieval Treatment of Ethical Proof

During the early medieval period, writers substituted the terms "ethical," "character," "propriety," "the becoming," and "decorum" for the concept of ethos discussed by Aristotle.[57] Capella, Julius Victor, Cassiodorus, and Alcuin discussed ethos but gave no attention to it as a mode of proof. Instead, the canons of style and delivery were to provide necessary audience approval of the speaker's ethical qualities.[58] The late medieval period gave rise to the rhetoric of dictamen which stressed some traditional aspects of ethos. Here, the exordium and adaptation of the reader's style to the audience were given attention. Moreover, treatises on preaching during this period recommended nobility of character and recognized the importance of ethical persuasion in invention through use of the scriptures.[59]

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[57] Sattler, "Conceptions of Ethos . . .," p. 232.

[58] Ibid., p. 234.

[59] Ibid., p. 233.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries rhetorical treatises followed either the classical tradition, or the stylistic approach which emphasized tropes and figures. Erasmus, Melanchthon, Bacon, Fenelon, and Lamy treated ethos as an Aristotelian mode of proof.[60] Sherry, Peacham, Fraunce, and Hoskins were among those who supported a rhetoric of tropes and figures. In their concept of rhetoric, ethos involved choices made by the speaker. As Sattler writes, "Ethos is applied both in figures which are concerned with invention and in the devices which evince sincerity through style and delivery."[61]

Modern Impressions of Ethical Proof

Further development of the Aristotelian concept of ethos occurred during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both English and American treatises described the constituents of ethical proof. Some—Mason, Sheridan, Burgh, Scott, Knox, and Austin—treated ethos only in regard to delivery. To these writers, the speaker demonstrated sincerity in the manner by which he delivered the speech. Others—Ward, Campbell, Blair, Whately in England, and Witherspoon and Adams in America—relied upon the complete and systematic treatment of the Aristotelian concept. As Sattler states: "The entire doctrine of Aristotle

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[60] Ibid., pp. 247-251.

[61] Ibid., p. 237.

appears, ethos as a mode of proof, ethos as adaptation to the audience, and ethos evinced in style and delivery. In fact, the threefold basis of ethos in the Rhetoric is fully explained."[62]

George Campbell restated the classical doctrine that the primary aim of rhetoric was persuasion and demonstrated a preference for the Roman treatment of ethical qualities required of the "ideal" orator. Campbell's chief contribution to the concept of ethos is his use of the term "sympathy" to describe it.

> Sympathy in the hearers to the speaker may be lessened several ways, chiefly by these two: by a low opinion of his intellectual abilities, and by a bad opinion of his morals. The latter is the more prejudicial of the two. Men generally will think themselves in less danger of being seduced by a man of weak understanding, but of distinguished probity, than by a man of the best understanding who is of a profligate life. So much more powerfully do the qualities of the heart attach us than those of the head. . . . Hence it hath become a common topic with rhetoricians, that in order to be a successful orator, one must be a good man; for to be good is the only sure way of being long esteemed necessary to one's being heard with due attention and regard. Consequently, the topic hath a foundation in human nature. There are, indeed, other things in the character of the speaker, which in a less degree will hurt his influence: youth, inexperience of affairs, former want of success, and the like.[63]

Like Aristotle, Campbell evaluates ethos through a study

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[62] Ibid., p. 338.

[63] George Campbell, Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1871), p. 119.

of virtues:

> One [rhetorician] reduceth all the virtues to prudence, and is ready to make clear that there neither is nor can be another source of moral good. . . . Another . . . benevolence . . . a third . . . veracity. . . . A fourth, [Campbell] with more ingenuity, and much greater appearance of reason, assures you that the true system of ethics is comprised in one word, sympathy.[64]

Campbell also treats ethos in terms of adapting to the audience and speech occasion. "When it is affirmed that the hearers are to be considered as such men in particular, no more is meant than that regard ought to be had by the speaker to the special character of the audience, as composed of such individuals that he may suit himself to them both in his style and in his arguments."[65] Ethos is also evinced through the speaker's style, claims Campbell, when "Authority . . . [is] tempered with moderation, candour, and benevolence."[66]

Like Campbell, Blair recognized the importance of ethos. "In the first place, what stands highest in the order of means, is personal character and disposition."[67] Again, like Campbell, Blair believed: "In order to be a truly eloquent or persuasive speaker, nothing is more

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[64] Ibid., pp. 146-147.

[65] Ibid., p. 117.

[66] Ibid., p. 122.

[67] Hugh Blair, Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, II (Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, 1813), 427.

necessary than to be a virtuous man."[68] Unlike Campbell, however, Blair did not believe that sympathy was the most important characteristic of virtue.

> Nothing . . . is more necessary for those who would excel in any of the higher kinds of oratory, than to cultivate habits of the several virtues, and to refine and improve all their moral feelings. Whenever these become dead, or callous, they may be assured, that, on every great occasion, they will speak with less power, and with less success. The sentiments and dispositions, particularly requisite for them to cultivate, are the following: the love of justice and order, an indignation at insolence and oppression; the love of honesty and truth, and detestation of fraud, meanness, and corruption; magnanimity of spirit; the love of liberty, of their country and the public; zeal for all great and noble designs, and reverence for all worthy and heroic characters. . . . A true orator should be a person of generous sentiments, of warm feelings, and of a mind turned towards the admiration of all those great and high objects, which mankind are naturally formed to admire. Joined with the manly virtues, he should . . . possess strong and tender sensibility to all the injuries, distresses, and sorrows of his fellow-creatures. . . . A proper mixture of courage, and of modesty, must also be studied by every public speaker. . . . Every public speaker should be able to rest somewhat on himself; and to assume that air, not of self-complacency, but of firmness, which bespeaks a consciousness of his being thoroughly persuaded of the truth, or justice, of what he delivers. . . .
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> Next to moral qualifications, what, in the second place, is most necessary to an orator, is a fund of knowledge. . . .
>
> Good sense and knowledge are the foundation of all good speaking. There is no art that can teach one to be eloquent, in any sphere, without a sufficient acquaintance with what belongs to that sphere.[69]

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., pp. 430-431.

In short, Blair claims that probity, disinterestedness, candor, and other moral qualities contribute to the speaker's character.

Richard Whately in his Elements of Rhetoric is highly Aristotelian in his approach to ethos.

> Under the head of Affections may be included the sentiments of Esteem, Regard, Admiration. Aristotle has considered this as a distinct head; separating the consideration of the Speaker's Character from that of the disposition of the hearers. . . .
>
> He remarks, justly, that the Character to be established is that of, first, Good Principle, secondly, Good Sense, and thirdly, Goodwill and friendly disposition towards the audience addressed.[70]

Whately completes his treatment of ethical proof by saying, "If the Orator can completely succeed in this, he will persuade more powerfully than by the strongest arguments."[71]

In America, both John Quincy Adams and John Witherspoon treated the concept of ethos in the Aristotelian tradition. Adams singled out integrity as the most important facet of ethos and claimed that unless a speaker possessed this quality, his audience would loose all confidence in him.[72] Like Adams, Witherspoon saw integrity as the prime evidence of ethos. He wrote: "There can be

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[70]Richard Whately, Elements of Rhetoric (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1872), p. 223.

[71]Ibid.

[72]John Quincy Adams, Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory, I (Cambridge: Hilliard and Metcalf, 1810), 345.

no doubt that integrity is the first and most important character of a man, be his profession what it will."[73]

Contemporary Concepts of Ethical Proof

Rhetoricians of the twentieth century universally recognize the importance of ethical proof in rhetoric. Nearly all writers of fundamentals of speech texts treat this ancient concept. Weaver and Ness tell prospective speakers, "When we like anyone, we find it easy to accept his arguments and appeals. If we dislike him personally, we may take pleasure in refusing to accept what he asks us to believe or feel or do."[74] Echoing Aristotle, Lomas and Richardson claim, "In your class, and in the speaking you will do after you leave college, your successes will be measured in large part by the level at which your audience evaluates your integrity, your intelligence, and your good will."[75] To Corbett, ethos is the "hidden persuader" of our society. He sees this rhetorical principle in nearly every facet of our everyday life. "In our world, such enterprises as public relations,

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[73]John Witherspoon, "Lectures on Eloquence," in The Works of the Reverend John Witherspoon, III (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1802), 570.

[74]Andrew Thomas Weaver and Ordean Ness, An Introduction to Public Speaking (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1961), p. 191.

[75]Charles W. Lomas and Ralph Richardson, Speech: Idea and Delivery (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956), p. 6.

motivational psychology, market research, and advertising, are engaged in searching for effective stimuli and in creating the proper 'image.'"[76] Gilman, Aly, and Reid aptly summarize the position of the twentieth century teacher of speech when they point out: "Day by day more changes are effected by request or direction based on faith in the speaker than by any argument advanced for a proposition."[77]

Experimental research concerning ethos is increasingly prevalent among contemporary rhetorical scholars. These researchers have developed modern experimental studies which may enable us to systematically analyze the interaction among variables believed to influence the use of ethical proof. They speak in terms of **source credibility**, opinion change, attitude shifts, and prestige suggestion to describe ethical proof. The following experiment reported by Hovland, Janis, and Kelley is typical of modern research:

> An experimental variation in source credibility through the use of communicators differing in trustworthiness was produced in the study by Hovland and Weiss of retention effects. The general procedure consisted of presenting an identical communication to two groups, in one case from a source of high credibility and in the other from one of low credibility. Opinion questionaires were administered before, immediately

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[76] Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 85.

[77] Wilbur E. Gilman, Bower Aly, and Loren D. Reid, The Fundamentals of Speaking (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951), pp. 334-335.

> after, and a month after the communication. Four different topics were selected; each presented to some subjects by a source of high credibility and to other subjects by one of low credibility. Affirmative and negative versions of each topic were employed.
>
> A questionaire administered before the communication obtained judgments from the subjects as to the trustworthiness of a long list of sources, including the specific ones used. An analysis of these judgments revealed very definitely that the sources used with the communications differed greatly in their credibility. The four high credibility sources were judged to be trustworthy by 81 to 95 percent of the subjects; the low credibility sources were judged trustworthy by 1 to 21 percent.[78]

To date, experimenters have not been able to differentiate between the two main components of credibility—trustworthiness and expertness. They have, however, concluded that both appear to be important variables. Experiments in this area continue and researchers are optimistic. As Hovland, Janis, and Kelley conclude, "Some of these [experiments] will undoubtedly shed further light upon the persistence of source effects. The evaluation of such hypotheses through the use of experimental procedures promises to be a very fruitful area for future research."[79]

Historical Treatment of Ethical Proof Summarized

From pre-Aristotelian times to present, ethical proof has been a subject of rhetorical importance. While

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[78]Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis and Harold H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), pp. 27-28.

[79]Ibid., p. 48.

Aristotle's concept has been modified by contemporary rhetorical theorists, we are indebted to him for the complete and systematic treatment of this principle. Moreover, most of the Aristotelian theory remains unchanged. The most important deviation from Aristotle's ideas is in regard to the scope of ethos. Aristotle's system saw ethical persuasion arising from the speech itself rather than through the audience's previous opinion of the speaker's intellectual and moral character. Commenting on this position, Thonssen and Baird represent contemporary thought. They claim this restriction is artificial "since the attitude of the audience toward the speaker—based on previous knowledge of the latter's activities and reputation—cannot accurately be separated from the reaction the speaker induces through the medium of the speech."[80] In short, as experimental studies demonstrate, the audience's impression of the speaker which he has generated before he comes to the platform is just as much a part of ethical proof as the impression he leaves with the audience while speaking. In fact, to separate the two is impossible.

Points of similarity between Aristotle and contemporary writers include the concept of ethos as a mode of persuasion and the constituents of good sense, good moral character, and good will of this rhetorical

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[80]Thonssen and Baird, p. 385.

principle. Too, rhetoricians agree that the choices a speaker makes in invention, arrangement, style, and delivery significantly add to this construct. Minor differences appear in discussions of those virtues which enhance the speaker's character, but these differences are of little consequence. Generally, a speaker is believed intelligent when he demonstrates knowledge of the needs, interests, and beliefs of his audience, supports worthwhile and important proposals, speaks from authority based on personal experience, and uses common sense. A speaker is considered to be of good character when he demonstrates sincerity, modesty, good taste, courage, and associates himself with that which is virtuous. A speaker reveals his good will when he identifies his wants with those of his audience, acts in the best interest of society, and demonstrates moderation, tact, loyalty, and fairness. Thus, the speaker gains credibility with his audience by making those choices which show him to be of good character, intelligent, and friendly. He supports his cause because he is worthy of belief.

Ethical Proof in the Political Process

Like all public speakers, the politician is keenly aware of the importance of ethical proof. Burns and Peltason testify to this fact in making recommendations to the aspiring public servant. They recommend that he "stress

his name and personality rather than issues."[81] Lomas and Richardson further explain this recommendation:

> The central issue of any political campaign is, "Which candidate or party is best qualified to lead in the next term of office?" Events change the importance of issues, and no one can predict with certainty whether the issues of today will be relevant to the events of a year from now, to say nothing of longer periods of time. As a result, many, perhaps most, votes are cast on election day . . . for or against the qualities of leadership demonstrated by a candidate.
>
> Political speeches, therefore, even when they seem to deal with specific issues are concerned with the ethos of a candidate.[82]

The stress of the politician's personality as the important factor in an election has resulted in the need for specialists in the area of political advertising. These public relations experts have been on the American political scene for a considerable period of time but are increasing in number because of their success. As Stanley Kelley Jr. writes: "If present tendencies continue, our Federal elections will increasingly become contests not between candidates but between great advertising firms."[83]

An impressive demonstration of the use of publicity

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[81]James M. Burns and Jack W. Peltason, Government by the People (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), p. 356.

[82]Lomas and Richardson, pp. 232-233.

[83]Stanley Kelley Jr., Professional Public Relations and Political Power (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), p. 2.

in politics was the preconvention campaign of Wendell L. Willkie in 1940. The real contestants for the Republican nomination were thought to be Thomas E. Dewey, Robert A. Taft, and Arthur Vandenburg. In fact, Willkie, as far as the general public was concerned, was an obscure figure a year before the convention. Prior to the convention, mass circulation magazine feature articles on Willkie began to appear as a part of a well timed publicity "build-up." The convention gave way and voted Willkie a sixth ballot nomination. John Chamberlain wrote, "The Willkie strategy proved the Dewey-Taft-Joe Pew 'professionals' to be the real bunglers, the real amateurs."[84] Willkie was, or course, no novice in matters of publicity. The utility interests, with which he was associated, had had vast experience in the use of modern public relations techniques. Senator George Norris, in fact, charged that it was this utility publicity machine that had "built" Wendell Willkie.[85]

A more recent example of the important role played by a speaker's ethos is the 1952 presidential campaign. Again, as in 1940, Republicans reached outside the ranks of party regulars to find their candidate for president. The popular Eisenhower was their choice. While the General

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[84] Ibid., p. 34.

[85] As cited in ibid.

had other qualities to recommend him for this high office, his personal popularity was no small factor in his selection by the Republican Party.

> Eisenhower's personal popularity with the public was perhaps not the only reason that he was chosen by Republicans to lead them, but it was certainly one of the most important ones. And, whatever his native virtues, it is important to note that the wartime psychological needs of the nation had played a not inconsiderable part in subsidizing the buildup of Eisenhower the man into Eisenhower the public figure.[86]

According to a Roper poll of March, 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower was the most admired living American.[87] Capitalizing the good will the public bore him was bound to be an almost irresistable temptation to politicians. Recognizing the importance of Eisenhower's popularity, a Citizens for Eisenhower preconvention campaign leaflet bluntly stated:

> The Republican Party must not take a chance! <u>With</u> Eisenhower, the victory will be sweeping. <u>Without</u> Eisenhower, the outcome is doubtful. . . . <u>If you are seeking Republican office</u>, would you rather add to your strength the surging wave of Ike Eisenhower, or have a doubtful candidate ride in on <u>your</u> coat-tail? . . . The odds against a Republican victory are huge.[88]

Eisenhower's nomination, like Willkie's in 1940, demonstrated that public popularity, personality, or in a larger sense, a favorable public image was a weapon which an aspiring candidate could not afford to ignore.

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[86]Kelley Jr., <u>Professional Public Relations and Political Power</u>, p. 145.

[87]As cited in <u>ibid</u>.

[88]<u>Ibid</u>., pp. 145-146.

The method of establishing the politician's ethos is given by Lomas and Richardson. They write:

> You draw upon examples chosen from his long career of public service to develop the concepts of integrity, intelligence, and good will. You point to his voting record to show that he has consistently favored measures of value to the audience, the community as a whole, or the entire country.[89]

Closely related to establishing the ethos of the candidate is the attempted destruction of the opponent's image. Lomas and Richardson claim, "The political campaigner will also contend, or at least imply, that these qualities are not present in sufficient degree in the opposing party and candidates."[90] The reason behind the above statement is offered by Stanley Kelley Jr.: "The discussion of personality probably has a more consistent importance in political campaigning than does policy controversy."[91] A politics that makes a well-known name and favorable public image among the most valuable of political goods, as American politics does, also encourages the disparagement of those who possess these assets. In short, the character of the choice that faces voters in American elections—"one between men and not between unified parties committed

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[89]Lomas and Richardson, pp. 233-234.

[90]Ibid., p. 233.

[91]Stanley Kelley Jr., Political Campaigning (Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institute, 1960), p. 85.

to definite policy programs"[92]—gives campaigners exceedingly strong motives to create a favorable image for themselves as well as to attack the personal qualifications of opposition candidates.

The importance of the character or image of the candidate in winning office does not diminish after successful election. Kenneth Boulding claims:

> The occupant of the role is expected to be affable and accessible; he is expected to shake hands with innumerable people; he is expected to sign his name to innumerable documents; he is expected to make public pronouncements on important decisions. . . . An image of this role is present in the minds of millions of Americans in greater or less degree of clarity. It is not only present, it is accepted, that is, it is placed high on the value scale. . . . The whole of society is permeated with these images of political roles.[93]

In fact, Boulding further claims that the expected image of the politician's role can be strong enough to "have a profound influence on its occupants."[94] Thus, the public servant must be as concerned with his image after election as he was during the election.

We have observed that the politician must be ever mindful of the image he has created for his constituents, but does he not also need be concerned with the way his colleagues in public office observe him? Moreover, can

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[92] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

[93] Kenneth Boulding, The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1961), p. 104.

[94] Ibid.

the congressman accomplish his purposes unless the image he projects to his fellow congressmen is one favorable to their interests? In short, as a public speaker, the politician must be always cognizant of the way his character is perceived by every audience.

The question that logically follows is whether it is desirable for the politician to portray the same character before his colleagues as he demonstrates to his constituents. In short, is the image that is necessary for successful election the same one that would be beneficial in achieving desired legislation. Boulding comments on this problem:

> There is a very real dilemma of power in society in that the images which are useful in gaining power are seldom useful in exercising it wisely or in keeping it. In formal democracies the ability to get elected is not identical with the ability to govern wisely.[95]

In other words, the personality trait that reveals the aspiring candidate as being just "one of the common folks" may very well be of little value in convincing fellow congressmen to vote for an appropriations bill. Why, his colleagues might ask, should we listen to a man who is "one of the common folks" when dealing with a complicated bill? Thus, the image necessary for election may not be congruous with the one which will result in respect and recognition by colleagues. Thus, the politician must

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[95] Ibid., p. 109.

consider his audience and present ethical proof appropriate to that particular audience. To say that ethical proof successfully used for one audience would not be successful for another is only to recognize that audiences, like individuals, are different and have different expectations. The politician who is aware of this concept is better prepared to gain and hold his position.

As we have seen, it may become necessary for the politician to alter his image. The changing of an image is not unusual. Boulding suggests:

> These images are constantly being changed by the messages received. They are changed by confirmations and disappointments; they are perpetuated by ritual observances and established lines of communication. We might hazard a proposition, for instance, that in those organizations where acceptance of the role is small, the role must be reinforced by extensive and elaborate forms of ceremonial behavior.[96]

Therefore, through communications, both oral and written, the politician can and does change his image.

In summary, we have observed that the public official's personality, character, or image plays a significant role both in the election and legislative processes. Moreover, the image necessary to achieve election may not be that most effective when working with colleagues. Consequently, the politician may find it necessary to attempt to alter his image from one situation to the next.

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[96] Ibid., p. 105.

Ethical Proof in This Study

Unlike the Aristotelian treatment of ethos this study is concerned both with the audience's impression of the speaker before the rhetorical act as well as the impression left with the audience as a result of the oral communication. The terms ethos, ethical proof, and image are conceived to hold the same meaning, and will be used interchangeably throughout the study.

CHAPTER III

BASIS FOR THE IMAGE

Introduction

To ascertain those factors which contribute to an individual's ability to project a favorable image is admittedly difficult. The rhetorical critic can, however, "point to some of the outward manifestations of inventive skill which influence the arguments men compose and deliver."[1] It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the factors which contributed to Kerr's image. The chapter seeks neither to analyze nor evaluate those characteristics which influenced Kerr's *ethos* but only to describe them.

This chapter seeks to identify those personality traits which culminated in the image Kerr brought to the rhetorical situation. To provide organizational clarity, Kerr's personality traits are divided into two groups: (1) those that were most applicable to the Oklahoma audience, and (2) those that were most important to the Washington audience. The reader should not take this structure as

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[1]Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, *Speech Criticism* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), p. 335.

evidence that Kerr held two separate images before two separate audiences. Obviously, in a day of mass media communication, such a dichotomy is impossible. Indeed, modern communication enabled people in Oklahoma to be aware of Kerr's actions in Washington. Kerr's colleagues in Washington also knew of his deeds in his own state. The most vivid part of an audience's image of a speaker, however, is determined by that part of the speaker that is closest to the audience. Thus, while the Oklahoma voters' awareness of Kerr's actions in Washington was undoubtedly incorporated into their image of Kerr, these activities were not relevant to, nor a part of, the interaction between Kerr and his Oklahoma audience. The same would hold true for the Washington audience. In short, two facets of the Kerr image are examined in this chapter in an attempt to answer the question, How did Kerr's audiences perceive him?

