Senator Zales Ecton : a product of reaction
by Timothy John Carman

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in History
Montana State University
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Abstract:
From Montana's initiation as a state until 1946, no Republican had ever been elected as a Congressional Senator. In 1946, Zales N. Ecton defeated Leif Erickson in a virulent and scurrilous campaign to become the first. The nature of the 1946 election is not unpreci-dented in Montana politics, but it certainly ranks with the most vituperative. Although an immediate cause of Ecton's victory relates to.the obstreperous tenor of the campaign, the complete explanation is broad-based and certainly not uncomplicated.

Burton K. Wheeler's defeat by Erickson in the Democratic primary became of particular significance to Ecton and the Republican attack.

The "smears and counter-smears" prominent in the primary served to develop a foundation on which Ecton was able to expand. Thus the constituents were initially socialized by the Democrats lending validity to Ecton's extension of similar accusations.

The role of the press in Montana and its relation to the Anaconda Company provides additional insight. The "Company's" opposition to Erickson, coupled with its control of a certain element of the Montana press, provided Ecton with an advantageous political tool.

Although Erickson's political career had been short, it provided Ecton with additional avenues of attack. Erickson had developed powerful political enemies and had been associated with groups and projects which became politically detrimental in 1946. Ecton was able to effectively exploit these and other elements of Erickson's political background during the campaign.

1946 found most voters discontented with President Truman's transition to a peace time economy. The whole spectrum of public discontent was exploited by the Republicans, nationally as well as locally, by relating the problems of the Truman Administration to Communist subversion in both the government and the Democratic Party. In Montana, Ecton was able to easily reshape the G.O.P. 's attack of the Truman Administration and re-apply it to Erickson and his political background.

It is impossible to measure the exact significance or impact of the aforementioned conditions relative to the Senatorial race. In 1946 no viable polls were being utilized in Montana. Scientifically designed polling devices would have aided greatly in gauging the constituents' view of the significant issues. It is true that such evidence is not all conclusive, but it is certain that the additional tool would have greatly aided this researcher.

In that sense, the more direct, ostensible conditions which allowed Ecton's election have already been suggested. There are, however, many additional factors that will be considered. The lack of survey data or any accurate measuring device has prevented this study from being totally selective.

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF ARTS

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History

Approved:

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

June, 1971

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this study depended upon the assistance and cooperation of many persons. The writer wishes to thank all of those who gave their time and energies to insure the completion of this project.

In more personal terms, the writer wishes to thank Professor Michael P. Malone of Montana State University for his constant insight and helpful suggestions. Besides Dr. Malone, Thomas C. Satterthwaite, a colleague and fellow graduate student, was generous with his encouragement and corrective criticism. A special acknowledgment should be given Professor Jeffrey J. Safford, Assistant Professor of History at Montana State University, for his probing questions and continually gracious assistance during the many months of research and writing.

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ABSTRACT

From Montana's initiation as a state until 1946, no Republican had ever been elected as a Congressional Senator. In 1946, Zales N. Ecton defeated Leif Erickson in a virulent and scurrilous campaign to become the first. The nature of the 1946 election is not unprecidented in Montana politics, but it certainly ranks with the most vituperative. Although an immediate cause of Ecton's victory relates to the obstreperous tenor of the campaign, the complete explanation is broad-based and certainly not uncomplicated.

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The role of the press in Montana and its relation to the Anaconda Company provides additional insight. The "Company's" opposition to Erickson, coupled with its control of a certain element of the Montana press, provided Ecton with an advantageous political tool.

Although Erickson's political career had been short, it provided Ecton with additional avenues of attack. Erickson had developed powerful political enemies and had been associated with groups and projects which became politically detrimental in 1946. Ecton was able to effectively exploit these and other elements of Erickson's political background during the campaign.

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I

"The Democratic Primary: An Upset and the Impact of Poison"

This thesis is primarily an investigation of the 1946 Senatorial race between Zales N. Ecton (Republican) and Leif Erickson (Democrat). The general election, however, cannot be viewed in isolation, for the framework within which it took place was established by the character and outcome of the Democratic primary directly preceding it. The primary was important in two ways. First, it saw the unexpected defeat of the nationally prominent incumbent, Burton K. Wheeler. Secondly, the primary provided Republicans with tactics and Democratic vulnerabilities they capitalized on to the fullest extent.

AN UPSET AND THE IMPACT OF SHOCK

In retrospect it appears that Wheeler's defeat provided the Republicans with an initial advantage in the general election. For one thing, the incumbent Wheeler had represented Montana in the United States Senate for twenty-four years. Few expected that Wheeler's nomination would be seriously threatened. He had gained national prominence and was even suggested as a possible presidential candidate in 1940, on the chance, of course, that Franklin D. Roosevelt refused re-nomination.[1] Although controversial, Wheeler

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1. "National Affairs", Time, Vol. 35-2, April 15, 1940, p. 21. See also Robert Bendiner, "Men Who Would Be President", Nation, Vol. 150, April 27, 1940, p. 532.

was held in high regard in Montana. It is for this reason that he had not lost a county in an election, primary or general, since 1928.[2]

Additionally, it is not certain that Leif Erickson, Wheeler's political opponent in 1946, presented an adequate political alternative. Erickson, in only 1944, had been soundly defeated in the Gubernatorial race. Sam Ford (Republican), supported by the Anaconda Company, was able to overpower Erickson by more than 34,000 votes.[3] In spite of his 1944 defeat, Erickson maintained some prestige and was still repected for his political potential. The general feeling was, however, that Erickson's opposition to Wheeler would only prove to completely destroy Erickson's career. The Miles City Star summed up the general sentiment relevant to the primary when it noted that by barging into a battle with Wheeler, Erickson was committing his career to one of literal "political suicide".[4]

Erickson proved the election predictions wrong, however, by defeating Wheeler in what has since been called the "Montana miracle".[5]

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2. Joseph P. Kelly, Unpublished Masters Thesis, Montana State University, 1959, p. ii.

3. The impact of the 1944 election, the role of the Anaconda Company, and the exploitable nature of Erickson's political background will be discussed in Chapter II.

4. Miles City Star, June 21, 1946, p. 4.

5. Joseph Kinsey Howard, "The Decline and Fall of Burton K. Wheeler". Harper's Magazine, Vol. 194, March, 1947, p. 226. This work can also be found in The Montana Past An Anthology, eds., Michael P.