Oklahoma Image

Man of the People

Heritage

John W. Keltner and Victor Harnack have called Kerr a "modern Horatio Alger,"[2] and a review of his life gives justification to the claim. He was born in a log

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[2]"Robert S. Kerr," in "Political Speaking in 1952: A Symposium," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 295.

cabin on September 11, 1896, and was one of few politicians who could claim that distinction. His parents, William Samuel Kerr and Margaret Wright Kerr, were of Scotch-Irish and English descent. Mrs. Kerr gave birth to six children, Bob being the second and the oldest boy. Following the birth of their first child, the Kerrs moved from Texas, across the Red River, to Indian territory in a covered wagon and leased one hundred sixty acres of restricted Indian land in what is now South Central Oklahoma. They lived in a tent the first winter and until Sam Kerr built a log cabin fourteen feet square.[3] The log cabin still stands as a monument marking the birth of Oklahoma's first native-born governor and United States Senator.

Sam Kerr, young Bob's father, was a man of many talents. To describe him, the phrase "jack of all trades and master of none" seems appropriate. He was a farmer, rancher, rural school teacher, merchant, and cotton buyer. When Oklahoma was admitted to the Union in 1907, Sam Kerr owned a small country store. He sold his store and accepted a position as the first county clerk of Pontotoc County. When his term as county clerk had expired, Sam Kerr found himself without a means of support for his family.[4] It

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[3]"Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," Kerr Papers, University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts, pp. 1-2.

[4]John Gunther, Inside U. S. A. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 882.

was at this time that Robert Kerr claimed he received his first advice concerning politics. His father told him that he could reach any goal in life, even governor of the state, if he would only work hard enough. He warned, however, "But don't go into politics before you have built economic security for your family and yourself. That's the best way, and there is no sense in both of us making the same mistake."[5]

Robert Kerr's heritage was a dominant influence in his life. He was proud of his humble birth and frequently reminded his audiences that he rose from the people. These traits were especially emphasized in the 1952 Democratic National Convention when Kerr was seeking the nomination for President.[6]

From his father, Robert Kerr maintained, he received a great amount of invaluable advice on topics from philosophy to politics. Kerr's frequent references to advice given by his father helped to structure the image of a pioneer man willing to accept advice from other frontiersmen. Childs reports the following: "'My Father,' he . . . told innumerable audiences, 'always said he never

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[5]As cited in "The Kerr Story," Kerr Papers, University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts.

[6]"Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner: Script for Narration by Chet Huntley and Frank McGee, N. B. C. News," Prepared by the Pate Organization, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 31, 1962), p. 10.

saw a bad day. And that's the way I feel too.'"[7] On another occasion he testified, "My father always used to tell me to waste no effort watering last year's crop."[8] Moreover, Kerr said frequently that his father was "the greatest man that ever lived"[9] and that he owed more to him than any other person.

Gunther summarizes the impact of Kerr's heritage on his life:

> His career is archtypically "American" in its emphasis on the frontier virtues of diligence and enterprise, its promise of utterly boundless opportunity to the young and bright in heart; and its rewards both in material wealth and a maturing sense of social responsibility.[10]

Education

Robert Kerr received his early education in the public schools of Ada, Oklahoma. He later attended Oklahoma Baptist University at Shawnee and the East Central Normal School in Ada, thereafter teaching elementary school for two years. The autumn of 1915 found young Robert borrowing three hundred fifty dollars to attend the University of Oklahoma law school. His money exhausted,

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[7]Marquis W. Childs, "The Big Boom from Oklahoma," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 22.

[8]As cited in Norman Transcript, January 2, 1963, p. 2.

[9]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 4, 1963, p. 3.

[10]Gunther, p. 882.

Kerr was forced to leave school in 1916.[11] Kerr's education, like his early life, added to his image as a man of the people. Certainly, he could justly claim that he both worked and sacrificed for his education until inadequate finances finally forced him to discontinue his education.

Fortune

In the summer following his year at the University of Oklahoma, Robert Kerr began a brief career as a magazine salesman. In Webb City, Missouri, he made a sales talk to B. Robert Elliott, a lawyer. After a period of strenuous argument, Elliott said, "I don't give a damn about your magazine, young man, but I'll give you one hundred dollars a month to work for me."[12] Kerr accepted the proposal, and the association lasted until the United States entered World War I almost a year later.

With the outbreak of the first World War, Kerr enlisted and received training at Fort Logan H. Roots in Arkansas. He went overseas in 1918, but the Armistice was signed while his division was preparing to go to the front.[13]

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[11]Otis Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, edited by J. T. Salter (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1946), p. 425.

[12]As cited in ibid.

[13]Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 425.

On his return to the United States in 1919, Kerr married, borrowed capital, and entered the produce business near his home in Ada. His business was short-lived. A fire destroyed his uninsured produce house and left him in heavy debt. Tragedy again struck Robert Kerr when only a short time later his wife and son died in childbirth.[14]

With the produce business destroyed, Kerr renewed his study of law, reading privately, and passed the bar examination. The year 1925 found Kerr a struggling lawyer making fifteen hundred dollars a year with debts amounting to ten thousand dollars.[15]

On December 29, 1925, Kerr married his second wife, Grayce Breene of Tulsa. Her brother-in-law, James L. Anderson, was in the oil drilling business and needed a lawyer for his company. Robert Kerr was the logical choice, and the two men formed a partnership. Kerr soon became interested in drilling oil wells as well as the legal aspects of the business.

Bob Kerr's big chance came with the discovery of oil in Oklahoma City. Many of the residents did not want to see the city defaced by oil derricks, and, more important, they felt that large scale operations would

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[14]Robert T. Elson, "A Question for Democrats: If Not Truman, Who?" Life, XXXII (March 24, 1952), 126.

[15]Edwin C. McReynolds, Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 383.

constitute a major fire hazard to the city. K. S. Adams of the Phillips Petroleum Company asked Kerr to head a campaign to convince voters that to approve drilling operations would be advantageous to the city.[16] In two hard-fought elections the citizens approved oil drilling within the city limits.

While Adams and Kerr were outlining the campaign, Adams asked, "Now, how much will we have to pay you for your services?" Replied Kerr, "Mr. Adams, I don't want you to pay me anything. I want a chance for my company to drill your wells."[17] Adams agreed and that marked the beginning of the Kerr fortune. Instead of taking a fixed fee for drilling the well, Kerr would take a share of the well itself as pay. A portion of a dry well is nothing, but this problem did not plague the Anderson-Kerr Company. Almost every well hit oil, and thus Bob Kerr made his fortune during the period that the rest of the country was plunging into a depression.

Kerr's influence in the oil business grew, and in 1936, he was appointed president of the Kansas-Oklahoma division of Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association. Now a shrewd businessman, Kerr helped found the Kerr-McGee Oil Industries, Inc., a company which he and his family

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[16]Childs, Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 22-23.

[17]Ibid.

controlled. Later he branched out into cattle and uranium mines, and upon his death, the Kerr fortune was estimated at fifty-one million dollars.[18]

In Oklahoma, Kerr's fortune worked both to his advantage and disadvantage. Keltner and Harnack claim, "In some circles his wealth causes distrust,"[19] and Sullivant explains why:

> The great majority of voters in Oklahoma are suspicious of and prejudiced against men of wealth, especially oilmen. . . . America is steeped in the tradition of the rise from a log cabin birth to the governorship of a state or the presidency of the United States. It is more remarkable in Oklahoma for a man to step from a prosperous oil company and the presidency of a conservative oil trade association to the governorship.[20]

When Kerr's political opponents made cracks about his wealth, he was quick to recall that he made his fortune and did not inherit it. He would scornfully remind them that in 1925, when he married, he was making one hundred twenty-five dollars a month and add, "You should have seen me and my family under Hoover."[21]

Kerr's fortune also served as an asset. Elections

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[18]"Oklahoma's Kerr—The Man Who Really Runs the U. S. Senate," Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 15.

[19]Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 296.

[20]Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 416.

[21]"Wildcatter," Time, LIX (February 25, 1952), 24.

were costly in Oklahoma, and the aspiring candidate needed substantial funds to gain election.

> Oklahomans are saying that the campaign [1954] is "better than a cotton crop" which is something of an exaggeration but still conveys the idea. Newsmen never get to see the books—if any are kept—but it probably costs somewhere between $150,000 to $400,000 to become governor or senator. . . . The money is not used to buy votes or the support of political machines but for advertising in newspapers, on billboards, and by radio and television in the seventy-seven counties in the state.[22]

In this campaign, Seligman testifies, as in all others, "Kerr spent a considerable amount of money just to buy himself a scientifically conducted survey of voter sentiment in advance of the election."[23]

Kerr's wealth also enabled him to obtain information for use during debate. Seligman related the following story:

> In the Senate's 1957-58 investigation of the financial condition of the United States most of the Finance Committee's time was taken up in listening to the wrangles between Kerr, on one side, and officials of the treasury . . . and several representatives of the F. R. B. on the other. Kerr was, as usual, carefully prepared—he had spent $15,000 to procure some exhaustive research—and, also as usual, he had the last word in all the arguments.[24]

In summary, Kerr was perceived by his Oklahoma audience

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[22]Otis Sullivant, "Rich Man's Race," Nation, CLXXVIII (June 29, 1954), 542.

[23]Daniel Seligman, "Senator Bob Kerr, the Oklahoma Gusher," Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 188.

[24]Ibid., p. 138.

as a wealthy man. He was, however, also perceived as a man who had earned his fortune. Thus, the fortune he compiled contributed to his image in Oklahoma. At times, his wealth served as an asset to his character, and other times it served as a liability.

Religion

Robert Kerr was a deeply religious man. Early in his childhood, his religious beliefs were formed. One day, while attending a Methodist Church, he participated in a baptismal service. When his mother found out what he had done, she went to the church and told the minister, "You'll just have to unsprinkle him . . . because he is a Baptist."[25] From that time on, Bob Kerr never forgot his church.

For more than fifty years he served his denomination by holding nearly every layman's post in his local church, The First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, and the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.[26] He taught a Sunday school class in his home church for more than twenty years. Even during his political campaigns he would fly home on Sunday in order to meet the class.[27] When he went to the

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[25]As cited in Katherine Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes All Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[26]Daily Oklahoman, January 4, 1963, p. 3.

[27]Ibid.

U. S. Senate, Bob Kerr continued to serve his church by teaching the Men's Bible Class of the First Baptist Church of Washington, D. C.

In 1950, Bob Kerr was the Oklahoma chairman of Brotherhood Week sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He was often asked to address local and state church conventions and was twice the main speaker at the National Baptist Convention. Only a month before his death, Kerr was re-elected president of the board of directors of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma for his third term.

Because of his religion, Kerr was a two-way tee-totaler. He neither drank nor smoked and declined to serve alcohol in his home. When he went to Washington, a city famous for its cocktail parties, Bob Kerr carried his convictions with him. He was intense in his belief that a leader in government should abstain from the use of intoxicants because of the responsibility of his position. After he had been in the Capitol only a few weeks, Kerr publicly reprimanded government officials for drinking, contending that alcohol dulled their minds on matters concerning the security of the country.[28] Later he claimed, "Alcohol has cost more money, destroyed more property, killed more people, and created more ill health and human

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[28]"Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 1.

suffering than all the wars . . . in the entire history of the human race."[29]

Kerr supported his church by giving to it more than thirty percent of his vast wealth.[30] This was not, however, the extent of his economic support. He frequently spearheaded campaigns for church organizations. He was most proud of his chairmanship of the Oklahoma Baptist Orphans' Home Committee which raised $400,000 for building funds in two drives.[31]

To Kerr, faith in God and service to his fellow man were more important than fame, riches, or power. He believed that a human being's highest privilege was to "acknowledge and worship God,"[32] and second, "to make some contribution to the environment in which we live."[33] "Of all investments," he said, "an investment in human value is the soundest. There is no tax on the dividends on such an investment. Where else can you trade money

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[29]Childs, Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 23.

[30]"Death of a Senator," Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

[31]"Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 1.

[32]As cited in Gilbert Hill, "Kerr in a Mild, Mellow Mood for Festive Dinner," Oklahoma City Times, June 11, 1962, p. 11.

[33]Ibid.

for such a high return in character and spiritual value?"[34]

Upon Kerr's death, Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs, minister of the First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, eulogized, "Kerr [was] a man of vision, . . . wisdom, . . . courage, . . . faith and . . . a man in the highest sense of the word."[35] But it was, perhaps, Ed Edmondson who best summarized the feeling of all those who knew Kerr when he said, "The death of Senator Kerr is the greatest loss Oklahoma has suffered in a generation. We have lost a great leader . . . in the field of the spiritual life of our state. . . ."[36]

Both in private conversation and speeches, Kerr's frequent references to the Bible helped to create the image of a spiritually oriented man. In fact, his Biblical learning is one of his major resources in rhetorical discourse. On one occasion, Kerr used a quotation from the Bible to the considerable detriment of a candidate running against Mike Monroney, Kerr's Oklahoma colleague in the Senate. Monroney's opponent, the Reverend W. H. Bill Alexander, announced that after communications with

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[34]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 4, 1963, p. 11.

[35]As cited in Norman Transcript, January 4, 1963, p. 1.

[36]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 2.

the Almighty, he had decided to enter the senatorial race in the Democratic primary. Soon afterward, however, he sought the Republican nomination instead. Senator Kerr, campaigning for Monroney, commented on Alexander's change of parties. "If the Lord told Bill Alexander to run as a Democrat, who told him to become a Republican?"[37] Kerr then quoted Hebrews 13: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow . . . Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."[38] "Reverend Alexander had little chance after that."[39]

Another occasion when Kerr turned to the Bible for source material was in the 1950 controversy over the building of a dam on the Colorado River at Bridge Canyon. Kerr attempted to justify the project on the basis of a need for more water. He said:

> The battle for water is not new among the people of this land nor among the people of this earth. In the first book of the Bible, we read of one of the historic struggles of antiquity for water. In the twenty-sixth chapter of Genesis, we learn that in the early dawn of life of the race, water was a controlling factor in the welfare of man. I read from Genesis 26:
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> "And Isaac digged again the wells-of water which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father;

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[37]As cited in Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 179.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 179.

> And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.
> And the herdmen of Geror did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, the water is ours.
> And they digged another well, and strove for that also.
> And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."[40]

Thus, by his story, Kerr demonstrated the age old fight for water and its necessity for survival. He further indicated that he was a man familiar with the Holy Scriptures.

To be sure, because of his service and pledges to the church, his stand on tobacco and liquor, and frequent references to the Bible, Robert Kerr was perceived by his Oklahoma audience as being a religious man. Dr. John W. Raley, Chancellor of Oklahoma Baptist University claimed, "He was big in . . . mind and spirit."[41]

Wit and Humor

Business Week described Kerr as having a "Will Rogers' styled wit,"[42] and Herschel Hobbs maintained that Kerr's "ready wit was exceeded only by his sober judgment."[43]

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[40]U. S., Congressional Record, 81st Cong., 2nd Session, 1950, XCVI, part 2, 2046. (Later cited as Record.)

[41]As cited in Francis Thetford, "O. B. U. Pays Tribute to Its Best Friend in Stirring Service," Daily Oklahoman, January 4, 1963, p. 11.

[42]"Kerr Switches Sides to Push Trade Bill," Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 86.

[43]As cited in Norman Transcript, January 4, 1963, p. 3.

McReynolds labeled Kerr as a man with "a keen sense of humor,"[44] while Katherine Hatch testified, "His trenchant wit convulsed the galleries and squeezed rueful laughter from his colleagues."[45]

A good example of Kerr's sense of humor, even while disappointed, occurred in 1952, when he attempted to gain the Democratic nomination for the presidency. After lasting only through the first roll call he told his fellow Oklahomans that the Democrats "were not aware of the fact of how superior a product had been made available to them."[46]

An example of Kerr's sarcastic humor occurred when Drew Pearson criticized him for having a conflict of interests in the Natural Gas Bill he was supporting. At that time, Pearson had a weekly radio program that was followed by a show sponsored by Airwick. Kerr's remark to Pearson's criticism was, "And then there's Drew Pearson, who's on the air each Sunday. No wonder A. B. C. has Airwick for fifteen minutes following his broadcast."[47]

Kerr could poke fun at himself, as well as others,

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[44]McReynolds, p. 385.

[45]Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes All Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[46]Joe Lastelic, "Bob Kerr Gets Things Done for Oklahoma," Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[47]As cited in Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes All Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

and often did just that. When asked about his title, the "Uncrowned King of the Senate," Kerr would remark that he was not uncrowned in the Senate but had been crowned many times during his tenure, and each time with a crown of thorns.[48]

Only five months before the Senator's death, President Kennedy was Kerr's guest at his Kermac Ranch at Poteau, Oklahoma. Reporters asked Kerr what he and the President had done on a particular afternoon, and Kerr replied, "We had our picture taken with a great big bull. . . . We were on the same side of the bull."[49]

Kerr's heritage, education, the way he made his fortune, religious activity, and use of wit and humor combined to give him an image in Oklahoma as a common man—a man of his people.

Developer of Oklahoma

In addition to his reputation as a man of the people, Kerr also received much publicity as being, as Lastelic put it, one who "Gets Things Done for Oklahoma."[50] To most Oklahomans, he was known as the "Champion defender and developer of Oklahoma."[51]

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[48]As cited in Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[49]As cited in Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 86.

[50]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[51]Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 1.

As Governor

Kerr's interests in politics began in 1924, when he joined the American Legion. Only one year later he was elected Commander of Oklahoma's Legion, the youngest commander in the nation. In 1932, he moved to Oklahoma City and became further involved in politics. As soon as he had made any appreciable sums of money, Kerr became a steady contributor to the Democratic Party in the state. "By 1940 he was a major source of funds for the party and was elected a national committeeman."[52]

Bob Kerr's interest and influence in the Democratic Party grew, and in 1942 he announced his candidacy for governor of Oklahoma. The campaign was a bitter one but resulted in the election of the first native Oklahoman to the executive office—Robert Samuel Kerr. His administration faced a battle from the outset. He was elected by a 16,500 vote majority, the smallest given any governor since statehood with the exception of R. L. Williams in 1914. Moreover, the Democratic Party controlled the lower house of the legislature by only a small majority.[53]

Kerr's objectives as governor were "a sound fiscal program, retirement of the state debt, a businesslike

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[52]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 184.

[53]Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 420.

administration, curbing the power of the governor, a minimum of political squabbling, and a friendly governor in the executive office."[54] He accomplished these objectives as well as many others during his four years in the executive office.

That Kerr was able to fulfill his ambitious campaign promises under such adverse circumstances is astonishing. He set out to win his political opponents by friendly conferences and without using the power of the executive office.[55] Such procedure was markedly different from the one he would employ to achieve his goals as a United States Senator. Upon his election to the governorship, Kerr said, "We intend to humanize the governor's office."[56] In his inaugural address he stated: "Members of the legislature may expect from the executive office no threats, no domineering, and no bad faith . . . that we may reason together what is good for the state."[57] Robert Kerr won respect for himself and support for his program by keeping his word.

The main points of Kerr's program were written into law as his first year as governor came to an end,

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[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid., p. 421.

[56] As cited in ibid., p. 422.

[57] Ibid.

and the legislature had completed their work in the shortest session in twenty years.[58] Kerr's primary objective as governor was to reduce the state's debt of forty-four million dollars. Not only was this debt paid off, but when Kerr left the governor's office in 1946, the state treasury held a surplus of forty million dollars.

Kerr took state-supported higher education out of politics by providing a constitutional Board of Regents for the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, and the state's six junior agricultural colleges. He initiated another constitutional amendment which, with voter approval, created a Pardons and Paroles Board and thus decreased political corruption in the issuance of pardons and paroles. In short, Kerr remained true to his campaign promise to curb the power of the governor's office.[59]

As governor of Oklahoma, Kerr increased workers' compensation payments and teachers' salaries by forty percent, while decreasing by forty-five percent compensation insurance rates. Unemployment compensation payments were increased and the payment period extended. Assistance payments to the aged and dependent children were increased

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[58]Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 421.

[59]"Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 2.

two-fold while the payroll of relief department workers was cut two-thirds and direct relief payments were increased from five to seven times.[60]

Kerr's other accomplishments as governor include the initiation of programs to improve hospital and medical facilities, the largest highway building program in the state's history up to that time, and a teacher retirement system.[61]

Some of the state's outstanding businessmen accepted positions in Kerr's administration. One of these was an executive earning $75,000 annually in private business. He left his position to direct the state's Board of Public Affairs for a yearly salary of $5,400.[62]

While a conservative in state government, Kerr was a liberal on most issues of national significance.[63] He vigorously supported the New Deal and Roosevelt's fourth term as president. Kerr's position on the New Deal was decidedly different from most conservative oilmen in Oklahoma. The majority opposed President Roosevelt and supported Governor Thomas E. Dewey and the anti-new deal

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

[62] "Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner: Script for Narration by Chet Huntley and Frank McGee, N. B. C. News," Prepared by the Pate Organization (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 31, 1962), p. 4.

[63] Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 416.

campaign. In explaining his support for the national administration, Kerr stated:

> A program that gives opportunity for economic progress to the greatest number of citizens is the essence of democracy. I am in the oil business. The greatest security the oil business can have is the widespread ability of the average citizen to purchase the production of the oil industry. I think the opportunity for the individual to prosper is the greatest in a society where general prosperity exists. Therefore, I believe in providing general prosperity on the theory I will do better as an individual than if I devote all my energies to my individual prosperity.[64]

Kerr's unaltering support of Roosevelt, and the Democratic sweep to victory in 1944, left him the undisputed leader of the Democratic Party in Oklahoma. Moreover, because of his campaigning, the Democratic Party, and, more particularly, Roosevelt himself, asked Kerr to keynote the National Convention in Chicago.