Wheeler claims in retrospect that he knew immediately that he was in "deep trouble" in the primary.[6] It is not clear that the constituents were as sensitive to this as Wheeler. On the eve of the primary, the gamblers in Butte, for instance, were giving 3-1 odds against Erickson winning.[7]

The impact of Wheeler's loss is well illustrated in the following campaign incident. Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky, Democratic Majority leader, campaigned in Montana during the 1946 general election on behalf of Leif Erickson and the Democratic ticket. His final speech, given before a capacity crowd on October twenty-first in Helena, re-emphasized the lingering shock at Wheeler's defeat. Bowing to the chairman, Barkley began:

"My colleague Senator Wheeler..." The second bow was never completed. The rustling hall was suddenly stilled. Barkley turned a little pale, coughed, and recovered. "...and my colleague Senator Murray!"[8]

Malone and Richard B. Roeder, (Missoula: University of Montana Press, 1969).

6. Burton K. Wheeler, Yankee From the West (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 401.

7. Ibid., p. 409.

8. Joseph Kinsey Howard, "The Decline and Fall of Burton K. Wheeler", op. cit., p. 226.

Senator Barkley's error typified the difficulty of discussing Montana politics at the exclusion of Senator Wheeler. At best, Wheeler's defeat to Erickson in the 1946 primary was accepted with great astonishment.

While Wheeler's defeat was startling, the Democrats obviously believed that Erickson was a strong political candidate. It will be determined, however, that in retrospect, Erickson presented a viable political target. Wheeler has argued that the Anaconda Company supported Erickson in the primary, and then forcefully supported Ecton in the general election.[9] If that was true, Erickson's win in the primary was viewed as a victory for the Ecton conservatives. Irregardless, it must be recognized that for the first time in twenty-four years, the Democratic Party was functioning at the exclusion of Senator Wheeler. It is not certain that Wheeler would have provided a stronger political candidate than Erickson, but the shock of his defeat, coupled with Erickson's political weaknesses, provided the Republicans with an early advantage.

THE PRIMARY AND THE IMPACT OF INNUENDOES

The political framework for the general election was, in part,

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9. Wheeler, Burton K., Personal interview with Michael P. Malone, Assistant Professor of History, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, May 23, 1970; K.R. Toole disagrees with Wheeler and argues that Wheeler lost in spite of strong support from Anaconda, K.R. Toole, Montana An Uncommon Land (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1959), p. 225.

determined by the tenor of the Democratic primary. The Erickson - Wheeler campaign exposed vulnerabilities and provided political tools upon which the Republican party capitalized.

Erickson's victory, as has been suggested, was not easily determined. Although the mean in Montana elections has always been typified by emotion, charge, and counter-charge, the 1946 primary initiated a campaign that outdid the norm in a barrage of scurrilous innuendoes. Wheeler's advantageous position at the initiation of the 1946 primary, coupled with his controversial nature, necessitated that Erickson stimulate a potent attack. In this respect, the "smears" and "counter-smears" prominent in the 1946 primary were significant in preparing the foundation for the Republican's attack of Erickson in the Congressional election.

At the onset, Wheeler was content to seek re-nomination on the strength of his record; he offered no special program or promises. The incumbent told a St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporter that the real issue was "whether we were going to let the P.A.C. [Political Action Committee] and Sidney Hillman [labor leader for the C.I.O.] run America."[10]

Leif Erickson and his supporters vigorously attacked Wheeler's

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10. People's Voice, July 12, 1946. Copyright story by Richard Baumhoff, staff correspondent for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Quoted in Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit., p. 23.

record, maintaining that his obtuse actions in Congress were not to the best interests of Montana or the Democrats.[11]

It is not my intent to relate the total rhetorical content of the primary, but I will retrace those aspects of the primary that had influence on Erickson and the Nov. 4th Congressional election.

CAMPAIGN FINANCES

Much was said and written, during and after the primary, about the source of the campaign budgets for both candidates. Bailey Stortz, Wheeler's campaign chairman, complained that between $100,000 and $150,000 was being spent to smear and discredit Wheeler. Erickson's forces named no figure but consistently alluded to the vast amounts at his opponent's disposal.[12] The Nation charged that "Wheeler's campaign was marked with shoddy techniques he picked up as an American Firster, complete with charges that his opponent was financed by Communists, New York Jews and Wall Street."[13] Wheeler was convinced enough of aforementioned charges, however, to ask the Senate Committee on Unfair Campaign Practices to investigate the campaign. The Senate

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11. Many prominent liberals in Montana felt that Wheeler had destroyed his relationship with Franklin D. Roosevelt, and thereby his ability to "get things done", by his strong opposition to the court packing plan, lend lease, and our involvement in World War II.

12. Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit., p. 27.

13. Nation, "The Shape of Things", July 20, 1946, Vol. 163, p. 59.

investigation, under Robert A. Baker, initiated its study in Helena on July 8th, just one week before the election.

In a prepared statement before the committee, Wheeler declared, "I want to know how much money the P.A.C. and the C.I.O. are sending into this state against me."[14]

The Committee eventually determined that Albert Lasker[15] and his wife, as well as Mrs. A. Greenbaum, all of New York City, contributed $1,000 each to Erickson's campaign fund. $4,250 more came from the New York and Chicago offices of the Committee on Public Affairs, with Arthur J. Goldsmith as its secretary. In addition, the United Auto Workers of Detroit submitted $3,000 to the fund, giving both the P.A.C. and the veteran's committee for Erickson $1,500 each. The National Maritime Union of New York also submitted $1,000. Also, usually listed in the out-of-state endorsements are Senator Murray's two contributions for $1,000 each.[16] $13,250

The committee also determined that both Wheeler and Erickson were guilty of utilizing funds derived from outside sources. Bailey Stortz told the committee that of the $18,747 in Wheeler's campaign

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14. Great Falls Tribune, July 9, 1946. Quoted in Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit., p. 45.