Previous to his keynote speech, Kerr was relatively unknown outside Oklahoma. This speech, however, gained him a national political reputation. "Keynote speakers often suffer the fate of prize fighters who come on in the preliminaries to fill in until the main bout comes on. That is to say, they are scarcely observed at all."[65] Kerr was determined that he should not suffer such a fate. He tore up a manuscript prepared by the national committee,

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[64]As cited in ibid., p. 418.

[65]Childs, Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 119.

went into seclusion, and spent several weeks working on a speech that would arouse the convention. As a result of his efforts Sullivant declared, "His ringing speech at Chicago placed him in the limelight as a political orator. He was the speaker most in demand with the national committee."[66] Such national recognition was a contributing factor to Kerr's election to the United States Senate in 1948.

As Senator

Kerr's interests as a senator included a large number of subjects, but with the exception of his pet natural gas bill and civil rights, his voting was "party line" on most issues.[67]

As an outstanding Senate spokesman for farm cooperatives, Kerr led the fight to secure rural electric and telephone lines, helped amend tax laws that enabled farmers and ranchers to claim income from the sale of breeder livestock as capital gains, and advocated expanded support prices for farm products at one hundred percent of parity, all of which was beneficial to Oklahomans.[68]

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[66]Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, p. 417.

[67]Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 295.

[68]"Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 3.

In the realm of foreign policy, Kerr vigorously supported the ratification of the Atlantic Treaty, the Marshall Plan, military aid to foreign allies, the Point Four Program, and the Mutual Security Program.[69]

United States Senators became immediately aware of Kerr's interest in the oil industry when he introduced the controversial Kerr Natural Gas Bill. The bill was designed to encourage greater exploration of oil and thus increase the production of the natural resources. Kerr secured passage of the bill after heated debates only to have President Truman veto it. The major points of Kerr's program, however, were later achieved when the existing law received a new interpretation.

In the area of finance and business Senator Kerr voted for reorganization of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, more effective anti-trust laws, and controls to protect consumers from price gouging.[70]

In his campaigns as well as in Senate debate, Kerr would frequently attack the Republican Party, dubbing them "bewitched, bothered, and bewildered,"[71] and would seldom miss a chance to lambast the Hoover administration.

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[69]"What Senator Kerr Stands For," Kerr Papers, University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts, p. 1.

[70]Ibid., p. 2.

[71]As cited in Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 295.

He was the first in Congress to openly attack the Eisenhower administration and also among the first to support President Truman after he had dismissed General Douglas MacArthur.[72] The sentiment of the country was behind MacArthur, and Kerr remarked that the resulting scene was "as hot as any depot stove."[73]

Oklahomans appreciated Kerr's efforts as a Senator. He was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 1956, and less than a year before his death, Business Week stated, "Kerr's position as a Senator is as secure as his vast oil and cattle lands."[74]

Kerr's Plan for Conservation

Throughout his life, the problem that most interested Kerr was the conservation of natural resources. In his first campaign for the United States Senate, he said:

> If America is to continue to be able to feed its own people and meet its destiny as world leader in winning the peace, stopping the spread of Communism, and guaranteeing the security of our own people, we must do more than ever before to rebuild the soil and conserve and use the water. This is America's greatest responsibility—this is Oklahoma's finest opportunity.[75]

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[72]William S. White, "Democrats Board of Directors," New York Times Magazine (July 10, 1955), Sec. VI, p. 10.

[73]As cited in ibid.

[74]Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 86.

[75]As cited in The Enid Events "Democrats Can Win in November," Special publication by the Kerr For Senate Club, July, 1948.

Bob Kerr's concern for the preservation of natural resources was evident in his early childhood. He remarked, "There on this farm chopped out of the wilderness I could plainly see our existence. As I grew to manhood I realized that this trio of natural wealth [land, wood and water] is the foundation of all prosperity and essential to a better way of life everywhere."[76] Undoubtedly, Sam Kerr played a major role in his son's interest in conservation. He told young Bob that when he settled he should choose a homestead where the land would be fertile and one with plenty of wood and water.[77] As a conservationist himself, Sam Kerr told his son, "Bob, I want you to help refurbish the land that men have stripped, and clear the streams they have muddied."[78]

The two events which influenced Kerr's interest in conservation before he became governor were the dust bowl of the 1930's and Governor Phillips's fight against the federal dams.[79] Kerr was outspokenly in favor of cooperation with the federal government in behalf of the program. He publicized the benefits of the program and,

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[76]As cited in "Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 1.

[77]Daily Oklahoman, January 6, 1963, p. A 17.

[78]As cited in Robert S. Kerr, Land, Wood and Water (New York: Fleet Publishing Corporation, 1960), p. 355.

[79]"The Kerr Plan: Conception, Adoption, Operation," Kerr Papers, University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts, p. 1.

in the long run, helped to gain the necessary support to bring about the desired water development.

Kerr began Oklahoma's conservation program. As governor he supported agricultural research to eliminate the waste of land and secured increased appropriations for Oklahoma's vocational education program. In 1943 both floods and drouth spread across Oklahoma and strengthened Kerr's resolution to conserve natural resources.[80] He watched his state first suffer from too much water only later to see it cry for moisture as winds blew the precious topsoil across the prairie.

In response to the 1943 flood and drouth, Kerr proposed the Arkansas Navigation Project—a program of soil conservation, flood control, irrigation and drainage, and hydroelectric power. Kerr did not invent the Arkansas Navigation program. The idea had existed in Oklahoma in a kind of "wish dream status" since 1907. Kerr, however, seized on the idea so completely that he gained the title "Admiral of the Arkansas."[81]

Kerr was elected to the United States Senate for a six-year term that began January 3, 1949, running on a program of conservation. His campaign slogan of "land,

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[80] Ibid.

[81] Keith Wheeler et al., "Pork Barrel Outrage: Too Much Money Spent Foolishly," Life, LV (August 16, 1963), 56.

wood and water" became famous. The first bill he introduced in Congress was authorization for the establishment of the Arkansas-White-Red River Basin Interagency Committee. The flood control navigation project resulting from this initial study is expected to be completed in 1970 at a cost of $1.2 billion.

The project got its first appropriation of $1.7 million only two years after Kerr entered the Senate. Appropriations swelled until they reached eighty-five million dollars in fiscal 1962. Before Kerr went to the Senate, Oklahoma had received only sixty-three million dollars of federal money for water development projects. Since 1948, the Army Engineers have spent some $312 million in Oklahoma.[82]

A look at the map of Oklahoma in 1965 shows a land of watersheds and lakes. Life magazine illustrates Kerr's achievements in Oklahoma in the area of soil and water conservation by referring to the state as the land of "Kerr's Lakes."[83] At the height of his political career Kerr took most pride in his accomplishments to conserve natural resources in Oklahoma. Only a month before his death, as he was flying over the state, he said, "If I live ten more years in this job, there won't be a muddy stream left in Oklahoma."[84]

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[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] As cited in Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

Bob Kerr's interest in conservation was so great that he wrote a book on the subject, giving it the title of his famous slogan, Land, Wood and Water. Kerr was such an avid supporter of conservation that he rarely missed an opportunity to bring up the subject in conversation. In fact, he talked so much about conservation that some people said his book should have been labeled, Land, Wood, Water and Wind.

Previous books on conservation had been dull and difficult to read because of their technical vocabulary. Before Senator Kerr's book was published many feared it would be no different. Moreover, since the book was published in 1960 and bore the Senator's well-known slogan, others expected it to have political ramifications. An examination of the book, however, quickly refutes both impressions. The work is almost free from partisanship. It is both comprehensive and concise and is written in a pleasant and readable style. As one reviewer stated:

> This book is a labor of love by one of the most eloquent men in Congress. The language is so picturesque and vibrant, that the book is deserving of attention for its literary quality alone. Yet it has much more and should be required reading for high school and college students, the general public, and policy makers at every level of government.[85]

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[85] Resource-Use Review, (a publication of the Conservation and Resource-Use Education Project by the Joint Council of Economic Education), No. 3, Winter, 1961, p. 7.

Thus, in Oklahoma, Kerr was known as a man of the people. Attributes contributing to this aspect of the image were Kerr's heritage, education, fortune, religion, and use of wit and humor. He was also known as the champion defender and developer of Oklahoma, and legislation he supported both as governor and senator, as well as his interest in conservation, helped to formulate this facet of his image.

Washington Image

"Pork Barreler"

Kerr's Political Philosophy

Robert Kerr was a conservative in the administration of state government but became more liberal when he entered the United States Senate.[86] Daniel Seligman reached the conclusion that Kerr was neither a liberal nor a conservative.[87] Kerr was less likely than Monroney to vote with the northern liberals. Moreover, he held little interest in the issues that preoccupied liberals in both parties during his third term as a senator. On such issues as segregation, McCarthyism, labor law, civil liberties, and aid to underdeveloped nations, he routinely voted with the Democratic center.[88]

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[86]White, New York Times Magazine (July 10, 1955), Sec. VI, p. 10.

[87]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 138.

[88]Ibid.

In the majority of senatorial arguments between the "spenders" and the "budget cutters," however, Kerr was firmly aligned with the spenders. Kerr contended that the 1958 recession was brought on by "tight money, excessive foreign imports, and Ezra Benson's program of flexible farm price supports."[89] Such views were the direct opposite of those upheld by the Eisenhower administration and the Federal Reserve Board.

In an attempt to define Kerr's political philosophy, Seligman states:

> He often seems to speak in the accents of the "Agrarian radicals" who organized the Populist movement in the 1890's and who later gained control of the Democratic Party under the leadership of William Jennings Bryan. In his strictures against big eastern bankers, in his impassioned arguments against hard money and for the farmer's way of life, multimillionaire Kerr often sounds oddly reminiscent of Bryan.[90]

Seligman further postulates that aside from "Agrarian radicalism" it is difficult to find a label for Kerr's ideology. The editors of Time magazine, however, offered a more accurate description of Kerr's political philosophy when they stated, "Kerr defied description either as a liberal or a conservative. He could only be explained as an Oklahoman."[91]

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[89]As cited in ibid.

[90]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 136-137.

[91]Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

Indeed, the Oklahoma criterion played a significant role in the formulation of Kerr's political philosophy. He was dedicated to the conviction: "What's good for Oklahoma, is good for the nation."[92] He once summed up his political philosophy by stating, "I'm against any combine Oklahoma ain't in."[93]

Kerr advocated this position frequently and openly, and, as one would expect, he was often attacked by his political opponents. They argued that he was more concerned with the welfare of Oklahoma than the security of the United States. In answer, Kerr would say, "You say I'm an Oklahoma Senator more than a national senator? Yes, that's what I'm here for."[94]

Regarding Senator Kerr's application of the Oklahoma criterion, Chet Huntley offered the following observation: "There was a bill up for debate, and some members of Congress were worried because they didn't know whether he would stay with the Democratic majority or bolt the party. Then a friend told them, 'Don't worry about Bob Kerr—whatever he does, he'll vote Oklahoman.'"[95]

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[92]As cited in Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 3.

[93]As cited in Norman Transcript, January 2, 1963, p. 1.

[94]Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

[95]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 19.

Lastelic believed Kerr would "trade with the devil"[96] if it meant shoving through something for Oklahoma. To be sure, Kerr would often perform favors in return for support of Oklahoma legislation. On one occasion opponents suggested that Kerr had made a deal with President Kennedy. Kerr boldly replied, "If I do a good job on this bill, then don't you think I'll have more bargaining power with the President?"[97]

Lastelic claims Kerr was always "a jump ahead of the other senators."[98] Kerr was one of the staunch supporters of legislation to stop water pollution. When the time came to select a site for a federal laboratory to do necessary research, it naturally went to Oklahoma.

Kerr likes to tell the story about the time Harry Byrd was introduced as the "Watchdog of the U. S. Treasury," and Kerr was the man who wasn't. "I got up and told them that there had been more government money spent in the state of Virginia than any other state, and . . . as soon as I got it so that more money was spent in Oklahoma than any other state—then I'd become the 'Watchdog of the Treasury.'"[99]

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[96]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[97]As cited in Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 86.

[98]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[99]As cited in Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

Robert Kerr was also a protectionist, and his sentiments were based on the undesirable effects that foreign imports had on the Oklahoma oil, lead, and zinc industries. Oklahoma has a high proportion of pensioners and older persons, and thus Kerr repeatedly sponsored legislation to expand social-security coverage.[100]

Even Kerr's spirited support of President Truman's dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur related to the Oklahoma criterion. Seligman reports that William S. White and other liberals lauded Kerr for upholding "the great democratic principle of civil control of the military."[101] In actuality, however, Kerr's support of Truman resulted from the fear that, if left alone, MacArthur would expand the Korean conflict to the point that Oklahoma's National Guard Thunderbird Division might be called into combat.[102]

Kerr's concern for Oklahoma appears to have occupied his thoughts and actions at all times. As Frank McGee stated:

> Even his Washington social events are with a purpose. The purpose is to further his influence with people who are in a position to help Oklahoma. Bob Kerr doesn't idle time with many ambassadors or tall social people. They can't produce a nickel's worth of help in getting a favorable ruling out of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or talking the

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[100]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 179-180.

[101]Ibid.

[102]Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

> Agriculture Department out of some extra soil conservation money, or even swinging a key finance committee vote on taxation of independent oil producers. So Bob Kerr prefers to hob-nob with less-dazzling "little" folks who have jobs which are merely crucial to Oklahoma. He gives an annual party for them.[103]

Kerr did not forget the Oklahoma Indians either. When the Cherokees got a fourteen million dollar settlement from the government, Drew Pearson claimed that Kerr would move the Washington monument to Oklahoma if he had a chance. Kerr replied that he thought Pearson had a good idea and exclaimed, "How beautiful the monument would appear on the Oklahoma prairie."[104] He then claimed, "Drew Pearson underestimates my intentions."[105]

Conflict of Interests

In addition to being labeled by his colleagues as a man more concerned with the welfare of his state than with the nation, Kerr was often accused of supporting legislation which was beneficial to his personal position in private business without consideration of how it would affect the rest of the country. One such controversial issue was the Kerr Natural Gas Bill which proposed giving oil

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[103]"Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 10.

[104]As cited in Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

[105]As cited in Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 3.

producers freedom to market their product wherever they could sell it to the highest bidder. Kerr never denied that the bill promoted his own interests and was always willing to answer any political opponents' accusations concerning his position:

> If you look on the Agriculture Committee you will find there many farmers. If you look on the Labor Committee, you will find there as many men who were formerly associated with labor. You will find bankers, lawyers, professional men on the Finance Committee. No man in the Congress of the United States can avoid voting on things that, in one way or another, affect him because they affect his people, and if he has a community of interest with the people of his state, then he is going to have an identity there, and the conflict of interest that would worry me would be a conflict of interest with my people—not with you or any other man reporting or any man attempting to pass judgment on me. They [the people of Oklahoma] don't want to send a man here who has no community of interest with them, because he wouldn't be worth a nickel to them. The only way that a man can vote in the Congress of the United States on something he had no interest in whatever would be to make a pauper's oath and prove it, and then he would still be ineligible to vote for the money that pays his own salary, or the legislation that fixes it.[106]

In essence, he said that any Oklahoma senator would vote the way he did because it promoted the interests of Oklahomans and that any senator who never voted on legislation affecting his own personal holding would have to sign a pauper's oath before entering the Senate.

Because of his political philosophy and his

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[106]As cited in "Senator Kerr Talks About Conflict of Interest," U. S. News and World Report, LIII (September 3, 1962), 86.

interests in legislation directly related to personal business holdings, Kerr became known in Washington as a "pork barreler." Wheeler, who claimed the Arkansas River Navigation project was one hundred percent pork, summarizes this aspect of Kerr's Washington image:

> The unchallenged all-time king of the pork barrel . . . was Oklahoma's late Robert Kerr. Over his four years as governor of Oklahoma and his fourteen years in the Senate, Kerr tapped the Rivers and Harbors bill so repeatedly and successfully that a trip around his once half-arid prairie state is now known as a tour of Kerr's Lakes.[107]

Uncrowned King

Kerr exerted an unusual amount of influence on Capitol Hill, and one frequently heard him referred to as the second most powerful man in Washington. Chet Huntley remarked, "There is, by act of Congress, the President, you know."[108] Early in his first term as a senator, Josephine Ripley exclaimed, "He [Kerr] is rapidly stepping to the forefront of the Democratic Party as one of the party's most able leaders."[109] This prediction came true when several years before his death Kerr became known as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate."[110]

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[107]Wheeler et al., Life, LV (August 16, 1963), 56.

[108]"Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 12.

[109]As cited in "Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 4.

[110]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

President Kennedy remarked that in his administration "almost every major bill enacted bore the mark of his [Kerr's] untiring leadership and skill."[111] Newsweek described Kerr's power in another way by stating, "Kerr, if he chooses can make a hash of almost any bill the President sends up to the Hill."[112] An example of his influence occurred when Kennedy's medical care for the aged bill failed to receive Senate approval. Kerr was one of the key figures in the defeat of the bill.

Kerr was a man that President Kennedy could not afford to alienate. As one strategist pointed out, though Kennedy may have had a somewhat unsuccessful record with the 87th Congress, "Without Bob Kerr, the President wouldn't have any record at all."[113] Joe Lastelic put it more colorfully when he said, "President Kennedy, when he gets down on his knees and says his rosary, ought to thank Bob Kerr every night. Without him, no Kennedy programs would have passed in this session."[114]

Committee Memberships

One of the primary sources of Kerr's Senate power

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[111]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963, p. 1.

[112]Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

[113]As cited in ibid.

[114]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

came from committee memberships. Business Week testified, "He sits on some of the most powerful purse-string committees in the Senate, being acting chairman of the Public Works Committee, ranking Democrat under the chairman of the Finance Committee, and chairman of the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee."[115] Crawford supports this conclusion and claims, "It was his chairmanship of the Rivers and Harbors Subcommittee of the Public Works Committee, an obscure post that makes few national headlines but much political hay,"[116] that gave him power. Kerr used the technique of placing senators under obligation to him by promoting their pet projects in committee, and "he never hesitated to collect on those obligations later, when the votes were needed."[117] Reported Newsweek, "He [Kerr] always finds some way to make your interest his interest. People find they need him more than he needs them. He has a way of getting people obligated to him on a due bill for collection later."[118] As a result, Kerr found his position in the Senate one of extraordinary influence with his sponsorship of a measure practically a guarantee of passage and his opposition "the kiss of

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[115] Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 36.

[116] Kenneth Crawford, "The Senate's Ways," Newsweek, LXI (January 14, 1963), 27.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

death."[119] Perhaps Crawford best summarized Kerr's power on Capitol Hill when he said:

> United States Senators, like the denizens of Orwell's animal farm, are all equal, but some are more equal than others. Senator Robert Kerr of Oklahoma, who died last week, had achieved the ultimate in equality. Like the other ninety-nine senators, he cast only one vote when the roll was called. Unlike most of them, he influenced the votes of a considerable number of his colleagues on a wide range of issues.[120]

Physical Traits

Kerr's appearance added credence to his title "Uncrowned King of the Senate." Kerr had a great deal of physical stamina and was always on the go. Because of his activity, Sam Rayburn once described Kerr as "the kind of man who would charge Hell with a bucket of water and think he could put it out."[121]

In 1944, Kerr made over three hundred speeches. Most of them required long drives or train rides. He spoke to almost every type of audience from eighth grade graduating classes and church conventions to the National Democratic Convention at Chicago.[122] From 1944 until his death, Kerr continued to be a popular speaker filling many

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[119] Ibid., p. 15.

[120] Crawford, Newsweek, LXI (January 14, 1963), 27.

[121] Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

[122] Sullivant, "Robert S. Kerr: Realist in Politics," in Public Men In and Out of Office, pp. 418-419.

more requests than the average senator. Crawford pointed out that "Kerr was a man of extraordinary vigor, mental and physical,"[123] and Lastelic observed that Kerr seemed to be tireless as he continued, even at the age of sixty-six, to put in a fourteen-hour day.[124]

Kerr, a big man physically, stood six feet three inches tall and weighed 235 pounds when he died. He carried his weight well and presented an impressive picture as a speaker.

Kerr's speaking voice matched his physical size. He was a booming speaker who could arouse drowsy spectators in the balcony of the Senate chamber. He did not have to shout to accomplish this feat but could rely on his deep resonant voice to achieve the task.

Both physical traits and committee memberships played important roles in Kerr's power in the Senate. As "King of the Senate" Kerr not only had the power, but the physical appearance as well, to fit this description.

Debater

While Robert Kerr was attending the University of Oklahoma, he wrote his father for permission to play football. His father's reply--"I would rather have made

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[123]Crawford, Newsweek, LXI (January 14, 1963), 27.

[124]Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, p. 1.

Bryan's Cross-of-Gold speech in 1896 than to have won every athletic contest which has taken place since Cain and Abel ran their first foot race on the banks of the Euphrates"[125]—ended Bob's football career before it began and was perhaps the embryonic stage of his interest and success in public speaking. Kerr joined the University debate team and remained active until he left school in 1916.

Kerr was one of the most feared and admired debaters on the Senate floor. Because of his college debate experiences, he "always loved a good contest."[126] He was especially fond of shifting the burden of proof to his opponent. Another of his favorite devices, said Huntley, was to "pounce upon a witness's misuse of words or phrases."[127] He would, related Huntley, call for a dictionary and proceed "to tear apart the grammar and syntax of the ill-prepared witness."[128]

Preparation

Senator Kerr spent a great deal of time studying legislation, especially legislation which was of particular

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[125]As cited in Marquis W. Childs, "The Big Boom from Oklahoma," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXI (April 9, 1949), 23.

[126]Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 296.

[127]"Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 7.