15. Albert Lasker was head of the United States Shipping Board under President Harding.

16. Miles City Star, Oct. 27, 1946, p. 9; Nov. 3, 1946, p. 13; Montana Standard, Oct. 9, 1946, Ed. page.

fund, $7,000 found its roots in sources outside Montana.[17]

The effect that the campaign-expenditures investigation had on the constituency is difficult to determine. Gordon Reid of the New Republic felt that because the hearings were reported "all over the state", Wheeler's plan to expose Erickson "backfired" costing him votes.[18] The question became increasingly less significant, however, as Erickson began to campaign for the Senate. Erickson's affiliation with "outside interests" was, by that time, well known, and Ecton and his supporters, in the general election, confidently exploited this association.

SMEAR TACTICS & THEIR EFFECT AND THE GENERAL ELECTION

The Senate investigation under Baker determined that the campaign had been one of the most "vicious ... that had ever been carried on."[19] Wheeler, late in the election, often connected Erickson's "outside money", and the C.I.O.-P.A.C.'s support of Erickson, to an attempt at Communist subversion.[20] Wheeler has noted of the Communist "Bogy" in

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17. Independent Record, July 9, 1946. Quoted in Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit., p. 45.

18. Gordon Reid, "How They Beat Wheeler", Nation, Vol. 115: 1, July 29, 1946, p. 100.

19. Burton K. Wheeler, Letter to the Author, Nov. 27, 1970.

20. Independent Record (Helena), July 8, 1946, p. 1; July 10, 1946, p. 2.

the 1946 primary, "... that the Communists campaigned against me and my secretary, Bailey Stortz; ... In Butte, just before the primary election, they [the Anaconda Company] had a meeting of all the Slovaks at Columbia Gardens, and they brought in some Communist leaders who spoke. I not only was not invited but was told I couldn't get in, but Erickson was there..."[21] Wheeler felt that the Communists took an active part in his defeat, basically because he had been against Russian ambitions during the war.[22]

Irregardless, it is not my purpose to indicate here which Democratic primary candidate, if either, was associated with Communism. Communist smear tactics were prominent and used functionally by both candidates, and in that sense developed a political stepping stone to be utilized by the Republicans in the Congressional elections. During the general election, ultra-conservative commentators (i.e., Fulton Lewis and Larry Smith) attributed Wheeler's primary defeat by Erickson to a "Communist smear" and told Montanans that the victor, who was now standard-bearer for Wheeler's party, was "endorsed by Moscow".[23]

Throughout the election, Wheeler had charged that the C.I.O.

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21. Burton K. Wheeler, Letter to the Author, Nov. 27, 1970.

22. Burton K. Wheeler, Unpublished interview by Michael P. Malone, May 23, 1970, p. 15.

23. Joseph Kinsey Howard, op. cit., p. 230.

labor organization was Communistic and thereby a threat to America.[24] He saw Erickson's association with that radical labor group as an attempt by Communists at subversion. These kinds of attitudes certainly laid the groundwork for a virulent attack of Erickson by Zales N. Ecton and his supporters during the general election.[25]

Wheeler's attempt to connect Erickson to the Communist party through his association with the C.I.O.'s Political Action Committee (P.A.C.), then, set the pattern that Ecton would utilize.

THE DAMAGE OF POISON

That Wheeler was damaged to any extent by the mudslinging campaign of the Erickson organization, including the slander disseminated in a book written by David Kin, alias "Plotkin", and financed by Eastern industrialists, is widely doubted.[26] The 394-page, hard cover-cover diatribe was published in Missoula by John E. Kennedy, a former secretary of Montana Congressman Jerry O'Connell.[27] The title,

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24. Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit., p. 86.

25. We shall see in Chapter III that Erickson was supported financially and actively by the Congress of Industrial Organizations - Political Action Committee.

26. Bozeman Chronicle, Sept. 19, 1946, p. 6.

27. Burton K. Wheeler, Yankee From the West, op. cit., p. 408. This information was made available because of the Senate Investigation Committee and its work in Helena.

The Plot Against America: Senator Wheeler and the Forces Behind Him,[28] indicates the text to be of questionable intent or quality. Wheeler has said of the book: "[It] was so laughably trashy I doubt if it could have done me any harm. In any event, it was introduced too late in the campaign for us to counter it."[29]

It has not been my purpose to suggest that Wheeler lost the primary either because of the out-of-state funds utilized by Erickson, or because of the Communist smear tactics.[30] It is indeed doubtful that either played a sizeable role in determining the election results. It was, however, Erickson's misfortune to be involved in a campaign spewn with virulent rhetorical attacks. Not only did this deter a reorganization of party strength, but it also provided an effective political tool to be exploited by the Republicans. The scurrilous use of the "Communist bogey" in the Democratic primary certainly gave Ecton's extension of similar accusations a certain element of validity. Ecton would probably have utilized this attack in any case, but it is significant to note that the public was initially socialized or prepared for these tactics by the Democrats themselves.

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28. See David George Kin, The Plot Against America (Missoula, Montana: John E. Kennedy, Publishers, 1946).

29. Burton K. Wheeler, Yankee From the West, op. cit., p. 409.

30. For a survey of the reasons for Wheeler's defeat see Joseph P. Kelly, op. cit.; Gordon Reid, op. cit.; Dan Whetstone, "Why Wheeler Failed", Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), July 26, 1946, editorial page.

II

"The Senatorial Candidates: The Backgrounds and an Element of Predictability"

Like the Democratic primary, the personal and political backgrounds of the candidates say much in explaining the political tenor of the general election. The best account of the history of the Erickson family was written by Leif's father, Oluf, and published in the Wisconsin Magazine of History.[1]

Olaf Erickson, Leif's grandfather, and his wife were immigrants who arrived in Quebec from Norway on July 1, 1867. Eventually the Erickson family settled in Wisconsin, where Olaf acquired four small farms.[2] He was "determined that his boys should be farmers" and thereby attempted to purchase enough land to provide them with the initial start. Leif's father, Oluf, became firmly entrenched in the pursuits of agrarian life.

In 1917 or 1918, Leif Erickson's family left Wisconsin to settle in McKenzie County, North Dakota.[3] Leif was about eleven years old at the time, and only one of seven children. Since their home was located close to Sidney, Montana, the Erickson's were schooled in

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1. Oluf Erickson, "Olaf Erickson Scandinavian Frontiersman," Wisconsin Magazine of History, Part I, Sept. 1947; Part II, Dec., 1947; Part III, March, 1948. To prevent confusion, it should be noticed that Leif's grandfather's name is Olaf while his father's name if Oluf.