[128]Ibid.

interest to him. Marquis Childs, Washington correspondent, believed Kerr to be "one of the most resourceful men ever to come to the Senate,"[129] and Business Week commented that he always arrived at the committee bench "loaded with facts."[130]

Even his political opponents had praise for his study and knowledge of legislation. Said one Republican senator, "My how he studies those bills. He is able—probably the most knowledgeable tax man on the finance committee."[131]

As a result of his assiduous concentration on legislation, especially those bills which had special meaning for Oklahoma, few senators would dare to clash with him. Those that did often wished they had not.

That Kerr was cognizant of audience analysis is evidenced by the method he used to prepare his speeches. He would usually talk out a speech with a dictaphone and then get a friend to act as a sounding board while listening to it.[132] Although Kerr relied heavily on his well-trained

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[129]As cited in "Bob Kerr's History, as He Lived it in Oklahoma," p. 4.

[130]"Changing the Senate's Finance Watchdog," Business Week, No. 1486 (February 22, 1958), [illegible].

[131]As cited in Lastelic, Kansas City Star, September 16, 1962, Sec. D, [illegible].

[132]Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 296.

staff to provide information for his speeches, he rarely used a speech written by a "ghost writer." Usually, the final product of the Kerr speech was a combination of his work and that of special assistants.

Kerr read a great deal in a variety of fields. The knowledge he obtained caused one colleague to say, "He has one of the sharpest minds in the Senate."[133] Even Harry Byrd, long-time opponent of Kerr, was quick to admit, "He was a man of great brilliance and great ability."[134]

On his death, U. S. Senator John Tower of Texas said, "He was one of the most able men in the Senate,"[135] and Hatch exclaimed, "His wit and gift of oratory was equalled only by his penetrating mind."[136]

Frank McGee once contended that Kerr was imaginative enough to make 2 x 2 equal 8.[137] New Mexico's Democratic Senator Clinton Anderson agreed and often told Kerr that he would like to take a knife, open up his skull, and examine the convolutions of his brain. "He's the smartest man I know."[138]

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[133] Business Week, No. 1486 (February 22, 1958), p. 24.

[134] As cited in Cullen Johnson, "Grief Voiced by President," Daily Oklahoman, January 2, 1963.

[135] As cited in ibid.

[136] Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[137] "Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 13.

[138] As cited in Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

Robert Kerr had a good memory. He could recall names and faces readily, apparently never forgot a story or joke, and repeatedly quoted statistics and facts that other senators, because of the lapse of time, had long since forgotten. Keltner and Harnack point out that his skill in recalling facts was often used in floor debates,[139] and Seligman declared, "Kerr's mastery of detail was remarkable."[140]

Kerr was also one of the best listeners in Washington. In fact, he listened so intently that visitors wasted little time in rambling discourse.[141] In Senate debates, Kerr was quick to catch the mistakes made by his opponents.

Knowledge gained through reading, memory, and careful listening helped Kerr prepare for debates in the Senate.

Cross Examination Procedure

Bob Kerr was at his best on cross-examination. Business Week testified, "He is disarming to the witness who has not seen him in action before, the witness who makes the mistake of believing that he has only a plain

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[139]Keltner and Harnack, Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 296.

[140]Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 137.

[141]"Senator Kerr Appreciation Dinner," p. 12.

politician as an adversary."[142] "And woe to the witness who came ill-prepared or tried to hood-wink his interrogators with shady logic,"[143] exclaimed Hatch.

Kerr's ability to cross-examine is best illustrated by reviewing a portion of an actual committee hearing. This particular examination of a witness occurred in the Finance Committee in 1957 when the fiscal conditions of the United States were being examined. The exchange took place between Kerr and William McChesney Martin Jr., then chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, who was "normally a lucid and articulate man."[144]

> Senator Kerr: You said in your report we had achieved a degree of economic stability in 1952.
> Mr. Martin: That is right.
> Senator Kerr: Why are you saying now you were moving in 1953 to overcome the inflationary situation of 1952?
> Mr. Martin: It got out of hand here. Do you want to comment on this?
> Senator Kerr: You are the one who made the statement.
> Mr. Martin: Well, I stand on the statement.
> Senator Kerr: You can't stand on both of them, because they are in contradiction to each other.
> Mr. Martin: Mr. Riefler, I have gotten confused under the questioning. Will you bail me out of this?
> Senator Kerr: Who are you?
> Mr. Martin: This is Mr. Riefler, assistant to the chairman of the F. R. B.
> Senator Kerr: I'll tell you, if you can bail him out of that one I want to get acquainted with you.

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[142] Business Week, No. 1486 (February 22, 1958), p. 25.

[143] Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[144] Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 138.

Mr. Riefler: I thought he wanted to correct himself. He was not saying in 1951-52 we were having active inflation.
Senator Kerr: You can say that is what he wanted?
Mr. Riefler: That is right.
Senator Kerr: I'll tell you if you can read men's minds, I want you out of this room.[145]

Concerning this ability, Hatch wrote: "Senator Kerr could dissect a question or construct an answer with aplomb and insight that left fellow senators helpless in the rough-and-tumble arena of senatorial debate."[146]

Invective and Sarcasm

Senator Kerr held a vast amount of power in the United States Senate and often exercised it, sometimes through invective and sarcasm. He was unusually rough on opponents. One Republican commented that he was "as poisonous as a scorpion's tail."[147] Keltner and Harnack indicate that Kerr was a master at coining satirical phrases such as "Wherry-go-round" and "MacArthuritis,"[148] and Hatch contended, "His repartee cut down Senate adversaries like a scythe."[149]

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[145]As cited in ibid., p. 138 and p. 179.

[146]Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[147]As cited in Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

[148]"Robert S. Kerr," p. 296.

[147]Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

On one occasion Senator Proxmire gained the Senate floor and said, "Mr. President, I do not like to puncture the Senator's [Kerr's] magnificent oratorical balloon"—Kerr interrupted to say, "Have at it." Replied Proxmire, "I will have at it." Kerr answered by saying, "I ask no quarter and give none."[150] Kerr remained true to this promise throughout his Senate tenure and was well-known for his sarcastic attacks.

In the course of a debate in 1952, Kerr remarked that Senator Homer Ferguson appeared to be confused about a pending bill. Rising to Ferguson's defense, another Republican senator suggested that it was Kerr who was confused and probably the confusion was related to the defeat Kerr had just suffered in the Nebraska presidential primary. The following statement by Kerr is a good example of his use of sarcasm and invective:

> The Senator from Oklahoma wishes to say that he is not confused as to what happened in Nebraska, nor was the result so detrimental that he is unable to recognize at this time another chapter in the continuing confusion of the distinguished Senator from Michigan. So far as I know, the Senator from Michigan has had no such jolt in the recent past as to justify the belief that the condition under which he labors at the present time is either temporary or that with reference to it there is any hope of recovery or improvement.[151]

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[150] Record, 87th Cong., 2nd Session, 1962, CVIII, part 13, 17860.

[151] As cited in Seligman, Fortune, LIX (March, 1959), 137.

However, it was not necessary for another senator to insult Kerr first for him to receive a taste of Kerr's sarcasm. Senator Lausche once asked Kerr, "May I ask another question? Perhaps the Senator from Oklahoma can answer."[152] The Senator's request was not out of the ordinary, but Kerr replied, "I would not be surprised but what I could."[153] In another instance, Senator Capehart had made reference to the fact that he was a farmer and that he understood the problems confronted by farmers. Kerr rose and said:

> The Senator from Indiana says he is a farmer; and he well may be, because he certainly has indulged in a lot of hogwash on the floor of the Senate, talking about the taxpaying proclivities and capacities of the private utilities.[154]

Senator Proxmire was one of Kerr's favorite sparring partners, and Kerr rarely missed an opportunity to insult him. In the debate on the Lake Michigan Water Diversion proposal, Senator Proxmire was discussing one aspect of the issue—a sewage plant to be built in Chicago. He was arguing that the plant should be constructed in Milwaukee. Kerr interrupted his speech:

> Mr. Kerr: Will the Senator yield for a question?
> Mr. Proxmire: I yield to the Senator from Oklahoma for a question.

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[152] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 5, 6110.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Record, 84th Cong., 2nd Session, 1956, CII, part 6, 8235.

> Mr. Kerr: The Senator from Oklahoma would ask his good friend from Wisconsin just what it is about Milwaukee sewage which gives it an advantage in the matter of purity over the sewage of the city of Chicago? Is it the contents, the origin, the treatment?
> Mr. Proxmire: I point out to my good friend from Oklahoma that in all those regards the sewage from Milwaukee is far superior.
> Mr. Kerr: I wish to say to my good friend that the observation of the Senator from Oklahoma is that the examples seen here on the floor would tend to give credence to his statement.[155]

The most publicized incident involving Kerr's invective and sarcasm occurred in 1957 with President Eisenhower and Senator Capehart of Indiana receiving the brunt of the attack. Capehart was arguing for the appointment of an Advisory Committee to President Eisenhower to study the fiscal affairs of the nation. Kerr challenged Capehart's justification of the committee saying, "No man can help Eisenhower study the fiscal politics of this government, because one cannot do that without brains, and he [Eisenhower] does not have them." Capehart tried to interrupt, but Kerr continued, "If the greatest fiscal experts this nation has ever produced marched in solid phalanx before Eisenhower for months . . . he would emerge from the experience just as uninformed as he is now." Capehart, now outraged, received an opportunity to speak and told Kerr that he should be ashamed of saying the President of the United States had no brains when the gallery was full of school

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[155] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19524.

children. Kerr then amended his statement to read that the President had no "fiscal brains," and said, "I reserve that broad and sweeping accusation for some of my cherished colleagues in this body." Capehart should have known when to quit but didn't. He asked, "Who are those cherished colleagues, and am I one of them?" Kerr asked for permission to further amend his statement. "I desire to have the word some changed to the word one and . . . the word colleagues changed to . . . colleague."[156] Kerr was abrupt, demanding, and sarcastic, but he got his point across.

Summary

To Oklahomans, Kerr was a man of the people. His humble birth, struggle for education and wealth, religion, and use of wit and humor contributed to this image. He was also known as the developer of Oklahoma, and his actions both as governor and senator, as well as his interest in conserving the state's natural resources, built this image.

In Washington, because of his political philosophy and conflicts of interests, Kerr was known as a "pork barreler." He was also known as the "King of the Senate." Physical traits and committee memberships added to this image. Finally, in Washington, Kerr was known as a debater. Careful preparation, a unique cross-examination procedure, and the use of sarcasm resulted in this label.

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[156]As cited in "Brainstorm," Time, LXX (July 29, 1957), 11.

Thus, Kerr was perceived differently by these two audiences. In the following chapters Kerr's use of ethical proof before these different audiences will be examined. In short, how Kerr attempted to reinforce or modify different aspects of his image is the question for the final chapters.

CHAPTER IV

ETHICAL PROOF IN OKLAHOMA COMMUNICATIONS

Audience

Aristotle observed that a speech was composed, or grew out of the interaction, of three elements: the speaker, the subject, and the persons addressed. He further maintained that the audience is the element that most determines a speech's end or objective. Thonssen and Baird claim this statement has almost become a rhetorical axiom.

> It announces the fact that, for the speaker, the audience is the most important element in the situation and that, if he is to be effective, the speaker must adjust both himself and his ideas to it. The basic consideration, then, is adaptation, or adjustment to the variables of human behavior as found in a specific group of hearers.[1]

The purpose of this section is to analyze Kerr's Oklahoma audience. In essence, the section attempts to describe the characteristics of Oklahomans by examining their attitudes, interests, and beliefs.

Oklahoma History and Geography

On March 23, 1889, President Harrison issued a

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[1]Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948), p. 360.

proclamation for settling the land previously known as "Indian Territory." From the borders of surrounding states, settlers rushed to claim land and establish homesteads. By May of 1890, Congress had passed the Organic Act—the law that established the territory of Oklahoma. On November 16, 1907, Oklahoma, with a population of approximately 1,500,000, became the forty-sixth state in the Union.

Oklahoma, surrounded by the states of Texas, Kansas, New Mexico, and Arkansas, has been classified by Walter Prescott Webb as a "desert-rim state."[2] The importance of climate in the Southwest (of which Oklahoma is a part) is expressed by Hollon. "It is doubtful whether any subject is discussed more frequently in the Southwest—day in, day out, year in, year out—than its climate."[3] John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath vividly described the effects of the Southwest's desert-like climate. As Hollon testifies:

> The scenes of desolation and human suffering throughout most of the Southwest during the "dirty thirties" were almost unprecedented in American history. As one who saw hundreds of families fleeing the blighted area in worn-out jalopies during those terrible years, I can testify that John Steinbeck's account of the wretched and pathetic victims of man's crime

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[2]As cited in W. Eugene Hollon, The Southwest: Old and New (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 315.

[3]Ibid., p. 312.

> against nature in The Grapes of Wrath was not exaggerated.[4]

In short, Oklahoma's climate is hot, arid, and known predominately for its periods of drouth.

Because of its climate, the importance of, and interest in, water is readily understandable. Hollon writes:

> If a single subject attracts more political attention in the region than any other, it is water. All governors and state legislators pretend to be interested in its conservation and use. Each Southwestern state has at least one senator who specializes in this general area: Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma, Lyndon Johnson of Texas, Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, and Carl Hayden of Arizona. In 1957, while the Southwest still suffered from a severe drought, I queried the region's eight United States senators on the subject of political pressures which they experience from their constituents. Each of the seven who replied listed reclamation aid, public power in the form of REA, flood control, and various other aspects of the water problem as "must" legislation.[5]

People of Oklahoma

Population

The early settlers of Oklahoma were farmers migrating from the South and Midwest. Oklahoma reached its population peak in 1930, suffered a population loss during the dust-bowl days of the 1930's, then began

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[4] Ibid., p. 318.

[5] Ibid., pp. 362-363.

gaining population again in the 1950's with the increasing industrialization that began during World War II. More interesting, however, is the stability of Oklahoma's population. "Oklahoma's population has been relatively stable since 1920. The greatest variation in state population since 1920 has been less than four hundred thousand, and Oklahoma's 1960 population exceeded its 1920 population by only three hundred thousand."[6]

The influx of residents from outside the state has been relatively small in recent years. Despite the fact that much is heard about the increase of executive personnel from the northern and eastern sections of the nation into Oklahoma City and Tulsa, more immigrants into those cities have come from the South than from any other section.[7]

Economy

Economically, median family income for Oklahoma in 1959 was about $4,600. For nearly fifty counties, however, the figure was under $4,000. In sixty-one counties there were thirty percent or more families reporting an annual income under $3,000, a point considered to mark the

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[6]Wayne Fisher Young, "Oklahoma Politics: With Special Reference to the Election of Oklahoma's First Republican Governor" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Government, University of Oklahoma, 1964), p. 37.

[7]Ibid., p. 40.

poverty line. Throughout the state, non-manufacturing occupations predominate.[8]

Young testifies to the political importance of members of the low income group.

> Residents of the low income counties have acquired a vested interest in the public assistance program, and because of their numbers they have become a voting bloc to be reckoned with. All but one of the thirty counties where the public assistance rolls are highest are predominantly Democratic, and the low income status of the residents of these counties undoubtedly reinforces their Democratic sympathies.[9]

Aged

Because the population of Oklahoma is stable, the state has a large number of elderly citizens. The number of residents over sixty-five years of age has grown to the point where Oklahoma ranked eleventh in the nation in 1960 in the percentage of persons over sixty-five to the total population.[10] Revenue from Oklahoma's two percent sales tax is earmarked for welfare purposes. Hence, the state's more than eighty-five thousand old age assistance recipients have become an important voting bloc with a vested interest in maintaining the welfare

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[8]Oliver Benson et al., Oklahoma Votes, 1907-1962 (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1964), p. 6.

[9]Young, "Oklahoma Politics: . . .," p. 69.

[10]Ibid., p. 55.

status quo. Hollon testifies, "Old-age pensioners are especially well organized in Oklahoma."[11]

Farming

As we have noted, during the period of early settlement of Oklahoma, farmers migrated to the cheap land. Even today, the farmer is important in Oklahoma. McReynolds claims, "Considerable areas in southwestern Oklahoma are still dominated by cotton production."[12] Hollon notes that, until 1940, the entire Southwest was more oriented toward agriculture than industry. "Almost two decades later [by 1960] the region still led the nation in livestock production and remained among the top producers of cotton, wheat, peanuts, and other crops."[13] Today, agriculture still constitutes a major sector of Oklahoma's economy.

By 1960, approximately two thirds of the population of Oklahoma lived in cities. However, because the state had not reapportioned its legislature for more than a generation, the farmers still controlled the state government. Hollon explains:

> In . . . Oklahoma no county can elect more than one senator or seven representatives. This

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[11]Hollon, p. 388.

[12]Edwin C. McReynolds, Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 415.

[13]Hollon, p. 364.

> enables the rural areas to control the legislature and their representatives to cater to the demands of farmers for special tax exemptions, county roads, state aid to rural education, and prohibition. . . . Often the demands of . . . urban residents are ignored.[14]

In short, even though the rural resident is now in the minority in Oklahoma he still has very much to say about the political affairs of the state.

Religion

In Oklahoma, Hollon states, "The Baptists and other fundamentalist denominations wield enormous political power."[15] Slightly more than seventy percent of the total church membership of all faiths in Oklahoma is Southern Baptist and Methodist, with the Baptists outnumbering the Methodists by about two to one. The percentage of membership of leading faiths to total Oklahoma church membership is presented in the table below.

Southern Baptist	46.2
Methodist	23.9
Disciples of Christ	11.5
Roman Catholic	8.5
Presbyterian	4.2
Assemblies of God	3.6
All Others	2.1[16]

Moreover, Baptists predominate in sixty of the state's seventy-seven counties.[17]

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[14] Ibid., pp. 364-365.

[15] Ibid., p. 388.

[16] Young, "Oklahoma Politics: . . .," p. 52.

[17] Ibid., p. 53.

Hollon colorfully describes the effects of religious groups in Oklahoma.

> Everything in Oklahoma . . . seems to open with a prayer—meetings of bankers' associations, conventions, football games, rodeos, even bathing beauty contests. Parts of . . . [the] state still hold the convictions that characterize the Bible Belt—strangely, when one considers the robust and bawdy character of the Southwest as a whole. Few states have as many "blue laws" and restrictions against sin. . . . When Oklahoma abolished prohibition in 1959, the Oklahoma Baptist General Convention announced that it would expel any member who operated a legal liquor store.[18]

The important role that religious affiliation has played in Oklahoma politics is demonstrated by the fact that the Democratic percentage of the vote for President in Oklahoma has exceeded that for the nation as a whole in every election except the two in which Catholic nominees represented the Democratic party.

Year	National Per Cent	Oklahoma Per Cent
1908	43.17	48.1
1912	41.91	46.9
1916	49.42	50.6
1920	34.3	44.5
1924	28.98	48.4
1928	41.24	35.4
1932	59.14	73.2
1936	62.45	66.8
1940	54.98	57.4
1944	53.77	55.5
1948	49.8	62.7
1952	44.67	45.4
1956	42.25	44.8
1960	50.08	40.9[19]

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[18]Hollon, p. 388.

[19]Young, "Oklahoma Politics: . . .," p. 52.

In the 1928 election, with Catholic Al Smith the Democratic nominee, the Southern Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, the largest religious group in the state, as a group did not endorse either candidate. In some of the cities, however, ministers openly did so. At a meeting of the Louisville, Kentucky, Baptist Pastors' Conference, the ministers declared that they would support Hoover and "intend[ed] to work as an organized body for election of the Republican candidate."[20] Many Oklahoma Baptist ministers supported this position.

Statements such as, "We either get Hoover or a Roman persecution"; "Smith owes his allegiance to the Pope of Rome"; "History proves Catholicism is not a friend to religious liberty"; "America is not ready for Roman Rule"; and "Smith would change the amendments to the Constitution even to the First" appeared in newspaper editorials, "Letters to the Editor" columns, and were repeated by word of mouth throughout the state.[21] Nabors writes:

> The opposition to Smith was strongest in towns where the church influence was well established. In Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma, observers said that the Baptists could be directly charged with the anti-Smith vote because Oklahoma Baptist University was located in Shawnee. This accounted

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[20]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, July 22, 1928, p. 4-D.

[21]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, July 29, 1928, p. 11-C.

> for the fact that most of the school teachers in the county were Baptists.[22]

To be sure, the defeat of Al Smith in Oklahoma can be largely attributed to the Baptists.

National surveys indicated a decline in prejudice on the religious issue, but the 1960 Oklahoma election returns demonstrated it was still very much alive in the state. In the 1960 election Nixon got more votes for President in Oklahoma than any other candidate in the history of the state. His vote totaled 534,748 to Kennedy's 369,174.[23]

Baptist activity in the 1960 election started early in the campaign. At the state convention several delegates received telegrams from ministers and laymen urging them not to vote for Kennedy because of his religion. Three Baptist ministers claimed to have a petition with fifty thousand signatures which opposed any Catholic for President or Vice-President of the United States.[24]

Shortly after the Democratic National Convention in 1928, the question, "Should religious views govern a person's vote in an election?" was asked several Oklahoma

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[22]Jon Huddleston Nabors, "Robert S. Kerr, Baptist Layman: A Study of the Impact of Religion and Politics on the Life of an Oklahoma Leader" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Department of History, University of Oklahoma, 1964), p. 71.

[23]Daily Oklahoman, November 10, 1960, p. 1.

[24]Ada Evening News, (Ada, Oklahoma), July 13, 1960, p. 1.

City ministers. Replied Reverend Mordecai F. Ham, "Religion has and always will influence politics, because it influences individuals who conduct political affairs."[25] In 1960, this statement still appeared to summarize the feelings of many of Oklahoma's Baptist ministers. Nabors adequately summarizes the results of the 1960 campaign which were markedly similar to those of the 1928 election:

> From the outset of the Presidential campaign it was predicted that Nixon would carry Oklahoma. It was estimated that at least 100,000 Democrats in the state would not vote for a Catholic for President. Although Kennedy supporters, such as Governor Edmondson were optimistic from the start, the fact that prejudice still existed in Oklahoma could not be questioned.[26]

Kerr campaigned for the Democratic nominee in Oklahoma and still won his senatorial race with 472,929 votes over Crawford's 385,316.[27] After the election, Kerr indicated that he believed his support of Kennedy cost him one hundred thousand votes.[28] Obviously, Kerr, who before the 1960 election was at the height of his popularity in Oklahoma, lost some of the prestige he previously

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[25]As cited in Daily Oklahoman, June 22, 1928, p. 9.