2. Oluf Erickson, Part II, op. cit., p. 189.

3. Oluf Erickson, Part I, op. cit., p. 7.

that small urban center and correspondingly considered themselves Montanans.[4]

In these early years, life for the Erickson family was difficult. Leif and his brother made the journey from Wisconsin, with the livestock, in an immigrant-cattle car. In their first year on the plains, the Erickson family was forced to live in a tar paper shack.[5]

Leif Erickson was not interested in following the agrarian tradition of his family. He graduated from Sidney High School in 1924,[6] only to enroll at the University of North Dakota in 1926. After a year and a half, he left to continue his studies at the University of Chicago.[7] Erickson desired his education enough to work his way through school with an assortment of jobs including: short order cook, taxi-cab[8] driver, switch-board operator, door to door salesman, and waiter and cafeteria manager.[9] In addition, Erickson proved his robust nature by

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4. Joseph P. Kelly, "Study of the Defeat of Senator Wheeler", Unpublished Masters Thesis, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, 1959, p. 15.

5. Leif Erickson, personal interview with Joseph P. Kelly, May 16, 1958. Cited in Kelly, op. cit., p. 16.

6. People's Voice (Helena), May 3, 1946, p. 1.

7. Who's Who In the West, Publisher, Kenneth N. Anglemire, (Chicago, Illinois: The Von Hoffman Press, Inc., 1970-71), p. 181.

8. Time, "National Affairs on the Record", July 29, 1946, p. 16.

9. Kelly, op. cit., p. 16.

winning the Big Ten heavyweight wrestling championship. He was granted a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy in 1931 and a Doctor of Jurisprudence Degree in 1934.[10]

Erickson's early agrarian background caused him to recognize the problems related to farming and ranching. Although Erickson's agrarian roots should not be overstressed, it was of some significance as Erickson, in the general election, was able to win four of the six wheat counties.[11] It must be recognized, however, that Erickson was considered a liberal.[12] In that sense, the Farmers Union has traditionally supported the more liberal or progressive political leaders.[13]

ERICKSON AND THE MEDIATION BOARD: AN AVENUE OF ATTACK

After Erickson graduated from the University of Chicago, he returned to Sidney to practice law and was elected county attorney for Richland County in 1936.[14] In 1938, Erickson, at age thirty-two,

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10. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, July 18, 1946, p. 6. Cited in Kelly, op. cit., p. 16.

11. See appendix VII.

12. Jules A. Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana", Vol. 1 of A History of Montana, eds., Merrill Burlingame and K. Ross Toole, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1957), p. 275.

13. Ibid., p. 248.

14. Time, op. cit., p. 16.

became the youngest man ever to be elected to the State Supreme Court as an associate justice.[15] He served Montana in that capacity until 1946.

Erickson's background in law allowed President Roosevelt to appoint him, in the early 1940's, to act as referee in 150 cases before the Railroad Adjustment Board dealing with railroad rules.[16]

While the appointment initially appeared to forward Erickson's career, it eventually provided the Republicans with an avenue of attack. Erickson was, during the 1946 election, accused of earning $8,700 working for the Federal Railroad Mediation Board, while at the same time collecting his $7,500 a year as a Supreme Court justice.[17] In addition, President Truman appointed Erickson to serve as chairman and member of six emergency fact-finding boards under the Railroad Labor Act.[18] Erickson again was confronted with collecting fifty dollars a day for 147½ days for his adjudication work, while continuing to collect his state salary.[19] Ralph Anderson, a former justice of

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15. Who's Who In American Politics, eds., Paul A. Thesis and Edmund L. Henshaw, Jr. (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1967), p. 205.

16. People's Voice (Helena), op. cit., May 3, 1946, p. 1.

17. Miles City Star, Sept. 29, 1946, Editorial page; Daniels County Leader (Scobey), Oct. 17, 1946, p. 1.

18. Great Falls Tribune, March 9, 1946, p. 1.

19. Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 31, 1946, p. 10.

the Montana Supreme Court, vehemently accused Erickson of unprofessional ethics in a state-wide radio address only four days before the election:

"While Erickson sat on the Supreme Court bench, the court's productivity declined 40 percent and litigents were compelled to wait many months for decisions...", Anderson said, "with a member of the court ... earning extra pocket money at the rate of fifty dollars a day."[20]

Although Erickson gained some national prominence for his appointments in the many railroad litigations, there can be little doubt that these activities eventually hurt him in the political arena. Republicans such as Ralph Anderson used Erickson's association with the Railroad Mediation Board to question his professional ethics. The ability of the Republicans to raise questions about Erickson's character became significant as issues relative to Communism developed.

ERICKSON'S POLITICAL BACKGROUND AND VULNERABILITY

In 1944, Erickson was nominated for Governor on the Democratic ticket. He was resoundingly defeated (27,000 votes) by Sam Ford at the same time that Franklin D. Roosevelt was carrying the state with a plurality of 21,000 votes.[21] In the 1946 Senatorial race, Ecton

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20. Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 31, 1946, p. 10.

21. Independent Record (Helena), Nov. 4, 1946, p. 6; Washington Star, Oct. 10, 1946; Zales N. Ecton, Manuscript Collection, 1946-52. Montana State University Library, Bozeman.

constantly reminded the Montana constituent of their disapproval of Erickson in 1944. Not only was Erickson's defeat in 1944 a political disadvantage, but his association with the Political Action Committee (P.A.C.) and his support of the Missouri Valley Authority (M.V.A.) in that election was also detrimental.

It was speculated that Erickson, in 1944, was supported by Sidney Hillman and the P.A.C.[22] That committee was allegedly associated with Communism and its attempts to gain control of the government. Don Chapman of Great Falls was president of the Montana Farmers Union and chairman of the local P.A.C. in 1944.[23] He and the P.A.C. openly endorsed Erickson before the state Democratic convention.[24] While Erickson initially repudiated the direct support of the P.A.C.,[25] by the final weeks of the election, he welcomed the endorsement.[26] Orators in 1944 correspondingly claimed that the Democratic Party had been turned over to Sidney Hillman, and that Erickson was only a pawn of these "saboteurs of the process of democracy."[27]

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22. For a greater explanation of the role and origins of the P.A.C. see Chapter III.

23. Great Falls Tribune, Sept. 18, 1944, p. 1.

24. Jules A. Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana", op. cit.

25. Montana Standard (Butte), Sept. 9, 1944, p. 1.

26. People's Voice (Helena), Nov. 3, 1944, p. 1.

27. Jules A. Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana", op. cit; Western News (Libby), Oct. 19, 1944, p. 4, Col. 1.

The accusations of Sam Ford and his supporters in 1944 became increasingly important in the 1946 Senatorial election because, like the 1946 primary, they provided the foundation for a similar but much more virulent attack.

Like his affiliation with the P.A.C., Erickson's support of the M.V.A. in 1944 was easily exploited by Ecton in the 1946 campaign.[28] While Ford strongly opposed the M.V.A., Erickson was actively involved in the Missouri River development project. Erickson was, in fact, named the Chairman of the Regional Association of the M.V.A.[29] Although Erickson's loss in 1944 cannot be explained exclusively by his support of the M.V.A., it was certainly of major consequence.[30] The issue re-appeared in 1946, and Erickson's previous support of the program was crucial to Ecton's campaign. Like the M.V.A. issue, Ecton was able to capitalize on the previously mentioned aspects of Erickson's political record. Erickson's service on the Railroad Mediation Board, his association with the P.A.C., and his support of the M.V.A. all proved politically detrimental in 1946.

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28. For a more thorough description of the M.V.A., see Chapter III.

29. New York Times, July 15, 1946, p. 1; People's Voice (Helena), July 13, 1945, p. 1.

30. For comments by Erickson supporting the M.V.A. see Billings Gazette, Oct. 18, 1944, p. 1; Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 22, 1944, p. 1; For comments by Ford refuting the M.V.A. see Billings Gazette, Oct. 8, 1944, p. 1.

ZALES ECTON: AN AGRARIAN BACKGROUND

Zales N. Ecton, like Erickson, was not a native Montanan. He was born in Weldon, Iowa on April 1, 1898, the son of Arron S. Ecton, a rancher.[31] When Zales was nine, the Ecton family left Decatur County, Iowa and moved west to Montana. Zales received his preliminary education at public schools in Gallatin County, Montana, and attended Montana State College (Bozeman) from 1916 to 1919, and the University of Chicago from 1919 to 1920.[32]

He then became involved in ranching and farming and was successful enough to eventually claim extensive holdings in land and cattle around Manhattan. Ecton maintained these interests until his death on March 3, 1961. Ecton not only raised cattle, but he also utilized much of his land to raise grain. In that respect, Ecton was not only a member of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, but he was also an active member of the Farm Bureau Federation.[33] This element of Ecton's background became increasingly important, as he functionally used his farming experiences in an attempt to show empathy for, and to draw

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31. Biographical Directory of the American Congress, Chairman, Joint Committee on Printing, Carl Hayden. Compiler, James L. Harrison. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 1117.

32. The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, University Microfilms, A Xerox Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Reprint Copy. (New York: James T. White and Co., 1966), Vol. 49, p. 349.

33. Ibid.

support from the traditional Democratic farming communities north of the Missouri River on the "High-line".

ECTON'S POLITICAL CAREER AND CONSERVATISM

Ecton was elected to the State House of Representatives from Gallatin County when he was thirty-five years old. He served in that capacity from 1933 to 1937. Ecton then initiated his career as a State Senator from Gallatin County and served until 1945. In addition to the aforementioned, he served from 1940 to 1944 as chairman of the Montana State Republican Central Committee.[34] Ecton's political experience and influence made him the likely candidate for the G.O.P. nomination in 1946. Miles Romney has suggested that Ecton's opponent in the primary (R.E. Skeen, a Northern Pacific Brakeman from Billings) entered the campaign on a wager.[35] At any rate, Ecton dominated the polling results when he collected 22,731 votes to Skeen's 11,226.[36]

Ecton was a well known conservative in Montana politics.[37] His voting record in the State House and Senate indicated that he favored

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34. Ibid.

35. Western News (Libby), Sept. 12, 1946, p. 4.

36. Ellis Waldron, Montana Politics Since 1864, (Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1958), p. 316.

37. U.S. News, "People of the Week", Nov. 8, 1946, Vol. 21:2, p. 72.

the business community in Montana as opposed to the smaller interests.[38] This, of course, brought cries that if Ecton were elected he would be a puppet of the Anaconda and Montana Power Companies. The Anaconda Company did support Ecton and thus fought Erickson with the same vigor it displayed when Erickson attempted to unseat Governor Ford in 1944.[39] The support of the "Interests" (i.e., the Anaconda and Montana Power Companies) certainly provided Ecton with a definite advantage. It is well recognized that the Montana press has played a peculiar role in the dissemination of the "Companies'" political power.[40] In 1951, it was determined that the Anaconda Company owned newspapers in four of the five largest cities in Montana and consequently distributed about 55 percent of the total Sunday circulation.[41]

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38. For analyzation of Ecton's voting record on crucial bills see, People's Voice, July 26, 1946, p. 1; Aug. 2, 1946, p. 1; Aug. 9, 1946, p. 1; Aug. 30, 1946, p. 1; Sept. 6, 1946, p. 1; Sept. 13, 1946, p. 1; Sept. 20, 1946, p. 1; Sept. 27, 1946, p. 1; Oct. 4, 1946, p. 1; Oct. 11, 1946, p. 1; Oct. 18, 1946, p. 1.

39. Jules A. Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana", op. cit., p. 275.

40. See John M. Schiltz, "Montana's Captive Press", Montana Opinion, I, June, 1956, p. 3; Richard T. Ruetten, "Anaconda Journalism: The End of an Era", Journalism Quarterly, Winter, 1960, p. 4; Richard T. Ruetten, "Togetherness: A Look into Montana Journalism", The Montana Past An Anthology, eds., Michael P. Malone and Richard B. Roeder, (Missoula, Montana: University of Montana Press, 1969); "Anaconda Country", Economist, Vol. 184, Sept. 7, 1957, p. 766; Montana Kaimin, (Missoula), Oct. 24, 1958, p. 2; Hungry Horse News (Columbia Falls), Jan. 30, 1959, p. 2.

41. The Anaconda Company owned a controlling interest (50% or more)

Anaconda's hegemony relative to the Montana press went beyond just its immediately owned newspapers, however. It has often been suggested that a fear of the Company and possible economic reprisals explains much in understanding Anaconda's domination of the Montana press.