[26]Nabors, "Robert S. Kerr Baptist Layman . . .," p. 78.

[27]Daily Oklahoman, November 10, 1960, p. 1.

[28]"Oklahoma's Kerr—The Man Who Really Runs the U. S. Senate," Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

enjoyed. As one person said, "I am for Bob Kerr unless he comes back and tries to cram Kennedy down our throats."[29]

Other Pressure Groups

Without doubt, the Baptists are the largest single pressure group in Oklahoma. There are, however, other groups which affect the political process. Two such lobbies are education and oil. Treating the importance of the education lobby, Hollon writes:

> Another political factor in this section of the Southwest is the education lobby. Texas and Oklahoma lead all the other states in the number of teachers' colleges. The Oklahoma Education Association and the Texas State Teachers Association maintain full-time lobbyists in their respective state capitals.[30]

Also, in Oklahoma, the oil interests are strong. Several oilmen have served as governor (Kerr among them). The effectiveness of this group is diminished, however, because many of the Oklahoma companies are absentee owned.[31]

Oklahoma Politics

The Democratic Party has been dominant in Oklahoma since statehood but probably to a less extent than is generally assumed. On the national level, Republican presidential candidates have carried the state's electorial

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[29]Constituent to Kerr, August 12, 1960, Kerr Papers.

[30]Hollon, p. 388.

[31]Ibid., pp. 387-388.

vote four times. In almost one third of the presidential elections since statehood, Oklahoma has voted Republican. Oklahomans have sent three senators and thirty-six congressmen who were registered Republicans to Washington since statehood.[32] However, Young claims, "Oklahoma has been a predominately one-party, Democratic state since statehood was achieved in 1907."[33] Benson and others disagree. They claim:

> By almost any index except that of the voting division in gubernatorial, presidential, and senatorial contests, the Oklahoma political system cannot be designated as a genuine two-party one. On the other hand, neither do the usual indices clearly demonstrate that Oklahoma fits the pattern of the typical American one-party system. Hence we conclude that Oklahoma rests on the continum somewhere between these extremes.[34]

Thornton, Rushing, and Wood concisely answer the question, Is Oklahoma a one-party or two-party state? They write: "Although Oklahoma is not a one-party state—in the deep South sense—it appears, barring unforeseen developments, that its people must continue to depend upon the Democratic Party for leadership."[35]

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[32]H. V. Thornton, Corbitt Rushing, and John Wood, Problems in Oklahoma State Government (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 72.

[33]Young, "Oklahoma Politics: . . .," p. 7.

[34]Benson et al., p. 52.

[35]Thornton, Rushing, and Wood, p. 74.

Summary

Oklahoma, one of the last states to be admitted to the Union, has been described as a "desert-rim state." Rainfall in the area is sparce, drouth is frequent, and the need for water is ever present. In spite of these problems, however, early settlers rushed into Indian Territory to claim cheap farm land. They came mostly from the South and Midwest. Nevertheless, Oklahoma remained a rather sparsely settled state, reaching its population peak in the 1930's. More important, the population has remained rather stable since 1920. This stability of population has resulted in an increase of the elderly in the state. The high proportion of elderly residents has contributed, at least in part, to the fact that economically, Oklahoma is a poor state. Non-manufacturing occupations predominate, and the farm dweller, although now in the minority in Oklahoma, still is a very vital force in the political process.

The most dominant and important group in Oklahoma politics is the fundamentalists in general, and more specifically, the Southern Baptists. Their role in politics is most vividly demonstrated in the presidential elections of 1928 and 1960. Other pressure groups include the oil and education lobbyists. Because of the above factors, Oklahoma is predominately a one-party, Democratic state.

These are the attitudes, interests, and beliefs of those people to whom Kerr directed his Oklahoma communications. How did he adapt to this audience? This question is treated in the following section.

Ethical Proof

Acting in the Best Interests of Oklahoma

Serving the State

In Oklahoma, Kerr enjoyed the image of "the developer of Oklahoma," and he constantly reinforced it in communications to the people of his state. This was particularly evident in the 1954 campaign. Kerr announced the theme of his campaign in March. "I have worked and fought for a SQUARE DEAL FOR THE PEOPLE OF OKLAHOMA, and the theme of my campaign will be a 'SQUARE DEAL FOR THE PEOPLE OF OKLAHOMA.'"[36] The Oklahoma Senator carried this theme into the fall campaign. He said, "In opening this fall campaign for the entire Democratic ticket, we do so for the welfare . . . and the benefit of the people of Oklahoma. A political party has value only if it serves the people."[37]

During the 1954 campaign, Kerr laid his record

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[36]Kerr Campaign Speech, March 14, 1954, Kerr Papers, University of Oklahoma Division of Manuscripts.

[37]Kerr Campaign Speech, Durant, Oklahoma, September 24, 1954, Kerr Papers.

before Oklahomans while his opponent was attacking the Senator as "the man who wasn't there."[38] This attack seemed to fit in well with Kerr's campaign plan. He retaliated by saying, "I am making this campaign for a second term on my record and my program for you. I am doing this because I am a builder—instead of a knocker."[39]

In closing the 1954 campaign, Kerr again returned to his campaign theme.

> Again, I want to thank all of you for your wonderful support of me in this campaign. You and I know that a Senator is of value as he is willing and able to work for you. I know that your decision in this campaign will be based on your judgment of who can best serve you. That is the reason that I am making this campaign solely on my record. . . .[40]

Shortly after his election to the Senate, Kerr gave the people of Oklahoma a preview of what was to come to their state. In his weekly press release to Oklahoma, Kerr enthusiastically claimed:

> Our over-all soil-and-water program can be explained this way:
>
> We are going to make a new girl out of Old Mother Earth. Time has weighed heavily on her surface. She has been wrinkled and seamed by erosion. She cannot keep pace with the demands of today. But, the magic of modern engineering will give her new life. Her contour will be put back in shape. She

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[38]As cited in Kerr Campaign Speech, "My Fellow Oklahomans," June 18, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Kerr Campaign Speech, Statewide Radio Address, June 4, 1954, Kerr Papers.

> will become more productive. Yes, Old Mother Earth will be just like a new girl. And boy oh boy, the opportunities she is going to have.[41]

For Oklahomans, this promise became a reality. Kerr worked in Washington to provide public works projects for his state. He did not, however, stop there but broadened his interests and activity into other areas that would benefit Oklahoma. In 1954 he said:

> A Square Deal for Oklahoma is getting our fair share of the national defense program. I have constantly worked with the Oklahoma Congressional delegation and the citizens of Oklahoma, which has resulted in—among other things—the reactivation of the air bases at Ardmore, Altus, Clinton, and Enid; the Naval base at Norman; operation of the Tulsa bomber plant; maintenance of Tinker Field at its present level; a program to use Frederick, and increase personnel at Fort Sill. Defense industry and installations today employ more people than were employed by all Oklahoma industry 10 years ago, a reminder of the importance of maintaining and expanding these operations.[42]

Throughout his tenure in the Senate, Kerr continually put before his constituents the legislation he had helped obtain for them. In 1956 he claimed:

> Without a doubt, this has been Oklahoma's finest year in Congress. We could call it the Gold Star Year, as we prepare to celebrate Oklahoma's 50th anniversary of statehood in 1957. As a result of the gains in this Congress, and all the other splendid developments getting under way in Oklahoma, I firmly believe that Oklahoma can

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[41]"Senator Kerr Says," May 3, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[42]Kerr Campaign Speech, March 14, 1954, Kerr Papers.

> christen the second half-century as the "Golden Age of Progress."
>
> IMMEDIATE GAINS: But we will not have to wait 50 years or even five to begin to realize the benefits in store. In fact, Oklahoma will begin to BENEFIT immediately. There will be new jobs opening up with the construction of public works throughout the state. Other businesses affected by these payrolls and purchases will offer that many more new jobs. It should start an extensive chain reaction for general prosperity.[43]

Such statements still marked Kerr's communications to the people of Oklahoma in 1958.

> East Side, West Side, all around the state. Upstream, Downstream, varied projects rate. That is the sweep of progress which Oklahoma is scoring in this Congress, by far the most important of any year in the history of our state.
>
> The construction programs, covering soil-and-water projects, roads, military and defense installations, hospitals, etc., will be of immediate benefit affecting every area of Oklahoma. It is the statewide diversification that is so outstanding.
>
> From the very tip of the panhandle in Cimarron County, the Helium plant near Keyes, this widespread development reaches to the opposite southeast corner which is slated to get three new dams in the Millwood project authorized in the new compromise omnibus bill. This trio of dams will also be a tremendous boost for the Central Oklahoma project which is expected to get additional survey funds this year.[44]

In fact, Kerr, in nearly every press release sent to Oklahoma, reminded constituents of the accomplishments made for them. A large portion of these accomplishments

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[43]"A Report from Senator Kerr in Washington," August 1956, Kerr Papers.

[44]"Senator Kerr Says," June 26, 1958, Kerr Papers.

dealt with soil-and-water conservation—a primary concern of the Oklahoma farmers.

Kerr did not, however, work only in Congress for his state. "What can it do for Oklahoma?" was the question he continually asked, and he never let his constituents forget it. While making a speech to a group of Ohio businessmen concerning the Korean War, Kerr managed to talk of his home state. He reported the following to the people of Oklahoma:

> I went to Ohio this week to make a speech to the "50 Club" of Cleveland. This club is composed of top industrial, financial and professional men. I was invited to give my views and opinions with reference to developments on the home front and on the war front. I tried to comply fully with their requests on these subjects, but I watched carefully and just at the moment I thought I had their closest attention, I proceeded to expound on the marvelous opportunities for industrial operations in Oklahoma. Judging from their response, I am predicting that these seeds are going to sprout into some fine new industrial plants for Oklahoma.[45]

Kerr also recognized specific interest groups within the state. After helping the private and public utility companies work out a contract agreement, he told Oklahomans, "I know it was one of the best things that ever happened for Oklahoma."[46] On another occasion he claimed, "In another move to increase consumer purchasing power where it is needed most, and to give tax relief to

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[45]"Senator Kerr Says," March 1, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[46]"Senator Kerr Says," February 15, 1951, Kerr Papers.

low income groups, . . . [I have] joined Senator George in a bill to cut income taxes by increasing individual and dependent exemptions."[47]

As Kerr worked for "Oklahoma's fair share" of Congressional legislation, he became known as a "pork barreler." Shortly before his death, Kerr addressed himself to this charge in a news release to the people of Oklahoma.

> Let the Washington wags make their jokes about the federal pork-barrel, but the Oklahoma Congressional delegation is happy to be bringing home the bacon. We know that our projects are a sound investment in Oklahoma's economic strength and growth. Thanks to the effective cooperation of the people of Oklahoma, and their leaders, state and national, Oklahoma's program for industrialization has made impressive strides. It gets the biggest boost yet from the recent session of Congress. Our Land, Wood and Water program benefited by more than a half billion dollars. This means more new starts, more new funds for construction, more new projects authorized, and more new contracts to be let than at any time in our state's history. A wide range of new legislation will spur Oklahoma industry, agriculture, business, and tourism.[48]

Few would deny that Kerr did indeed achieve an extremely large amount of beneficial legislation for his home state. Moreover, even fewer could deny that he constantly reminded the people of Oklahoma of what he had done for them.

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[47]"Senator Kerr Says," March 18, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[48]"News Release to Oklahoma," October 13, 1962, Kerr Papers.

Serving the Individual Within the State

Kerr further demonstrated that he was acting in the best interest of Oklahoma by treating the needs of the individual constituent. He appealed to each individual in the state to make suggestions, offer solutions, or request help if he could be of service. In short, Kerr attempted to identify with his audience as an individual serving individuals. This approach is particularly evident in a 1954 campaign speech. As he opened the speech, Kerr said, "Now as the campaign advances, I want you to write me and ask me about the special questions or matters in which you are interested. Some of these I can talk about when I visit with you on the radio and T.V."[49] Further in the speech he said, "Sometime, I hope you can visit us here in our Washington office. Our door is always open to Oklahomans, and we love to see you, whether you have any problems or not."[50] Finally, in the conclusion of the speech, Kerr said, "We hope to be seeing you soon."[51] Statements such as the above appeared in almost every one of Kerr's campaign speeches. Further, he acknowledged the letters he received from constituents by replying to every one.

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[49]Kerr Campaign Speech, April 13, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Ibid.

Two months after the April 13th speech, Kerr devoted an entire speech to answering constituents' questions. He opened the speech by saying, "When I spoke to you before, I asked you to send me your questions and suggestions. I am indeed grateful to you for all the kind letters and encouraging messages you have sent me."[52] He then proceeded to answer the questions he had received. Kerr's attitude toward individuals within his constituency was perhaps best summarized by the Senator in 1951. "Any constituent," he said, "who feels I haven't done enough for him, . . . please call on me."[53]

In still another way, Kerr attempted to present himself as one who catered to the needs of every Oklahoman who asked his help. His weekly press release "Senator Kerr Speaks" frequently contained information about individual services performed. These services which included requests for information and personal appearances, veterans benefits, welfare and relief benefits, and others were acknowledged or explained week by week to the people of his state. Moreover, the weekly press release always had a special section devoted to visitors from Oklahoma.

> Visitors: I am always happy to welcome Oklahoma visitors at my office. The following were among last week's groups: J. D. Allen of Chickasha;

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[52]Kerr Campaign Speech, Statewide Radio Address, June 4, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[53]"Senator Kerr Says," April 12, 1951, Kerr Papers.

> George C. Stratton, Cookson; Dale Johnston, Enid; Henry Templeton, Hollis; Mrs. J. F. Connolly and children, Markham and Ann, and Tom Marshall, all of Oklahoma City; Roy C. Lindley, Tulsa; and Jim Smith, Westville.[54]

Kerr's attempts to identify with his audience as an individual serving individuals and acting in their best interests are numerous. He did, indeed, make every effort to reinforce his image as the "developer of Oklahoma."

Demonstrating Moral Character

Religion

As one would expect, because of the influence of religion in Oklahoma politics, Kerr found it desirable to recognize this group in his state communications. Kerr enjoyed his image as a "Man of the People" in Oklahoma. His religion contributed to this image. Reinforcing this image, Kerr made frequent references to the Bible and God in his speeches and letters to his constituents. In one press release, Kerr treated the subject of the Korean War. Here, his use of religious appeal was most evident.

> The all-American team of all Americans is on the march. Under one flag, as one people under one God, we will meet and rise victorious over every threat and every danger to our homes, our freedom, and our country. . . .

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[54]"Senator Kerr Says," February 15, 1951, Kerr Papers.

> We can build and maintain the military strength, the united valor, the combined courage, the unfaltering faith in our God and our people that will insure our victory. . . .
> We must also mobilize our spiritual and moral resources. We must fortify our courage and renew our faith. The God of our fathers is still supreme and is available to guide us against the atheistic enemy.[55]

Thus, Kerr attempted to stimulate his constituents to work together in the war effort. One week later, continuing the religious theme, Kerr adapted his remarks to the holiday season: "Threatening war clouds cast a long dark shadow over the annual holiday season, but the true spirit of Christmas warms our hearts and renews our faith. At this sacred time, we learn anew how precious what we have is to us."[56]

Kerr's references to the Bible and God were not limited to special religious occasions. He made such references whenever the opportunity presented itself. In treating the subject of Truman's lambast of the music critic who wrote an unfavorable review of his daughter's concert, Kerr said, "Now, I don't pretend to be a professional music critic, although as a boy I was a member of the B.Y.P.U. male quartet."[57] Thus, Kerr reminded his audience of his early activity in the Baptist Church. On another

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[55]"Senator Kerr Says," December 21, 1950, Kerr Papers.

[56]"Senator Kerr Says," December 28, 1950, Kerr Papers.

[57]"Senator Kerr Says," December 14, 1950, Kerr Papers.

occasion, while defending Dean Acheson, Kerr admitted that Acheson was wrong but pleaded to his constituents, "If we ever did need human tolerance and understanding, it is today. We must use all the best we have, and pray to God that it will be enough."[58] In reference to the illness of the Republican Senator Vandenberg, Kerr told his constituents, "Senator Vandenberg's party and his country sorely need him, and we hope and pray that he may be able to return here in the near future."[59]

Kerr also used religious appeals in attacking his opponents. While speaking against Nixon in the 1960 campaign, he said:

> In Holy Writ we read that "God created man in his own image." The awful thing is that man hasn't lived up to that image. Eisenhower has created Nixon in his image. Do you doubt it? Just a month or two ago, the President at his press conference confirmed it. When asked about Mr. Nixon, he replied, "So far as I know, there has never been a specific difference in our points of view on any important problem in 7 years."[60]

A similar example of Kerr's use of religion in a campaign occurred in 1954. Kerr had charged that his opponent was not an active member of a church. Replied the opponent, "To any who may desire to investigate any

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[58]"Senator Kerr Says," December 28, 1950, Kerr Papers.

[59]"Senator Kerr Says," January 4, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[60]Kerr Campaign Speech, April 30, 1960, Kerr Papers.

of his [Kerr's] unfounded allegations I respectively suggest that you inquire of Rev. Ben Sturdivant, pastor of Crown Heights Methodist Church in Oklahoma City. I am and have been for a number of years a member of his church."[61] Replied Kerr:

> Now it so happens that my oldest son, Bob, Jr., some years ago married the lovely daughter of a great Methodist preacher, and with his wife is a member of the same Crown Heights Methodist Church and one of its Board of Stewards. I accepted my opponent's challenge to investigate and asked my son to tell me what Rev. Ben Sturdivant (my opponent's pastor) thought about him, to which my son replied, "Why, daddy, Rev. Ben Sturdivant isn't the pastor of the Crown Heights Methodist Church of Oklahoma City.
>
> He hasn't been for a month. He is now pastor in Enid. Rev. Jack Wilks is our new pastor, and, of course, anybody who attends or knows what's going on would have been well aware of this weeks ago."[62]

Thus, Kerr was able to establish (1) that he had reared his own family to support the church and (2) that his opponent was, at least, not a very active member.

Closely related to the religious groups in Oklahoma is the question of prohibition. The Baptists had openly fought against the repeal of prohibition each time the issue had arisen. When they turned to Kerr for help, he publically stated:

> I am glad to have the opportunity to reaffirm my position of unalterable opposition to the

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[61]As cited in "Senator Kerr Says," July 1, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[62]Ibid.

> repeal of constitutional prohibition against the role of intoxicating liquor. Based upon my observations and knowledge of the many evils of liquor to human beings, I have been against it all my life and will oppose it as long as I live. Brought face to face with the tragic record of alcohol I cannot compromise on this issue.[63]

On going to Washington, Kerr wrote to his constituents, "I just don't see why every kind of business . . . has to be mixed with a drink."[64] He further charged that in both private and official society in Washington, the capital slogan was, "Let's have a drink."[65] In reaffirming his position on alcohol, Kerr wrote to his constituents in Oklahoma:

> Now, I am neither long-faced nor any professional reformer. I enjoy good humor just as much as the next fellow, but I do have some very definite ideas about the economic and physical evils of alcohol.
>
> Hard liquor dulls the wits and clouds the vision, no doubt about that. And, official Washington must be at its best when the lives of our men are at stake and the future of the nation hangs in the balance. If we ever did need clear thinking, we need it now.
>
> This is my favorite quotation (original) on the subject: "Alcohol has cost more money, destroyed more property, killed more people and created more ill health and human suffering than all the wars in the entire history of the human race. It is equally deadly to youth or maturity. It exacts much and returns nothing. Its continued use makes it our master and us its slave."

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[63]Robert S. Kerr, Listen (January-March, 1959), p. 18, Kerr Papers.

[64]"Senator Kerr Says," April 5, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[65]Ibid.

I think about the first thing we need to cut these days is this "high cost" of drinkin'.[66]

The examples that have been cited provide clear evidence that Kerr did make extensive use of Biblical quotations and religious illustrations in his speeches. That this was by careful design is suggested by a folder of carefully organized Bible passages that was included in the Senator's papers. Selections from the file, "It is Written," are listed below:

Department of Agriculture--2 Chronicles 26:10
And He built towers in the desert and digged many wells: for He had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains: husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the mountains . . . for the loved husbandry.
Department of Air Force--Psalms 18:10
. . . Yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind.
Department of Army--Deuteronomy 20:01
When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee.
Army Engineers--Psalms 74:15
Thou didst cleave, the fountain and the flood: thou driest up mighty rivers.
Bureau of Budget--Geneses 47:18
When that year was ended, they came unto Him the second year, and said unto Him, we will not hide it from my Lord, now that our money is spent.
Civil Service Commission--Psalms 119:91
They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are they servants.
Federal Bureau of Investigation--Job 34:22
There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.
Federal Housing Administration--Psalms 49:11
Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling places to all generations.

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[66] Ibid.

General Services Administration--Acts 4:35
. . . and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare--Jeremiah 33:6
Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

Immigration and Naturalization Service--Ephesians 2:19
Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens. . . .

Department of Interior--Ecclesiastes 2:4-5-6
I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vinyards: I made me gardens and orchards, I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.

Internal Revenue Service--Luke 2:3
And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city.

Department of Labor--Psalms 104:23
Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.

Library of Congress--Exodus 17:14
. . . write this for a memorial in a book. . . .

National Guard Bureau--II Kings 11:5-6
And He commanded them, saying, this is the thing that ye shall do, a third part of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house; and a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard; so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it not be broken down.

Department of Navy--Psalms 107:23-24
They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.

Post Office Department--Esther 3:13
And the letters were sent by posts into all the King's provinces.

Bureau of Public Roads--I Samuel 28:10
And Ackish said, whither have ye made a road today?

Selective Service--Numbers 31:3
And Moses spake unto the people, saying, arm some of yourselves unto the war. . . .

Small Business Administration--Esther 3:9
And I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business. . . .

Department of State--Psalms 35:19-20
Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully

> rejoice over me; neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause for they speak not peace but they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.
>
> Veterans Administration--Psalms 37:25
>
> I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.
>
> White House--I Kings 3:8
>
> And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge thy so great a people.[67]

Kerr demonstrated good moral character by making references to the Bible, God, and prayer in his speeches. He reinforced his image as a religious man through the use of religious appeals.

Displaying Patience

Kerr also demonstrated good moral character by displaying patience and restraint. Known for his sarcasm and invective in Washington, Kerr attempted to demonstrate the opposite in Oklahoma. This was evident in the 1954 campaign. Kerr's opponent attacked the Senator's personality, and Kerr replied:

> When I started this campaign, I said I wasn't mad at anybody. I'm still not mad. In fact, I'm not even in a bad humor. But if I were, I wouldn't inflict it on the public under the guise of a political campaign.
>
> I think the people are sick of fussin' and fightin' and feudin' which neither deals

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[67]Kerr Papers.

> with the relevant matters of the campaign, nor demonstrates that the candidate is willing or able to do the job he seeks.[68]

Kerr maintained he would not attack his opponent's personality and remained true to his promise throughout the campaign.

On another occasion, Kerr commented to his constituents on the virtues of restraint. In speaking of Truman's response to the criticism of his daughter's singing, Kerr said:

> I know just how easy it was for Harry Truman to resent the critical and really unkind newspaper story about Margaret's singing. I am of the opinion, however, that "thunders of silence" from the irate father would have been a more effective treatment of the incident than what he gave it.[69]

One cannot help but wonder, however, what Kerr's reaction would have been had a member of his own family been so criticized.

By displaying patience and making religious references and appeals in his speeches, Kerr attempted to reinforce his Oklahoma image as a "man of the people." General observation indicates that he was successful.

Promoting Good Will

Using Wit and Humor

As we noted in Chapter III, Kerr was known for his use of wit and humor. He used humor, especially telling

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[68]"Senator Kerr Says," July 1, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[69]"Senator Kerr Says," December 14, 1950, Kerr Papers.

jokes about himself, to establish good will with his audience. In his January 4, 1951, press release to Oklahoma, Kerr related the following story about shaving.

> This required process of self-beautification was interrupted by a prolonged telephone conversation. In the midst of which, the tempting aroma of bacon and eggs captivated my interest, and, soon I unhooked from the telephone and made for the breakfast table. Yes, sir, it's mighty hard for anybody or anything to compete with bacon and eggs early in the morning at my house.
>
> Later, that morning, I sat in my office with several visitors from Oklahoma. Stroking my face, as I often do—in feeble imitation of "The Thinker," my palm skidded across a clearing and bumped into a patch of stubble. Closer inspection confirmed my worst fears. I had completely forgotten to finish shaving.[70]

On another occasion, Kerr related the following story to his constituents.

> Kerr's Rib: I teach a Sunday school class at the First Baptist Church in Washington. The class president, Carey Shaw, a genial bachelor, and I keep up a running exchange of friendly banter. He makes the introductory talk. This gives me the last word. Often, I poke a little fun at his unmarried condition.
>
> The other morning, he told the class he was always at a disadvantage, because he never knew what to expect from me in advance. Sometimes, when he poured it on me, I ribbed him but little. Again, when he would be nice to me, I ribbed him something terrible.
>
> Whereupon, I assured the class that I never would "rib" my good bachelor friend unless I could do it in the same way and for the same purpose that God "ribbed" Adam.[71]

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[70]"Senator Kerr Says," January 4, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[71]"Senator Kerr Says," February 8, 1951, Kerr Papers.

Kerr rarely passed up an opportunity to tell a joke or to poke fun at himself.

Identifying with the Frontier Spirit

Kerr's heritage contributed to his image as a "man of the people." Evidence abounds that indicates Kerr's attempt to maintain this frontier identification. While talking about Senator McFarland, Kerr told Oklahomans:

> I know something about the conditions of his early life because I grew up on a near-by farm. Life was simple back there when God-fearing men were building a great state from virgin soil and forest, but life also was wholesome and rugged, full and free. This hardy homespun background helped make Ernest McFarland a true democrat—written both small and capital "D".[72]

Indirectly, he identified with the people in the same speech by claiming McFarland had "deep understanding of the masses from whom he sprang."[73] The inference here is clear. By associating himself with McFarland he also associated himself with McFarland's deep understanding of the masses.

Kerr further reinforced this image by speaking the language of the people. In a 1954 campaign speech, he said:

> Now, I'm not going to quote a lot of figures about the economic slow-down. Many of you have already felt the pinch. You know, a recession is when it hits your neighbor. A depression is when it hits you.

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[72] "Senator Kerr Says," January 11, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[73] Ibid.

> I am convinced that we can stop this recession and prevent a depression.
>
> You know, a reporter called me the other day and wanted to get my favorite recipe. I told her I have some special cookin' recipes, but I am busy now with my recipe for prosperity.
>
> First, you must have a strong and stable agriculture, and that requires price supports of at least 90 per cent of parity. Mix that with plenty of consumer purchasing power. I am really stirring on this. We have already gotten some additional purchasing power by reducing excise taxes. Senator George and I have a bill to reduce everybody's income taxes.[74]

To be sure, Kerr's language was not complicated. Such use of language helped establish Kerr's frontier image.

Kerr rebelled against wearing formal clothes, and the only time he ever wore a tuxedo, he claimed it was the last until "I die and I'm laid out and people come by saying, 'Don't he look natural?'"[75] In reference to his wife's purchase of an antique bed that reportedly belonged to Napoleon I, Kerr said, "All I know is that it sleeps good, and I bought it second hand."[76]

Like Will Rogers, Kerr wanted to be known for his homespun humor. In his weekly press releases he set aside a special section entitled, "Kerr's Kernels," which contained examples of his frontier humor and philosophy. Representative selections are listed on the following page.

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[74]Kerr Campaign Speech, April 13, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[75]As cited in "Farmer from Washington," Clippings File, Kerr Papers.

[76]As cited in Joseph Kroft, "King of the U. S. Senate," Saturday Evening Post, CCCXXXVI (January 5, 1963), 26-27.

> Kerr Kernels: I usually try to work 8 hours and sleep 8 hours per day. Now, I am trying to figure out how to do both in the same 8 hours.
>
> An old French proverb says: Patience is bitter but its fruits are sweet.[77]

> Kerr Kernel: Kindness penetrates and lingers; hatred evaporates and disappears.[78]

> Kerr Kernels: Every time I blame myself for something, I find few who disagree.[79]

In short, Kerr through the use of wit and humor and by identifying with the frontier spirit helped reinforce his image as a "man of the people."

Summary

Kerr's use of ethical appeal in Oklahoma can be classified into three groups: (1) acting in the best interests of Oklahoma, (2) demonstrating moral character, and (3) promoting good will.

By discussing the legislation which Kerr had gained that was beneficial to the state, the Oklahoma Senator made his constituents aware that he was acting in their best interests. His major efforts centered on soil-and-water conservation, a subject of prime importance to Oklahoma farmers—the most significant political group in the state. He reminded them of his efforts to provide electricity to rural areas as well as other modern conveniences.

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[77] "Senator Kerr Says," March 8, 1951, Kerr Papers.

[78] "Senator Kerr Says," July 1, 1954, Kerr Papers.

[79] "Senator Kerr Says," March 1, 1951, Kerr Papers.

In an effort to boost the sagging Oklahoma economy, Kerr reminded constituents of his efforts to achieve federal assistance on projects making the state more desirable for prospective industry. Federal defense installations in Oklahoma further helped stimulate the economy.

Kerr also made Oklahoma Senior Citizens aware of his efforts to increase pensions and social security payments. Further, he introduced legislation in Congress to provide free medical assistance for the aged.

In short, Kerr's efforts in Congress reflect the interests and needs of the people of his state.

His requests for individuals to suggest solutions, ask questions, or just visit him further indicate that he was indeed concerned about Oklahomans and their needs.

Recognizing the importance of religion to the people of Oklahoma, Kerr demonstrated good moral character by frequent references to the Bible and God. Preparation of appropriate Biblical phrases enabled him to quote the Great Book on many spontaneous occasions. In addition, he exhibited restraint and patience, a characteristic which certainly was not evident in Washington.

Finally, Kerr promoted good will through the use of wit and humor (especially when poking fun at himself) and by identification with the frontier spirit. Kerr seldom passed up an opportunity to use humor, and he constantly reminded his constituents of his humble birth.

Kerr's use of ethical proof in his Oklahoma communications reinforced his favorable image as the developer of Oklahoma and a man of the people.

CHAPTER V

ETHICAL PROOF IN WASHINGTON COMMUNICATIONS

Audience

Introduction

"The most exclusive club in the world," the United States Senate, just as any other group of human beings, has its unwritten rules of the game, its norms of conduct, its approved manner of behavior. Some things are just not done, and others are a must. As one of the Senate's more influencial members claimed, "There is great pressure for conformity in the Senate. It's just like living in a small town."[1]

William White colorfully described appropriate Senate conduct for the newly elected in the following analogy:

> When one unexpectedly needs a room in a good, and crowded, hotel in New York like the Pierre, which is not so very long on tradition, his best course is to approach the clerk in masterful determination, allowing no other assumption at all than that he will be accommodated. When such a need arises in a traditional hotel abroad, say

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[1]As cited in Donald R. Matthews, U. S. Senators and Their World (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), p. 92.

> Brown's in London, the wiser attitude is precisely the reverse. . . .
>
> When one enters the House of Representatives . . . the sound attitude is not simply to put the best foot forward, but to stamp it for emphasis—in front of photographers if any are present, and if official superiors are not. But when one enters the Senate he comes into a different place altogether. The long custom of the place impels him, if he is at all wise, to walk with a soft foot and to speak with a soft voice, and infrequently.[2]

The freshman senator quickly learns his place in the club. He is expected to serve a proper apprenticeship, "not to take the lead in floor fights, to listen and to learn."[3] One freshman senator exclaimed, "Like children, we should be seen and not heard."[4]

What are the standards to which the senators are expected to conform? What, specifically, do these unwritten rules of behavior say? Why do they exist? What influences a senator? To understand why senators behave the way they do, these questions must first be answered.

Pressures on Senators

Members of Congress, like people in other decision-making roles, operate in a more or less uncertain world. Senators are confronted almost daily with the necessity of making choices on a wide range of issues and problems.

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[2]William S. White, Citadel: The Story of the U. S. Senate (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1956), pp. 81-82.

[3]Matthews, p. 93.

[4]As cited in ibid.

Their decisions affect the lives of millions, and these millions, so it must appear to the senator, make their personal opinions known. In short, the senator should expect pressures from every point. William White writes:

> A Senator of the United States is an ambulant converging point for pressures and counter-pressures of high, medium and low purposes. The variety and complexity and severity of these pressures will largely be determined by the economic nature, the size and degree of homogeneity of his state. The one absolutely common factor of the business is that no member of the Senate, however well favored by circumstance, can wholly escape them and that they seem to grow and to rise in intensity with the passage of time.[5]

Lewis A. Froman, Jr. further substantiates this point:

> Pressures come in from multiple directions. Given the fact that the consequences of a law are likely to be different for different people, we would expect, on any given bill before Congress, that some people will be opposed to it, some will favor it, some will feel it does not go far enough, others will feel it goes too far, still others will want qualifying amendments, etc.[6]

Although it may sometimes appear that these pressures come from an infinite number of directions, they may be conveniently summarized in terms of five types: constituency, party, institutional, executive, and personal.

Constituency Pressures

Most senators like their jobs and wish to remain

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[5]White, Citadel: The Story of the U. S. Senate, pp. 135-136.

[6]Lewis A. Froman, Jr., Congressmen and Their Constituencies (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1963), p. 4.

in office. The spectre of the next election is constantly before them, and most senators operate on the assumption that it is dangerous to alienate constituents back home. Alienation of constituents has, more than once, cost a senator his office. Hence, senators are likely to pay relatively close attention to constituency opinion. Froman testifies, "In the long run, perhaps the most important pressures on congressmen are constituency pressures."[7] Defeat at the polls, the possible cost of ignoring the constituency, is generally more severe than the cost of ignoring party, executive, or institutional pressures, at least for most senators in most situations.

Constituency pressures include written and personal contacts from the senator's state, as well as communications from spokesmen for interest groups that are based or have affiliates within the senator's state. Senators, however, are not always able to determine the magnitude of constituency pressures. Often he will receive thousands of post cards and letters obviously written by a few individuals or members of a single group. Some of these campaigns are easy to detect, while others are not. In such a case, and in the absence of any direct pressure, the senator must be prepared to rely on his perceptions of his constituency's desires.

> Congressmen are themselves members of their constituencies, have probably lived there a

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[7] Ibid., p. 7.

> long time, and develop a "feel" for how the people within the constituency are likely to react on given issues. In the absence of contrary evidence, and because a congressman does operate in such an uncertain environment . . . he must often rely on . . . [his] feelings.[8]

In short, whether the constituency pressures are direct, indirect, or absent, the senator must always consider the needs and desires of those who placed him in office.

Party Pressures

The action a senator takes on a particular issue is also affected by his political party's stand on the issue. Many of these party positions are ambiguous and give the senator great leeway. National party platforms are usually so ambiguous that a senator can claim he is supporting the national organization by voting on either side of the issue. Nevertheless, on some issues, such as social welfare programs, the parties do take stands which may serve as constraints on congressmen's behavior.

Should the party and constituency pressures be in opposition, however, the senator is most likely to respect the wishes of his constituents. Froman explains:

> Other important considerations affecting the influence of constituency factors are the highly decentralized character of our political party system nationally and the fact that most congressmen receive little help from the national party in their bids for election and re-election. This means that party members in Congress are relatively independent from the national party both financially

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[8] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

> and organizationally and are dependent, to a much more significant extent, on their own local district organization and financial contributors. In fact, re-election in their home constituency may depend upon a certain degree of independence from policy planks in the national platform.[9]

In short, while the national party is important, party pressures are generally not as strong as constituency pressures.

Executive Pressures

Executive pressures involve a great number of factors including service by executive agencies to the congressman's constituents, provision of information to the congressman, promises of aid, and cooperation. Executive pressures are far less important to the senator (in most cases) than constituency or party pressures, but nevertheless they exist and to some extent govern the way a senator votes.

Personal Pressures

Personal pressures are, generally, the least important of all pressures. These personal factors include a congressman's own values, convictions, preferences, attitudes, and beliefs. However, the senator's personal feelings are, more than likely, the feelings of his constituency. When this is the case, the senator's personal beliefs coupled with constituency pressures increase the intensity of his stand on an individual issue.

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[9] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

Institutional Pressures

Institutional pressures come from a variety of sources. A senator's colleagues, friends, committee chairmen, and others may attempt, in various ways, to help the congressman make up his mind on a particular legislative matter. These pressures can range all the way from friendly discussion to promises of help or veiled threats of withdrawing favors.[10]

Summary

A study of the pressures placed on senators yields three important conclusions. First, all pressures (party, constituency, institutional, executive, and personal) are interrelated. Froman points out:

> Many . . . pressures are quite closely interwoven. For example, members of the same party are more likely to be in contact with one another than members of opposite parties. In this case, institutional factors serve to reinforce party differences. Executive pressure is likely to be put more strongly on members of Congress of the President's party than on other members. Constituency pressures and party pressures are very often likely to be congruent.[11]

Second, the amount of pressure put on a senator in regard to a piece of legislation depends upon the importance of the legislation. The more important the bill, the more pressure is brought to bear by different groups. Third,

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[10] Ibid., p. 5.

[11] Ibid.

and perhaps most important, is the strength of the constituency pressures. As indicated, the congressman owes his term in office to the constituency he represents. If he has ambition to retain the office, this group must not be ignored.

In short, the senator is not a free agent, acting on his own will. Many people are interested in his vote and attempt to persuade him to their position. An understanding of the pressure groups sheds light on the behavior of senators.

Need for National Interest

While pressure groups are attempting to influence the vote of a senator he must be ever mindful of the title he holds—United States Senator. Implicit within this title is the assumption that a senator reacts first to legislation because of its impact on the entire country rather than on any special group. Therefore, a senator's first obligation is to the welfare of the country and second to a particular state or group. Oftentimes, what is best for one group may not be best for the nation. The senator is expected by his colleagues to support legislation beneficial to the welfare of the country.

> Congressmen must wear two somewhat different sets of lenses in viewing their responsibilities. They have to look to their states or districts, since they have the duty of representing the people back home. But they have also to look to the nation and its needs, which are not

> always identical with the sum of the needs of the separate states and districts.[12]

The task of a senator is far from easy when these two responsibilities are on opposite poles. The state expects the senator to serve its best interests while other senators expect him to respect the best interests of the country. Indeed, when such an occasion arises, a senator may find himself teetering on a tightrope, afraid to move toward either end. He can afford to alienate neither group as one is responsible for his election, and he must depend on the other to support legislation desired by his constituents.

Senate Structure

Another important factor in understanding the behavior of a senator is knowledge of the structure of the Senate. Three to four thousand different bills and resolutions are introduced in Congress every session, and of these fifteen hundred may reach the floor for debate and a vote.[13] In addition, these bills and resolutions "vary from specific, local matters (such as relief for individual persons) to matters of great national and international importance (such as an education bill or foreign aid.) There are also amendments to be considered

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[12]Joseph S. Clark, Congress: The Sapless Branch (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1964), p. 79.

[13]Froman, Jr., p. 3.

to many of these bills and votes to be taken on the amendments."[14] In addition, the senator has other responsibilities—committee work, activities for constituents, and personal affairs. These circumstances make it impossible for the congressman to be knowledgeable on all matters brought before Congress.

Specialization

The accepted answer to the extensive interests of Congress is specialization.

> According to the folkways of the Senate, a senator should not try to know something about every bill that comes before the chamber nor try to be active on a wide variety of measures. Rather, he ought to specialize, to focus his energy and attention on the relatively few matters that come before his committees or that directly or indirectly affect his state. "When you come to the Senate," one administrative assistant said, "you have to decide which street corner you are going to fight on."[15]

At least three considerations enter into the senator's choice of speciality. One of these is his personal background. A senator is likely to want to focus his attention on an area in which he has previous experience, knowledge, and interest. Second, and perhaps the most important factor, is the congressman's perceptions of the interests of his constituents. He generally wishes to be involved

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Matthews, p. 95.

in an area which is of particular interest to his own state. Finally, the area of policy in which a senator specializes depends upon his committee assignments.[16]

Importance of Committees

Because of the large number of bills introduced during each congressional session, a means had to be devised for determining which measures would receive the serious consideration of the Chamber. The committee system answers this problem. "Most bills introduced in Congress die at the committee stage. They are either tabled or ignored."[17] The importance of the committees is easily seen. Evins testifies:

> The committees are among the most influential factors in determining the decisions both of individual members and of the entire Chamber. Their influence is increased in that the debate on the floor is controlled by the committee having jurisdiction over the legislation at issue. Therefore, committee members are in the best position to present a strong case for its version of the bill, and have at hand the best collection of relevant facts on the issue. So it is that when a committee reports a bill with sizable majority—and particularly if it has some bipartisan support—there is a considerable disposition on the part of non-committee members to follow the lead of the committee.[18]

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[16] Ibid., p. 250.

[17] Norman C. Thomas and Karl A. Lamb, Congress: Politics and Practice (New York: Random House, 1964), pp. 104-105.

[18] Joe L. Evins, Understanding Congress (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1963), p. 200.

"Backscratching"

The scope and volume of legislation makes it impossible for a single senator to be knowledgeable on each bill and gives rise to the need for specialization and the committee system. The power of individual committees, in turn, gives rise to the need for cooperation among senators who are not experts on legislation brought before the Chamber. This cooperation is often referred to as "backscratching." The concept is explained by Matthews.

> Every Senator, at one time or another, is in a position to help out a colleague. The folkways of the Senate hold that a Senator should provide this assistance and that he be repaid in kind. The most important aspect of this pattern of reciprocity is, no doubt, the trading of votes.[19]

Occasionally, the exchange of voting favors is done quite openly in the course of public debate. The following exchange, for example, took place during the 1956 debate on acreage allotments for burley tobacco.

> Mr. Langer [North Dakota]. We don't raise any tobacco in North Dakota, but we are interested in the tobacco situation in Kentucky, and I hope the Senator will support us in securing assistance for wheat growers in our state.
> Mr. Clements [Kentucky]. I think the Senator will find that my support will be 100 percent.
> Mr. Barkley [Kentucky]. Mr. President, will my colleague from Kentucky yield?
> Mr. Clements. I yield.
> Mr. Barkley. The colloquy just had confirms and justifies the Woodrow Wilsonian doctrine of open covenants openly arrived at.[20]

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[19]Matthews, p. 99.

[20]As cited in ibid., pp. 99-100.

Usually, however, this kind of bargain is either made by implication or in private.

Senator Douglas of Illinois, who tried unsuccessfully to combat the bargaining and "backscratching" system, has analyzed the way in which a public works appropriation bill is passed:

> This bill is built up out of a whole system of mutual accommodations in which the favors are widely distributed, with the implicit promise that no one will kick over the applecart; that if Senators do not object to the bill as a whole, they will "get theirs." It is a process, if I may use an inelegant expression, of mutual backscratching and mutual logrolling.
>
> Any member who tries to buck the system is only confronted with an impossible amount of work in trying to ascertain the relative merits of a given project; and any member who does ascertain them, and who feels convinced that he is correct, is unable to get an individual project turned down because the Senators from the state in which the project is located, and thus is benefiting, naturally will oppose any objection to the project; and the other members of the Senate will feel that they must support the Senators in question, because if they do not do so, similar appropriations for their own states at some time likely will be called into question.[21]

Supporting Douglas' conclusion is a statement often made by the late Speaker Rayburn. "If you want to get along, go along."[22] Evins adequately summarized the "backscratching" concept. He says, "The member of Congress who wants to be effective, on behalf of his constituency, must be . . .