Of the ten daily and thirteen weekly newspapers surveyed in this study, only Miles Romney's Western News (Libby)[42] and Harry Billings's People's Voice (Helena) supported Erickson over Ecton. It was again to Ecton's advantage that neither of these publications were dailies which certainly affected their total circulation and ultimate impact on the voting constituency.

Conversely, at least seven daily newspapers forcefully supported Ecton. Among these were the Miles City Star, Montana Standard (Butte), Bozeman Chronicle, Independent Record (Helena), Lewistown Democrat News, Havre Daily, and the Billings Gazette.

The most objective news coverage was provided by the Great Falls Tribune and the Pioneer Press (Cut Bank). Although the Tribune did not support the Democrats with the vigor of Romney or Billings, the

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in the Butte Daily Post, Montana Standard (Butte), Livingston Enterprize, Independent Record (Helena), Billings Gazette, and the Mineral Publishing Co. in Superior. This information was determined when, in 1951, the Fairmont Corporation, a subsidary of Anaconda attempted to purchase a share of the Great Falls radio station KFBB.

42. The site of the Western News was moved to Hamilton in 1947.

paper's interest in the election and fair coverage of local, political news items helped the Democrats be heard. Dan Whetstone's Pioneer Press provided fair news coverage as well as clear, probing editorials. Although Whetstone deplored the Communist smear tactics of the Republicans,[43] he eventually supported the Republican Party as he expressed a fear of Communist infiltration in government.[44]

In 1946, the "Company" press played an instrumental role in the dissemination of "smear" campaign techniques. One of the papers most radically potent in its attack of Erickson was the Miles City Star. At the expense of unbiased reporting, the Star showed disfavor for Erickson, not only in its editorials,[45] but also in the many paid political advertisements it permitted to be printed. One such fullpage advertisement utilized three parallel headlines printed in one inch bold type:

"AMERICANISM OR COMMUNISM"

"BYRNES FOREIGN POLICY OR WALLACE RUSSIAN POLICY"

"ECTON OR ERICKSON"[46]

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43. Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Oct. 25, 1946, Editorial page. It should be noted that in 1946, Dan Whetstone was a Republican National Committeeman from Montana.

44. Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Sept. 13, 1946, Editorial page.

45. Miles City Star, Sept. 29, 1946, Ecton Papers, op. cit., Oct. 18, 1946, p. 4.

46. Miles City Star, Oct. 27, 1946, p. 13; Nov. 3, 1946, p. 13.

The nature of the press and its relation to the "Montana twins" says much in explaining the general tenor of the campaign. In a state with vast distances, sparce population, and generally inadequate facilities for mass communication, the role of the Montana press is significant. In this respect, Ecton was at a considerable advantage as he dominated the Montana press releases. This aspect of the campaign is certainly significant in understanding Ecton's eventual victory.

III

"The Campaign: Governmental Controls Versus Reaction"

THE PLATFORM COMMITTEES

On Tuesday, August 13th, Montana Republicans concluded a two-day State Convention in Helena. Among those in attendance was Carroll Reece, Chairman of the National Committee. Typifying a new feeling of enthusiasm and confidence developing in the G.O.P., Reece concluded that the 1946 Congressional elections offered Republicans "the best chance for victory ... since the Democrats won control of the Federal government in 1932."[1] The platform that Reece maintained would "insure" a Republican Congress was basically a rehash of the classical Republican dispute with F.D.R.'s "New Deal". Constituted of eight points, it called for:

1. A reduction in the huge governmental bureaucracy
2. An effective means of investigating subversion in Washington
3. An end to controls on the economy
4. Jobs for World War II veterans
5. Protection of state and local rights
6. An end to secret conferences with foreign governments
7. A reduction in income taxes
8. An end to deficit spending[2]

In announcing the platform, Reece simultaneously hinted at the over-riding theme the party would utilize to give continuity to its campaign. "The voters are tired of senseless and irritating controls

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1. Independent Record (Helena), Aug. 13, 1946, p. 10.
2. Ibid.

dictated by bureaucrats who draw their political ideology from Moscow", he pointed out. "[They] have come to realize that the...party in power is dominated on the policy-making level by elements antagonistic to the American form of government...."[3] The democracy had been put on clear notice that "patriotism" would be central to G.O.P. campaign tactics. On such a basis Montana Republicans readied themselves for a heated and emotionally-charged campaign.

Three weeks later the State's Democrats convened in Great Falls, convinced, despite the obvious schism caused by the "hard fought" primary, that the party could regain its former harmony and reunification.

Their platform highlighted policies already initiated by the Truman administration and respectfully supported by the Democratic Party in Montana. In summary, it favored:

1. Support for the U.N.
2. Veterans benefits similar to those called for by the G.O.P.
3. Continued federal support of farm loan agencies
4. Rural electrification to every farm in Montana
5. Continued federal support of labor
6. Aid to the small businessman
7. Programs to control inflation
8. Efforts to establish Indians as independent citizens
9. Improvement and extension of social security
10. Support for a plan for development of natural resources, (referring to the Missouri Valley Authority)[4]

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3. Ibid.

4. Great Falls Tribune, Sept. 7, 1946, p. 1.

Additionally, the convention attempted to meet the implication that Republican leaders would use the Communist scare technique with a pledge of militant opposition to any organization that would undermine American institutions.[5]

The 1946 Congressional election in Montana, then, had been staged with programs and appeals representing the mood of the national parties. Such Republican platform planks as a reduction of economic controls, a reduction of income taxes, a reduction in governmental bureaucracy, and an end to deficit spending certainly affronted basic concepts of the "New Deal". That the Democrats, on the other hand, were hopeful of extending the "New Deal" was best expressed by those planks on agriculture, labor, social security, rural electrification and the M.V.A.

The 1946 campaign found the dispute over governmental controls at the core of the political rhetoric.[6] The Montana Democrats campaigned in support of "New Deal" programs, while the Republicans maintained that continued governmental growth and control would destroy democracy by tending towards socialism and even Communism.[7] Major issues were governmental price fixing, the Missouri Valley Authority,

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5. Ibid.

6. New York Times, Nov. 10, 1946, Part IV, p. 3.

7. U.S. News, "Key Issues in the 1946 Election", Vol. 21, Oct. 24, 1946, Pp. 24-5.

and the planned economy.

GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL, THE O.P.A., AND THE MEAT CONTROVERSY

Public dissatisfaction over governmental controls was openly expressed in the months preceding the election. It appeared that the administration's planned peace-time reconversion program would not solve such problems as inflation, unemployment, shortage of consumer goods, and labor unrest.[8] By early 1946, the general public discontentment had become a serious consideration if the Democrats were to have a strong showing in the 1946 mid-term elections.

Much of the public dissent over governmental controls revolved around Truman's attempt, in 1946, to control inflation. On July twenty-fifth, Truman signed into law a bill that would enlarge the wartime governmental powers and extend the Office of Price Administration (O.P.A.) for one more year.[9] The continued spiral of inflation demonstrated that the O.P.A. was an ineffectual weapon. And when on August 20th the government tried to use its limited authority to stop the soaring price of meat by reimposing ceilings, livestock growers

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8. For further insight into the domestic problems of the early Truman years see: Henry B. Parks and Vincent P. Carosso, Recent America (New York: Thomas Y. Cronwell Company, 1963); Dumas Malone and Basil Rauch, America and World Leadership 1940-1945 (New York: Meridith Publishing Company, 1965), Vol. VI.

9. Truman's request of Congress to extend the O.P.A. was met with a bill that was virtually useless as an anti-inflationary weapon. Truman vetoed this bill on June 29, but reluctantly accepted the slightly stronger O.P.A. bill on July 25.

refused to market their animals.[10] The shortage of meat was keenly felt in Montana. Not only the Montana cattlemen, but the voting public at large reacted negatively to the O.P.A. and price fixing.

By early October, the O.P.A. meat restrictions were causing considerable political turbulence. On October 10th, the beef industry had coupled a demand for the immediate scrapping of price controls with a promise of providing an ample supply of meat, possibly before the November elections.[11] On the fifteenth of October, Truman notified the meat industry that the O.P.A.'s price ceilings on cattle and corresponding by-products would be rescinded.[12] Unfortunately for the Democrats, the Montana Press reported that Truman, before making his decision on the O.P.A., had considered buying the cattle on the plains in an attempt to evenly re-distribute the meat.

Zales N. Ecton, on the same day that Truman reported the O.P.A. retraction, commented on the meat problem. "Some of the bureaucrats have been talking of seizing the cattle on the ranges to solve a meat shortage which exists", Ecton maintained, "only because the law of supply and demand was not permitted to function. The Communist Daily Worker advocated seizing the cattle and so the bureaucrats and

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10. Parks and Carosso, op. cit., p. 205.

11. Daily Inter-Lake (Kalispell), Oct. 10, 1946, p. 1.

12. Daily Inter-Lake (Kalispell), Oct. 15, 1946, p. 1.

fellow travelers evidently see eye to eye."[13]

GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL AND THE MISSOURI VALLEY AUTHORITY

As early as 1942, governmental control relative to the development of the Missouri River became politically significant in Montana.[14] Almost immediately the Missouri River development project became a controversial political issue as numerous and varied plans were submitted for consideration.[15] A lack of co-ordinated planning led to increased misunderstandings until Senator Murray, in 1944, created a bill to establish the Missouri Valley Authority (M.V.A.).[16]

As was previously noted, the M.V.A. issue was of major consequence in the 1944 Gubernatorial race.[17] Erickson's close association to

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13. Miles City Star, Oct. 15, 1946, p. 3.

14. The Tennessee Valley Authority Act (T.V.A.), the first experiment ir integrated development of a river basin, became law in 1933. The next year, Senator George W. Morris of Nebraska, T.V.A.'s sponsor, introduced a bill to create a Missouri Valley Authority. Although the bill died in the Senate Irrigation Committee, it stimulated interest in the development of the Missouri River basin.

15. For a comprehensive study of the early proposals for the development of the Missouri River see Joseph Kinsey Howard, "Golden River", Harper's Magazine, Vol. 190, May, 1945, p. 513.

16. Wesley Price, "Battle Over the Missouri River", Readers Digest, Vol. 48, April, 1946, p. 71; the same article appears in The Saturday Evening Post, Vol. 218:4, Jan. 19, 1946.

17. For comments by Erickson supporting the M.V.A. see, Billings Gazette, Oct. 18, 1944, p. 1; Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 22, 1944, p. 1; for comments by Ford refuting the M.V.A. see, Billings Gazette, Oct. 8, 1944, p. 1.

Senator Murray and the M.V.A. program in the 1944 race did much to cause Erickson's eventual defeat.[18] Although he attempted to remain quiet on the M.V.A. issue in 1946, Erickson's silence did little to dispel the belief that he was in full support of the M.V.A.[19]

The Republicans, in 1946, were again forcefully opposed to the M.V.A. The 1945 Congress stalled on M.V.A. proposal designed, in part, by Senator Murray.[20] Under his plan, three men would have been appointed by the President to initiate and develop a system of dams and power plants on both the Columbia (C.V.A.) and Missouri River. It is significant that it was not specified that the appointees be residents of Montana.[21] It is for this reason that it was feared that Montana would lose control of the Missouri River water by the development of a system that would only store water for down-stream hydro-electric plants and ultimately destroy the irrigation potential in Montana. It was well known that new proposals would be designed, and consequently, the M.V.A. became a concern in the subsequent election.

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18. New York Times, July 15, 1946, p. 1; People's Voice (Helena), July 13, 1945, p. 1.

19. Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Sept. 2, 1946, Editorial page.

20. Ernest Kirschten, "Stalled But Not Stopped", Nation, Vol. 163, Aug. 17, 1945, p. 1.

21. Daily Inter-Lake (Kalispell), Oct. 30, 1946, p. 4.

It was obvious that Ecton felt the M.V.A. was another extension of the "New Deal" and the corresponding governmental controls and involvement. His criticism of the M.V.A. was traditional. He feared that the M.V.A. and the C.V.A., in conjunction with the T.V.A., would bring about a nationalization of electric power.

On September 19th, Ecton addressed an audience composed mostly of Fergus County farmers in Lewistown. Ecton described the authority which the M.V.A. bill sought to establish as a "corporation which could do anything it pleased - a dictatorship as Communistic as anything Joe Stalin could ever desire, a superstate which would supercede the rights of the state."[22] Ecton was very careful to point out that he favored the development of the Missouri River for irrigation, flood control, and electric power, but that he refused to support the Murray's M.V.A. bill.