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[21]As cited in Congressional Record (Daily Edition), June 13, 1956, p. 9153.

[22]As cited in Evins, pp. 186-187.

willing to recognize and support the ideas of others if he expects recognition and support for his own ideas and projects."[23]

In summary, the pressures placed on senators and the structure of the Senate are directly related. If the individual senator expects to satisfy the most important pressure group, his constituents, he must cooperate with his colleagues in order to provide legislation desirable to his state. As a member of one particular committee he finds himself in a position to extend aid to another senator who will in turn reciprocate and support legislation he has advanced.

"Pork" Legislation

Each individual senator is interested in achieving legislation beneficial to his own particular constituency. Such legislation is generally referred to as "pork-barrel" projects. Bailey and Samuel point out, "More and more in recent years Congress has been criticized for its pork-barrel activities."[24]

Webster's Dictionary defines "pork" as "money, position or favors obtained from the government as a result of political patronage."[25] More specifically, claim

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Stephen K. Bailey and Howard D. Samuel, Congress at Work (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1952), p. 166.

[25] As cited in ibid.

Bailey and Samuel, the term "usually is an uncomplimentary description of Congressional activities in the field of public works, especially in the use and conservation of water resources."[26] The most comprehensive and expensive vehicle for "pork" legislation is "the annual rivers and harbors and flood control bill."[27]

Perhaps what the "pork-barrel" critics object to most strenuously is the fact that in planning public works, Congress (which is a national legislature) approves expenditure of federal funds. These funds are obtained, mostly in the form of taxes, from the population of the entire nation for local projects of local benefit. Bailey and Samuel support this criticism.

> One river may course through a large section of the country, and its waters might affect the lives of millions of people. Furthermore, the great streams that have helped make this nation prosperous are interconnected with other streams, the whole forming a river system. Such a system—the Missouri, the Columbia, and several others—is capable of enriching the economy of half a dozen or more states. Congress, however, seldom treats these systems as such. One omnibus bill may contain fifteen projects on the Missouri River, from St. Louis, Missouri, to Helena, Montana, but each project is an entity, of benefit to one small community or agricultural area. Only by treating the Mississippi River Valley as one system, say the critics, can the river be forced to yield its potentially vast benefits for the entire area. And such treatment requires intensive and comprehensive planning.[28]

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[26]Bailey and Samuel, p. 166.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

Under the surface, however, runs an even deeper reason for Senate opposition to comprehensive government planning in this field. Many senators are pleased with the present procedure because it offers a relatively easy way of distributing favorable "pork" legislation to constituents, for which they may register their appreciation at the next election. "Once the distribution of projects is left to a centralized government agency, the wriggling of an individual Congressman would be lost in the coils of executive decision."[29]

In short, many senators feel it necessary to provide "pork" legislation for their constituents. Planning by a centralized government agency would impede their efforts. Under the present system, one senator will gain his colleagues' support for his "pork" legislation if he is willing to support their legislation. Should a particular senator choose not to support his colleagues' legislation, pressure will be placed on him. As William White explains it, "While the pressures <u>on</u> Senators are well known and have certain modified effects, . . . the pressures <u>from</u> Senators are in fact more intensive, more effective and far less recognized by the public for what they are."[30]

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[29]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 167.

[30]White, <u>Citadel: The Story of the U. S. Senate</u>, pp. 153-154.

Courtesy

Finally, the folkways of the Senate dictate that senators be courteous to one another. This professional courtesy is expressed in the manner by which senators recognize one another. Senators are expected to address one another not by name but by title. "Earle C. Clements does not disagree with Irving M. Ives, but rather the Senior Senator from Kentucky disagrees with the Senior Senator from New York."[31] The need for courtesy is explained by Matthews.

> The Senate of the United States exists to solve problems, to grapple with conflicts. Sooner or later, the hot, emotion-laden issues of our time come before it. Senators as a group are ambitious and egocentric men, chosen through an electoral battle in which talent for invective, righteous indignation, "mud-slinging," and "engaging in personalities" are often assets. Under these circumstances, one might reasonably expect a great deal of manifest conflict and competition in the Senate. Such conflict does exist, but its sharp edges are blunted by the felt need—expressed in the Senate folkways—for courtesy.[32]

Summary

As we have seen, a number of things affect the behavior of senators. Pressures placed on senators, the expectation that their interest will be for the national well being, the structure of the Senate, and the tradition

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[31] Matthews, p. 97.

[32] Ibid.

of courtesy are all interrelated. The senator is expected to be concerned first with the welfare of the nation rather than his individual state. However, constituency pressures may become so strong that a senator may believe he must achieve "pork" legislation for his state. Passage of such legislation depends upon support ("backscratching") from his colleagues. Their support obligates him to support their legislation. The volume of legislation considered by the Senate makes the committee system necessary and forces senators to specialize. Inevitably, some committees will be more important than others. The Public Works Committee is, consequently, of particular interest to senators committed to obtaining "pork" legislation for their state. Finally, courtesy is expected among senators in order to preserve order and personal relationships.

All of these factors contribute to the behavior of the senator. Indeed, he is not a free agent acting on legislation because of his personal beliefs. He is forced to play the game by rules long established or suffer the consequences.

> The safest way to obtain . . . respect is to conform to the folkways, to become a "real Senate man." Those who do not run a serious risk. In the Senate, if you don't conform, you don't get many favors for your state. You are never told that, but you soon learn.[33]

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[33] Ibid., p. 114.

Ethical Proof

In Chapter III Kerr's Washington image was described as that of "pork barreler," debater who relied strongly on invective and sarcasm, and as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate" because of his position on important committees and his personal traits. In some respects this image contrasts rather sharply with the Senator's role as it was described in the first half of this chapter. Kerr, for example, frequently appeared not to place the national well being before that of his home state. In addition, he often left something to be desired in the areas of courtesy and mutual accommodation.

The purpose of this section is to examine Kerr's use of ethical proof in his communications before the Senate. The remainder of this chapter will attempt to answer the question: How did Kerr reinforce or alter his Washington image in his speeches before Congress?

Acting in Best Interests of the Country

Perhaps because his colleagues labeled him a "pork barreler," Kerr found it necessary to justify legislation he introduced from the standpoint of national benefits. Ethical proof which reflects Kerr acting in the best interest of the country can be divided into two areas: (1) the future needs of the country and (2) economic benefits to the nation.

The Future Needs of the Country

In presenting a 1961 committee study report of water resource development, Kerr said, "This report today is concerned with general recommendations as to how we can best meet our water needs for farm, home, and factory in an expanding economy as we move into 1980 and the end of the century."[34] General statements such as the above example were frequently used to introduce a speech or report made in the Senate. Kerr did not, however, stop with these generalizations. In a floor debate on the Rivers and Harbor Flood Control Act of 1957 he pointed out:

> In 1850 the per capita consumption of water in the United States was about 50 gallons a person. In 1950 it had increased to the point where it exceeded 1,000 gallons per capita every day.
>
> In the development of our industrial economy, in the environment of the improved methods of agricultural production, there can be little question that in the next 35 or 40 years the amount of water required, on a per capita basis, will be double the present requirement.
>
> When we realize that the population of our country, on the basis of the present rate of increase, will very likely double in that same period of time, we are confronted with the realization that the necessity of the population for water could well be four times the amount required today.[35]

Kerr used a similar form of argument in a debate concerning amendments to the Tennessee Valley Authority.

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[34]U. S., Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 1st Session, 1961, CVII, part 2, 1412. (Later cited as Record.)

[35]Record, 85th Cong., 1st Session, 1957, CIII, part 4, 4535-36.

> Every member of the Senate is aware of the fact that the demand for electric power has been growing by leaps and bounds. The annual consumption in 1956 was approximately 16 times as much as it was in 1920. The annual consumption during the past few weeks or months has been at the highest rate in history, and is running from 8 to 10 percent above that of a year ago. . . .
>
> Industrial engineers tell us it is fully expected that within the next 35 years the consumption of electric energy in the United States will be 16 times what it is today.[36]

In short, Kerr was fond of using comparisons of past needs with present and future needs. These comparisons indicated that national progress was dependent upon the legislation he was supporting.

Senators attacked a 1959 Lake Michigan Water Diversion Bill on the grounds that the legislation was designed to benefit only a specific state. Kerr's reply attempted to provide a national justification for the bill.

> Mr. President, I was about to say, H.R. 1 is a bill to provide additional diversion of water from Lake Michigan into the Illinois Waterway, and to provide a study to determine the effect of such diversion upon the navigation of the Great Lakes, of the Illinois Waterway, and other waterways connecting with the Great Lakes, and also upon the problem of sanitation in the Chicago Sanitary District.
>
> The bill pertains to the waters of the United States of America, the navigation of those waters, commerce by transportation on those waters, and sanitary conditions in connection with the use of those waters. Therefore, it is very appropriately before the Senate.[37]

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[36] Record, 85th Cong., 1st Session, 1957, CII, part 10, 14073-74.

[37] Record, 86th Cong., 1st Session, 1959, CV, part 13, 17006.

Thus, Kerr pointed specifically to several states that would benefit from the passage of the bill and inferred that the entire country would be affected.

Kerr also liked to equate the security of the nation to legislation he supported. In a 1961 report on water resource development, Kerr said:

> In the words of my favorite phrase, the "land wood and water" are the basic elements of economic strength, and these elements must be diligently conserved and wisely used if we are to maintain our security and reinforce our world position. President Kennedy has said we must negotiate with the Russians from a position of strength, and this report verifies the fact that the basic foundation of our enduring strength consists of our natural resources.[38]

In concluding the report, Kerr's plea for Senate approval continued to play upon the theme of national security. "Mr. President, our committee closes shop tomorrow. Its job is done. But we hope that its recommendations will bring bold and vigorous response. This alone can produce a stronger, sounder, safer, and enduring America."[39]

Economic Benefits to the Nation

Public works legislation is generally very expensive. In addition, this legislation, although usually designed to benefit only a specific locale, is financed by national

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[38]Record, 87th Cong., 1st Session, 1961, CVII, part 2, 1412.

[39]Ibid.

taxes. Kerr would frequently point out that public works legislation was self-supporting and, in the long run, would be economically beneficial to the nation. In his opening argument against an amendment to an Interior Department appropriations bill that would eliminate the continuing fund for the Southwestern Power Administration, Kerr said:

> The continuing fund involves no cost to the Federal Government, Mr. President. It does not cost the taxpayers one penny. In fact, it is an instrumentality whereby the taxpayers save money, whereby revenue is created for the Treasury of the United States.[40]

Later in the speech, Kerr became more specific, presenting evidence to establish his claim.

> The fact further is that for every bit of power it buys for a dollar, it will get back more than two dollars, for the reason that the arrangement enables it to sell all the power generated at the dams in our area at a very favorable price to the Government, but when furnished to the REA it sells to them at a very low price, because it is enabled to move every bit of power generated at the public power projects into the rural electrical cooperatives and the municipalities at a rate which saves them great amounts of money. At the same time it brings the Government twice as much money as it would get for the power without such an arrangement.[41]

Early in his Senate career, Kerr spoke for an Interior Department appropriation bill for the Southwestern Power Administration. The only argument in the speech was one which he would use frequently in the following decade. Summarizing his position on the bill, Kerr

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[40] Record, 82nd Cong., 1st Session, 1951, XCVII, part 6, 7786.

[41] Ibid., 7788.

maintained national wealth and security would be increased with the passage of the legislation.

> As I was about to say, in considering the fiscal policies of the Government it is well to know that dollars and cents are not the only standard of national wealth. It has been said that a nation loaded with money, but whose resources are dissipated, is a poor nation; but that a nation whose resources are conserved and developed, a nation whose people are trained in heart and hand and mind, is a wealthy nation, though her financial resources alone may be limited. I do not consider that the United States of America is short in any of these regards. I say that programs having to do with the development of the economic resources of the Nation, the conservation and building of the soil, the conservation and use of water, the development of an industrial structure, the development of the people of the Nation to a point where they know how to get the most out of these resources—these things make for a wealthy nation, indeed.[42]

Kerr's Senate speeches abound with such examples. The "Pork Barreler" from Oklahoma found it necessary to demonstrate that the legislation he supported was indeed acting in the best interests of the country.

Demanding Respect and Attention

Kerr demanded the respect and attention due him in his role as "Uncrowned King of the Senate." He articulated these demands as a debater skilled in the arts of invective and sarcasm and as an expert on the subjects with which he dealt.

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[42] Record, 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 11449.

Displaying Expertness

Frequently, Kerr's speeches contained statements such as, "As I sat in the committee, week after week, listening to the testimony in this controversy . . .,"[43] "Mr. President, I have studied the Texas Light and Power Contract,"[44] and "The Senator from Oklahoma probably heard more of the evidence on the proposed legislation than did any other member of the committee,"[45] which established his authority on the issues.

Through statements concerning his personal authority on a particular issue, Kerr would indirectly argue that because he had heard the arguments of both sides, and since his position reflected conscious effort and fair judgment, his colleagues should accept his judgment.

> It was my privilege to be a member of that committee during the many months it considered Senate Bill 75. I personally attended the hearings of the committee for many weeks, during which time representatives of some of the great States of the Union presented their views with respect to the proposed project, and made their arguments upon it.[46]

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[43] Record, 81st Cong. 2nd Session, 1950, XCVI, part 2, 2047.

[44] Record, 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 11453.

[45] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19124.

[46] Record, 81st Cong., 2nd Session, 1950, XCVI, part 2, 2046.

On other occasions, Kerr would demonstrate his authority on the legislation at hand by demonstrating previous activity in the same area.

> It was my privilege, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors of the Committee on Public Works, to fashion the legislation permitting the great state of New York, through its power authority, to build the Niagara hydroelectric generation project, now under construction. It was my privilege to sit for weeks in hearings and in the work of the committee in fashioning that legislation in order that the inherent right of the people of New York and adjacent areas to the benefit and development of the potentiality of that great hydroelectric power project might become a reality.[47]

In the speech from which the above example was taken, Kerr was arguing for a bill concerning water diversion from Lake Michigan. By reviewing his work on similar legislation, Kerr attempted to establish his authority on the matter at hand.

At other times, Kerr would use a reference to his personal experience to establish his authority on an issue. "Mr. President, although I have been familiar for a long time with the damage done by floods, although on many occasions I have seen the terrible havoc which floods have wrought. . . ."[48] Another example is found in his 1957 speech on "Oklahoma's Worst Flood." "I have

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[47] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19125.

[48] Record, 82nd Cong., 1st Session, 1951, XCVII, part 8, 10026.

just returned from Oklahoma, where I spent a good part of the last three days in flying over those areas of Oklahoma which are suffering disaster from floods."[49]

Kerr was fond of quoting statistics, without using notes, to demonstrate his expertness on legislation he supported. In a 1951 debate on a public works project for his state, Kerr said:

> I have seen 800,000 cubic feet of water a second filling the channel of the Arkansas and flowing over into the adjacent areas for miles on both sides, at the point where the Arkansas leaves the State of Oklahoma, flowing into its valley in the neighboring state of Arkansas to the east. Of that 800,000 cubic feet a second—33 and one third percent more than the total volume of water emptied by the Missouri into the Mississippi in the recent flood—224,000 cubic feet a second, or more than 25 percent, was contributed to the Arkansas River's total volume by the Verdigris River.
>
> So, Mr. President, as we think about the necessity of the Oolegah Reservoir, we are not limited in our thinking to the rich bottomland immediately below the reservior or dam site, marvelous and valuable as it is; we are not thinking about the 100,000 acres alone in that river bottom, below the dam site and before the river empties into the Arkansas; but the control of the Verdigris is vital to the control of the Arkansas. The volume of water which the Verdigris contributed twice in 1 year, 1943, to two terrible floods of the Arkansas was greater than one-third of the total volume which the Missouri carried in the recent terrible flood. Therefore, it cannot be urged seriously that the river bottom of the Verdigris itself is the only thing involved in this flood-control project. It is one of the key projects to the whole development and flood control of the Arkansas River.[50]

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[49] Record, 85th Cong., 1st Session, 1957, CIII, part 6, 7229.

[50] Record, 82nd Cong., 1st Session, 1951, XCVII, part 8, 10026.

On another occasion, Kerr, on the Senate floor compared the testimony before the committee with the committee recommendations.

> If Senators will read the hearings held before the Senate committee, they will find this amazing and astonishing fact: The action of the committee conforms absolutely to the recommendations made by representatives of the electric utility companies, operating in the area of the Southwestern Power Administration.
>
> Mr. Langston Ashford, representing Arkansas-Missouri Power Co., at page 1422, Senate subcommittee hearings on the Interior Department appropriation bill for 1950, said:
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> "The particular appropriation which we oppose is one for $3,169,000 to build a 154 kilowatt line from Norfork Dam to Essex, Mo."
>
> At page 1424 of the same volume, Mr. Byron, vice president of the Missouri Utilities Co., stated:
>
> "My purpose is to oppose this line from Norfork to Essex just covered by Mr. Ashford, which comes into our territory in southeastern Missouri."
>
> The committee followed these recommendations by striking that item from the bill.
>
> Pages 1578 and 1579 of the same volume show two lists of projects submitted by Mr. Hamilton Moses, president of Arkansas Power & Light Co., One list describes "Projects of Southwestern Power Administration which should not be built with public funds." The other begins: "Projects not objected to by companies in the Southwest."
>
> With but few minor variations, the Senate committee followed all the suggestions contained in these two tables. Almost without exception, the items which Mr. Moses says "should not be built" are stricken. The ones "not objected to by the Southwest companies" are permitted to remain in the bill.
>
> On page 1408 of the same volume Mr. Walter B. Gesell, vice president of the Oklahoma Gas & Electric Co., said:
>
> "Operation and maintenance, marketing and administrative expenses do not need the $525,000 requested—$350,000 is probably more than adequate in the fiscal year 1950."

> The amount allowed by the Senate committee is $330,000.[51]

Thus, Kerr demonstrated his knowledge of the committee hearings by pointing to apparent collusion between the committee and the public utility companies.

Kerr would rely on his personal authority as an argument to pass or defeat a bill. At times, this would be the only proof offered by the Oklahoma Senator. In one statement before the Senate, Kerr said: "Mr. President, in my judgment, S. 856 would provide an efficient and practical means of carrying forward a much needed program in the Delaware River Basin."[52] On another occasion, Kerr rose to make this single statement: "In my judgment, the real opposition to the bill comes from a group of private utilities which want this project to be available to them for their development."[53]

Using Invective and Sarcasm

Although Kerr, without question, was well informed concerning those matters on which he spoke, he frequently enhanced his image as an expert even more by disparaging, through invective and sarcasm, the knowledge of those who opposed him.

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[51] Record 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 11451.

[52] Record, 87th Cong., 1st Session, 1961, CVII, part 15, 19681.

[53] Record, 84th Cong., 2nd Session, 1956, CII, part 6, 8220.

In the Lake Michigan Water Diversion debates, Kerr quoted a treaty in support of his argument. Senator Wiley asked Kerr if he had not left out one very important clause of the treaty. Replied Kerr:

> I wish to say to my good friend—I am sure to his great surprise—that there are fourteen articles to the treaty, and a resolution of the United States, which became a part of it. So the Senator knows that the Senator from Oklahoma knows he has not read all the treaty. I am surprised that the Senator from Wisconsin did not know that. If he had been remotely familiar with this treaty he would have known that I had not read five percent of it. However, what I read, I have read accurately.[54]

On another occasion concerning the same question, Senator Proxmire asked:

> I notice on page 355 of the hearings a map which I presume is the basis for the findings of the determination of the committee to submit this part of the amendment. I wonder if this is the authority or the basis, in part at least, for this language in the amendment.

Replied Kerr, "The Senator from Wisconsin, if he read the hearings, would be aware of the fact that the map was a part of the evidence offered by those who said this area of the lake should be studied."[55]

During the controversy concerning the Wichita Wildlife Refuge, Senator Neuberger asked, "When the range of artillery becomes greater than that which the Senator

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[54] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19462.

[55] Record, 86th Cong., 1st Session, 1959, CV, part 13, 17135.

has described, will the Department of Defense take from the wildlife refuge another 10,700 acres?" Kerr's reply went like this:

> That illustrates the lack of information my friend has about the location and terrain of this fish and wildlife refuge. If weapons with a greater range should be developed, the area used would be farther to the west. It would not involve a greater area where fish and wildlife are found, because the fish and wildlife area goes roughly north. If a greater range is required, it will be to the west. That would not involve an area adapted to a fish and wildlife reserve. I am happy to give that comforting information to my friend.[56]

Those who disagreed with Kerr on legislation he supported could expect to be challenged on their knowledge of the legislation. During the Lake Michigan Water Diversion debates Kerr made the following statement about those senators speaking against the bill.

> Mr. President, there has been considerable debate this evening about a treaty between the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada. In my opinion, the debate has been engaged in by men who are unfamiliar with the treaty. The distinguished Senator from Vermont (Mr. Aiken) talked about this measure as being a proposal for the diversion of Canadian waters. Nothing could be more inaccurate than that statement.
>
> The Senator from Vermont (Mr. Aiken) is here. I shall make a statement; and if it is in error, I should like to have him interrupt me and correct me. I make the statement that, in my judgment, the Senator from Vermont has not read the treaty to which he has referred.
>
> I make the statement, without much fear of contradiction, that the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. Wiley), who discussed this treaty at great length, has not read it.

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[56] Record, 84th Cong., 1st Session, 1955, CI, part 9, 11501.

> I make the statement, without much fear of contradiction, that the distinguished Senator from Ohio (Mr. Lausche) has not read it.[57]

Should a senator rise to defend himself against such accusations, Kerr would be ready with specific questions about the legislation. Senator Douglas, after being accused of ignorance on the Rivers and Harbors and Flood Control Act of 1957, claimed familiarity with the legislation. The following colloquy took place:

> Mr. Kerr: Did the Senator from Illinois attend any of the hearings on the pending bill?
> Mr. Douglas: No, I did not.
> Mr. Kerr: Has the Senator examined the reports of the Bureau of the Budget, of the Corps of Army Engineers or of other agencies of the Government with reference to individual projects in the bill?
> Mr. Douglas: There are some 182 projects, I believe. The bill was submitted to us on Monday. Since then we have been quite busy with the revenue bill. The Senator from Illinois has tried very hard to study the bill, and he has worked nights on it. He has not read all the projects. However, I have studied the hearings, and I may say that I hold in my hand a report from the Bureau of the Budget, in which I notice that----
> Mr. Kerr: Can the Senator tell me anything about the recommendations of the Bureau of the Budget without referring to its report?
> Mr. Douglas: Just a moment.
> Mr. Kerr: Can he?
> Mr. Douglas: I can answer the Senator's question much better if I refer to the report.
> Mr. Kerr: Can the Senator from Illinois tell the Senator from Oklahoma anything about any recommendation of the Bureau of the Budget contained in the report without looking at it now?

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[57] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 4, 19460.

Mr. Douglas: Yes. There is the Milwood Reservoir in Arkansas and Oklahoma involving $53 million. The Bureau of the Budget recommends that it should not be put into effect.

Mr. Kerr: What do they say as to their reasons, and what suggestions do they make? Can the Senator tell me, without referring to the report?

Mr. Douglas: I do not think the Senator from Oklahoma has the right to demand that I memorize the entire wording by heart. Can he quote the 39 articles?

Mr. Kerr: I am not demanding anything. I am requesting either that the Senator from Illinois manifest some knowledge of this matter or stand here branded with ignorance of it. That is what I am doing.[58]

Finally, Kerr would use sarcasm and invective as a warning to senators that if they did not support his legislation, they could expect little support from him in return.

> There have been times when the distinguished Senators from Illinois were looking elsewhere when Oklahoma needed their help. However, their State is entitled to the proposed legislation. This was the conclusion of the Committee on Public Works after extended hearings. That was the conclusion of the chairman of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors.[59]

In short, Kerr inferred that if the senators from Illinois failed to support future Oklahoma legislation, he would not continue to support legislation beneficial to their state.

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[58] Record, 85th Cong., 1st Session, 1957, CIII, part 4, 4606.

[59] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19125.

Once when a senator objected to Kerr asking a question—a common Senate courtesy—the Oklahoma Senator warned:

> It was a little unusual. I sat in my seat while the distinguished Senator from Michigan had the floor. I must say there was as near to a three-ringed circus going on on this floor as I have seen in my lifetime, and I have paid admissions to a few circuses, and I have been to the Dallas Fair twice. (laughter) No Senator objected to that informal discussion, because either a contribution was being made to the subject before the Senate or gratification on the part of Senators to be heard was being had by them.
>
> Yet when I asked unanimous consent to propound a question to the distinguished Senator from Ohio, the Senator from Vermont, who had been in violation of the Rules of the Senate this afternoon with impunity and without objection on my part, exercised his right and privilege, which he is certainly entitled to do, if he so desires, to become technical with the Senator from Oklahoma. It is interesting and illuminating with reference to the attitude of the Senator from Vermont.[60]

In summary, Kerr demanded the respect and attention due him as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate" by demonstrating vast knowledge of his subject and by raining sarcasm and invective down upon those who attempted to oppose him. He demonstrated his knowledge and interest in legislation by references to personal authority and experience. He exposed those who spoke against him as less knowledgeable than he on the legislation. His vehement and sarcastic attacks gave warning to other senators to respect his judgment upon legislation he introduced. To be sure, Kerr's

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[60] Ibid., 19461.

demands did not always meet the Senate folkways which call for courtesy and the avoidance of name-calling and attacks on personalities. Yet Kerr seemed able to violate these norms of Senate conduct and still remain accepted by his colleagues.

Promoting Good Will and Demonstrating Moral Character

Probably, Kerr found it necessary to soften the blow of his sarcasm and invective. Evidence abounds in Kerr's Senate speeches that points to his attempts to demonstrate moral character and promote good will among fellow senators.

Employing Humor

Kerr's use of humor in Senate speeches is extensive. He would frequently relate a humorous antedote to demonstrate his point. On one occasion he used the following story to demonstrate the promises of one in trouble (in this case the private utility companies), which, in the long run, are often not carried out.

> It reminds me somewhat of the story of Sandy when he was fishing and had with him his Scotch preacher. A storm came up and it looked pretty serious. Sandy said, "Preacher, I'll row if you'll pray, and we'll see if we can make out." So they started for the shore, each one doing his assigned job with all the energy he had. As it got darker Sandy said, "Preacher, pray a little harder. She's lookin' rougher." After a while Sandy thought he felt the front end of the boat touch the sand of the shore, and he immediately said, "Preacher, slow up on them

commitments. It looks like we're going to make it." (Laughter.)[61]

Similarly, on the question of the vigorous competition between the Southwestern Power Administration and private utility companies, Kerr used the following story:

> Oh, but Senators say they are no longer enemies, and perchance they are not. But I wish to say that their conversion is of very recent date and of very limited degree. I am reminded of the story of the hillbilly in the Ozarks, in the eastern part of our State or the western part of our great neighbor State. He came into the doctor's office one Saturday morning with a tall, gangling boy, and he said, "Doc, I wish that you would fix up my son-in-law."
>
> The doctor said, "What's the matter with him?"
>
> "Oh," he said, "I shot him in the leg yesterday and lamed him up a mite."
>
> The doctor said, "Why, shame on you, shooting your own son-in-law."
>
> "Aw, doc," he said, "he warn't my son-in-law till I shot him." (Laughter.)[62]

Kerr also used humor in spontaneous Senate situations. Once when McNamara said, "Incidentally, I wish to leave the Chamber to get something to eat," Kerr replied, "I think that is a very profound and fundamental statement, and gives a valid picture of a legitimate need on the part of my good friend. And I wish to say to him that inasmuch as I have already performed that little operation for myself, I can well understand his desire to do so. (Laughter.)"[63]

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[61] Record, 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 11452.

[62] Ibid., 12033.

[63] Record, 85th Cong., 2nd Session, 1958, CIV, part 15, 19460.

Another example of Kerr's spontaneous use of humor occurred in 1950 as demonstrated by this short statement:

> It was my pleasure to visit that fine State a little while ago, while I was Governor of Oklahoma. The distinguished Governor of California said to me, "What do you think of our State?" "Oh," I said, "it is a marvelous State, one of the greatest in the Nation." He said, "Why, you are really enthusiastic about it, aren't you?" I said, "I certainly am. I would not insult the intelligence of 150,000 Oklahomans who have deliberately chosen to move to California and to live here by arriving at any other conclusion." (Laughter.)[64]

Thus, through the use of humor, Kerr attempted to promote good will between himself and his audience.

Identifying With the Virtuous

By identifying with that which was virtuous, Kerr attempted to demonstrate good moral character. In a 1950 debate on the Colorado River Dam at Bridge Canyon Kerr claimed, "I became convinced that if this project were authorized, it would be the economic Magna Carta for a great State."[65] Similarly, in 1949, Kerr identified with the REA.

> Before the coming of REA less than 2 percent of those farms had electric power. Today in Oklahoma almost 73,000 of the 165,000 farms, or 44 percent, have electric service. Throughout the entire Southwest approximately 50 percent

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[64] Record, 81st Cong., 2nd Session, 1950, XCVI, part 2, 2047.

[65] Ibid.

> of the farms are presently being served, but Mr. President, there are 500,000 farm homes even now being denied the opportunity for electric lights, washing machines, refrigerators, and a multitude of other labor-saving devices.[66]

These examples are indicative of Kerr's attempts to identify with legislation he sponsored or supported which was beneficial to the public.

Throughout his Senate tenure, Kerr attempted to identify with the needs of the people. In a speech concerning the continuing fund for the Southwestern Power Administration, Kerr said:

> The Senate cannot escape its responsibility to see that facilities are available by which to deliver the power. Therefore, we must either give our representative equal bargaining position and power to negotiate for its delivery, or put him in such a position that the utilities will be the judge of whether or not a contract is to be made, and on what basis.[67]

In a later speech on the same topic, Kerr again appealed to the Senate's sense of social responsibility when he said:

> Shall we pass this legislation on the basis requested and urged by the people, or shall we submit to control by the private utilities of the public power policy of this Government?
>
> Shall we comply with the wishes of the people, or shall we conform to the desires of the electric utilities?
>
> Shall we accede to the petitions of the many, or yield to the demands of the few?

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[66] Record, 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 11453.

[67] Ibid., 12033.

> Shall we dedicate great projects built with public funds, which are largely self-liquidating, to the service of American citizens? Or shall we, in opposition to the people's desires, place these projects at the disposal of private interests for their financial profit?[68]

Kerr appealed to his colleagues' sense of fair play during the debates over the 1956 Flood Insurance Bill. He argued that the bill should also provide insurance for victims of tornado and cyclone damage. On one occasion he said, "I submit that in simple justice, the victims of tornadoes and cyclones are equally entitled to the protection provided by the bill for victims of flood damage or destruction."[69] In a 1953 debate concerning a conference report to cut appropriations for an Interior Department bill, he said, "If we adopt this conference report, Mr. President, Congress shall have betrayed the faith of the people."[70]

In the 1949 debate over the continuing fund, Kerr appealed to his colleagues' loyalty. He asked, "As between the two, which one is entitled to the confidence of Senators, the Administrator or the public utilities? Which one is accountable to us? The utilities are not, the Administrator is. Which one's failure would reflect

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[68] Ibid., 11454.

[69] Record, 84th Cong., 2nd Session, 1956, CII, part 6, 7935.

[70] Record, 83rd Cong., 1st Session, 1953, XCIX, part 8, 9944.

upon us?"[71] In essence, Kerr was saying that the Southwestern Power Administration was a creation of Congress, and a vote against the continuing fund would be a betrayal of loyalty.

In short, Kerr attempted to identify with the virtuous. His appeals were directed to social responsibility, fair play, justice, and loyalty. Such appeals usually enhance the moral character of the speaker.

Summary

Ethical proof in Kerr's Senate speeches reveal an effort both to reinforce and to alter his Washington image. Generally, Kerr attempted to alter the image of a "pork-barrel" Senator by demonstrating that he was acting in the best interests of the country. However, by demanding respect and attention from his colleagues through the display of expertness and the use of sarcasm and invective, Kerr reinforced his image as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate." Through the use of humor and by identifying with the virtuous, he attempted to promote good will and demonstrate moral character.

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[71] Record, 81st Cong., 1st Session, 1949, XCV, part 9, 12033.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was: (1) to examine the two dimensions of the image of Senator Robert S. Kerr, and (2) to analyze, with these facets of his image in mind, his communications for the presence of ethical proof. The method of accomplishing this purpose was to: (1) survey the concepts of ethos to determine those factors responsible for creating the speaker's image, (2) analyze Kerr's audiences to determine how he was perceived by them, and (3) examine Kerr's communications to discover ethical proof which reinforced or altered his image.

Concept of Image

Rhetoricians and politicians both recognize the importance of the speaker's image. Historical theory and contemporary research point to the significance of this "hidden persuader"[1] in our society.

The speaker's image is created by two equally important factors: (1) the audience's impression of the speaker before the rhetorical act, and (2) the impression

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[1]Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 85.

left with the audience as a result of the communication. The speaker who demonstrates intelligence, moral character, and good will supports his cause because he is perceived to be worthy of belief. Generally, a speaker is believed intelligent when he displays knowledge of the needs, interests, and beliefs of his audience, supports worthwhile and important proposals, speaks from authority based on personal experience, and uses common sense. A speaker is considered to be of good character when he shows sincerity, modesty, good taste, courage, and associates himself with that which is virtuous. A speaker reveals his good will when he identifies his wants with those of his audience, acts in the best interest of society, and demonstrates moderation, tact, loyalty, and fairness.

Audiences

The audience, most students of public speaking maintain, is the most important element in the rhetorical act. The speaker who ignores the beliefs, interests, needs, desires, or norms of conduct of his audience should not expect success. This is especially true when the orator violates the audience's expectations.

Oklahoma Audience

Oklahoma, a desert-like state with inadequate rainfall and frequent drouth, was one of the last states admitted to the Union. The sparsely settled state is ever

mindful of both its frontier heritage and its need for water. Stability of population has resulted in an increasingly large number of elderly persons, many below the national income level and others in poverty or on welfare and relief.

Non-manufacturing occupations predominate in the state with the farmer playing a significant role in politics. The influence of the frontier religion is still predominate in Oklahoma with the Fundamentalists being the largest religious group. The Baptists, more specifically, are by far the largest religious denomination in the state and are active on the Oklahoma political scene.

Washington Audience

United States Senators live in an uncertain world. They are expected to conform to the norms of the Senate but must be ever mindful of the expectations of their voting constituency. Pressures are placed on senators by their party, the Executive, the institutions to which they belong, and their constituents to support legislation. The most important of these pressures are those which come from the senator's constituency.

While receiving pressure from multiple directions, a senator is expected to view legislation from the standpoint of its necessity to the national welfare and security. When constituency pressures become strong,

however, a congressman may have to ignore the national interest and work for legislation beneficial to his own state.

To achieve "pork legislation" for his state, the senator must have the support of his colleagues. In turn, he is expected to support legislation beneficial to their states. The process of "backscratching" has long been a recognized feature of Congress.

The amount of legislation considered by Congress makes it impossible for a senator to be informed on each bill. This necessitates specialization and the committee system. Obviously, some committees will be more important than others, and the Public Works Committee is of special importance to those senators who are expected by their constituents to provide "pork legislation" for the state.

Finally, the Senate folkways demand courtesy among senators. The cooperation necessary to achieve legislation makes this unwritten rule necessary.

The Facets of Kerr's Image

Oklahoma Image

To Oklahomans, Robert Kerr was known as a "man of the people." One of the few politicians who could claim a log cabin birth, the poor boy of a frontier farmer had his education interrupted because of inadequate financial resources. As a young businessman, Kerr,

continuing to be plagued by economic problems, suffered business reversals that exceeded ten thousand dollars. With the discovery of oil in Oklahoma City, however, Kerr's luck changed and he began to compile his fortune just as the rest of the country was sinking into depression. Indeed, Kerr's life justifies Keltner and Harnack's claim that he was a "modern Horatio Alger."[2]

Religious beliefs and active interest in the Baptist Church also contributed to Kerr's image as a man of the people. His religious beliefs were formed early in his life, and for more than fifty years he supported his denomination with his money, effort, and time. He worked in his local church, in the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, and directed campaigns to raise money for religious institutions.

Kerr's use of wit and humor further contributed to this aspect of his image. His "Will Rogers' styled wit"[3] was in the true frontier spirit.

Robert Kerr was also known as the "developer of Oklahoma." His activities both as Governor of the State and as a United States Senator gave support to this facet of the Kerr image. His concern for developing Oklahoma

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[2]John W. Keltner and Victor R. Harnack, "Robert S. Kerr," in "Political Speaking in 1952: A Symposium," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 295.

[3]"Kerr Switches Sides to Push Trade Bill," Business Week, No. 1717 (July 28, 1962), p. 86.

was especially evident in his interest in soil and water conservation. In short, the legislation he supported and gained, both as Governor and Senator, formulated the Oklahoma dimension of his image.

Washington Image

The Washington aspect of Kerr's image was markedly different. He was known as a "pork barreler," a debater who relied heavily on invective and sarcasm, and as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate."

The Senator's political philosophy, which asked "What's in it for Oklahoma?," resulted in the label of "pork barreler." In addition, Kerr's colleagues charged him with having a conflict of interests as he introduced legislation beneficial to the oil companies.

Kerr's influence on Capitol Hill resulted in the title, "Uncrowned King of the Senate." It was primarily Kerr's membership on the Public Works Committee and chairmanship of Rivers and Harbors Subcommittee that gave him this rank. His technique of placing senators under obligation to him by supporting their "pet projects" in committee was an effective one as demonstrated by his influence on other senators.

Kerr's physical traits also added to his image and caused Sam Rayburn to describe him as "the kind of man who would charge Hell with a bucket of water. . . ."[4]

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[4]As cited in "Death of a Senator," Time, LXXXI (January 11, 1963), 23.

In short, Kerr not only had the power but the physical traits as well to fit his description of the "Uncrowned King of the Senate."

Kerr, the debater, was best known for his sarcasm and invective. Senators who crossed him knew what to expect. Extensive preparation and a mind for facts and figures enabled him to frustrate his opponent in periods of cross examination. If this procedure was ineffective, he would turn to invective and sarcasm. So effective was this method that Hatch exclaimed, "His repartee cut down Senate adversaries like a scythe."[5] Indeed, Kerr's mastery of invective and sarcasm must have resulted in senators "think[ing] twice before crossing Robert Kerr."[6]

Presence of Ethical Proof

Oklahoma Communications

In Oklahoma, Kerr's communications reflect an attempt to reinforce the impression of him held by his constituents. He constantly reminded Oklahomans that he was acting in their best interests. Usually, his press releases contained discussion of legislation he had supported or introduced with explanations of how it would benefit the

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[5]Katherine Hatch, "Appreciative City Goes all Out in Salute to Senator Kerr," Daily Oklahoman, June 11, 1962, p. 6.

[6]As cited in "Oklahoma's Kerr—The Man Who Really Runs the U. S. Senate," Newsweek, LX (August 6, 1962), 16.

state. He demonstrated that he was acting in the best interests of his constituents by asking for their help and suggestions and by inviting them to visit him at any time whether they had problems or not. Kerr's attempts to identify with his audience as an individual serving individuals and acting in their best interests are numerous, indicating that he made every effort to reinforce the Oklahoma aspect of his image as the "developer of Oklahoma."

Examination of Kerr's Oklahoma communications shows his attempt to reinforce his image as a "man of the people." Kerr's frequent references to the Bible, God, and prayer met the expectations of a large segment of his audience. In addition, he frequently reinforced this impression by displaying moral character through reasserting his opposition to alcohol and by demonstrating patience and restraint. He avoided attacking personalities, as he did in Washington, and used humor rather than sarcasm in identifying with the frontier spirit of his constituents. His plain language, informal style, and references to his early life provide additional evidence that Kerr reinforced the facet of his image as a "man of the people."

Washington Communications

Ethical proof in Kerr's Washington communications indicates that the Oklahoma Senator attempted to reinforce some aspects of his image while altering others. The image of "pork barreler" is obviously not an advantageous

one. To alter this dimension, Kerr frequently justified legislation he supported from the standpoint of its beneficial effect on the nation as a whole, rather than on one particular area or state. He discussed the future needs of the country and the economic benefits that could be derived from the legislation he advanced. These arguments represent an attempt to alter the "pork barrel" aspect of his image and conform to the expectations of his colleagues by demonstrating interest first in the welfare of the nation.

Kerr reinforced his dual aspect of his image as the "Uncrowned King of the Senate" and a debater by demanding his colleagues' respect and attention. Personal references to work he had done in committee and personal experiences in the area showed Kerr's expertness on the matter under question. He was especially fond of quoting statistics without referring to notes. In a different sense, Kerr demanded respect and attention by using sarcasm and invective. Through vehement attacks on his opponent's authority, Kerr not only indicated his own knowledge regarding the subject, but he also revealed his interest and conviction concerning the legislation under question.

Kerr's demands did not meet the Senate's folkways which called for courtesy and avoidance of name calling and attacks on personalities. He succeeded in violating these norms of conduct and still retained acceptance of colleagues, however, because of his position on important committees.

Kerr softened the blow of his invective and sarcasm by attempts to demonstrate moral character and promote good will among fellow senators. Kerr's use of humor in Senate speaking is indicative of his attempt to promote good will. Rarely did he pass up an opportunity to relate a humorous story or tell a joke.

By identifying with that which was virtuous, Kerr attempted to point out that he was of good moral character. Ethical appeals were directed to the needs of the people, social responsibility, fair play, justice, and loyalty, and present evidence of Kerr's attempt to alter his image as a sarcastic and powerful senator.

Comparing the Images

Even as the dimensions of Kerr's image in Oklahoma and Washington show similarities as well as differences, so too does his use of ethical proof in the different audience situations.

Those facets of Kerr's life, personality, and speaking that contributed to his image as the "developer of Oklahoma" also contributed to his image in Washington as a "pork barreler." Kerr's use of ethical proof in the different situations, however, reveals an attempt to reinforce the Oklahoma aspect of his image and alter the Washington dimension.

The Senator's image as a "man of the people" in Oklahoma is markedly different from his dual image as

a debater and the "Uncrowned King of the Senate" in Washington. He chose to reinforce both of these images. However, to soften the blow of his sarcasm and invective in the Senate, Kerr used humor—one of the techniques he employed to reinforce his image as a "man of the people" in Oklahoma.

Admittedly, the modes of proof are difficult for the critic to separate. Those factors which contributed to the separate aspects of Kerr's image held by his two audiences are also difficult to isolate. This study, however, attempted to do just that. The evidence, while not conclusive, points to Kerr's efforts to reinforce separate aspects of his image before different audiences through the use of ethical proof.

Whether Kerr's attempts to reinforce different facets of his image were conscious or unconscious cannot be determined. Perhaps this question could not even be answered by the Senator himself. Regardless, however, of whether the creation of separate dimensions of Kerr's image was or was not conscious, the fact that Kerr's Washington audience and his Oklahoma audience perceived him differently and that he used ethical proof to reinforce and alter these images cannot be denied.

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