The next day in Polson, Ecton called for Erickson to state his position on the M.V.A. proposal. He answered his own question, however, when he noted, "Everyone should know that my opponent [Erickson] is hog-tied to the Murray program."[23]

Erickson made no great attempt to reply to such attacks. On

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22. Montana Standard (Butte), Sept. 20, 1946, p. 2; Independent Record (Helena), Sept. 20, 1946, p. 10; Bozeman Chronicle, Sept. 20, 1946, p. 1; Lewistown Democrat News, Sept. 20, 1946, p. 1.

23. Montana Standard (Butte), Oct. 22, 1946, p. 2.

October 8th, he anticipated the campaign rhetoric when he said, "Republicans will interject a threat of Communism into the campaign" and added that there will never be any danger of Communism in the U.S. as long as "the common man...has a sense of security."[24] At any rate, Erickson remained quiet on the M.V.A. issue. Erickson's position was relatively well known, however. The People's Voice (Helena) observed that its main reason for supporting Leif Erickson was his "strong, courageous support of the M.V.A."[25]

Fred Huntington, a Billings attorney and long time Republican, was the President of the Montana M.V.A. Association in 1946. He attempted to defend the M.V.A. by hinting, as Democrats had in 1944, that the Republicans were political pawns of the Anaconda and Montana Power companies by disapproving of the M.V.A.[26] He made such charges on two occasions in open letters published in the People's Voice.[27] "...I must conclude that your [Ecton's] calling everyone 'Communist' who ventures to disagree with you, must have some undisclosed purpose," Huntington wrote, "maybe you don't want to explain why all the

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24. Lewistown Democrat News, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 1.

25. Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Sept. 2, 1946, Editorial page.

26. Merrill G. Burlingame and K. Ross Toole, A History of Montana (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1957), Vol. I, p. 273.

27. People's Voice, Sept. 27, 1946, p. 1; Oct. 25, 1946, p. 1.

'company' papers, all the 'company' politicians, all the 'company's' powerful interests, are actively working for you."[28]

BUREAUCRACY AND THE PLANNED ECONOMY

The Office of Price Administration, as well as the M.V.A., was viewed by Ecton and his supporters as governmental interference in state affairs. In addition, it was held that the deficit spending of the Truman Administration could be reduced or eliminated by limiting the federal government's powers and activities. Truman, of course, had maintained many of his emergency war measures in an attempt to generate a healthy economy during the transition from war to peace. These controls were viewed by the G.O.P. as a direct affront to personal and state liberties.

Ecton said that the one way to cut federal expenditures was to "put an end to this synthetic peace under which we are living.... If the state of war were terminated...the federal payroll, which is still near the wartime peak, would be reduced."[29]

The national debt had increased 1,340 per cent since 1933 to a total of 268 billion dollars. Ecton pointed out that the Truman administration had a budget of more than forty billion dollars in 1946, as compared with nine billion dollars in the highest postwar

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28. People's Voice (Helena), Oct. 25, 1946, p. 1.

29. Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 3, 1946, p. 1.

spending year under the Roosevelt administration.[30] Ecton felt that a relaxation of federal controls was essential to develop a healthy economy in the U.S.

Ecton told an audience on October 7, at the Glasgow courthouse, that, "the present planned economy under which the administration is running our government is forcing us towards state socialism in a form that is Communistic in its implication."[31]

Two days later in Sidney, Ecton continued his attack when he noted, "the overshadowing issue in this campaign is whether this country is to continue the constitutional government under which it has grown great or whether state socialism with Communistic implication will be substituted for it...."[32]

Senator Murray, at this same time, was in Montana for a seven-day campaign trip on behalf of the Democrats. The trip took him across the "high-line" which, for the most part, allowed him to follow Ecton. The Senator spoke on the need for vigilance and protection against the encroachment of Communistic policies, which, he said, "have made their greatest boring from within during the

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30. Ibid.

31. Glasgow Courier, Oct. 10, 1946, p. 1.

32. Daily Missoulian, Oct. 12, 1946, p. 3.

last six years in our state and nation."[33] It is significant that Senator Murray, a Democrat of some esteem, called for an increased awareness of Communism in America. Murray's expressed concern about Communism in America certainly provided Ecton's similar fears with a certain element of validity.

Ecton and his supporters clearly demonstrated their concern that the M.V.A. and the O.P.A. were examples of state socialism. It was their contention that the planned economy supported a huge bureaucracy which not only expanded deficit spending and inefficiency, but that it also provided an opportunity for Communist subversion.

Erickson reacted strongly to these kinds of contentions. In Roundup on October 12th, Erickson charged "that the Republicans, lacking a constructive platform, have repeatedly called all Democrats 'Communists'. When they call our Democratic Party members Communists, the Republican candidates are adopting the tactics of a Gerald T.K. Smith, American Firster and pro-fascist."[34] Erickson's inference was drawn from the fact that, on October 5th, Ecton and forty-five other Congressional candidates were endorsed by Smith. Ecton immediately refused the support, "I don't know him [Smith]. I repudiate such an endorsement, as my Democratic opponent [Leif

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33. The Herald News (Wolf Point), Oct. 10, 1946, p. 1.

34. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 13, 1946, p. 4.

Erickson_/ should repudiate the endorsement of pro-communist groups...."[35]

THE WALLACE AFFAIR

In addition to the extension of war time governmental controls, the Henry Wallace cabinet fight on foreign affairs proved highly detrimental to the Democratic effort in Montana. Wallace (Sec. of Commerce) capitalized the dispute with a nationally advertised speech in New York on September 12th.[36] It is inconsequential to the Montana campaign that President Truman approved the speech before it was given. It is significant, however, that Wallace's candid remarks opposed the "hard-line" policy taken in relation to Russia by Truman and the State Department. Wallace's criticisms of postwar American diplomacy, especially of what he considered to be its departures from Roosevelt's efforts to co-operate with and reassure the Kremlin of Washington's goodwill and friendliness, amounted to a serious indictment of the State Department and, in Truman's opinion, "an all-out attack on our foreign policy".[37]

The event had serious repercussions in Montana because Leif

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35. Montana Standard (Butte), Oct. 5, 1946, p. 2.

36. Daily Inter-Lake (Kalispell), Sept. 13, 1946, p. 1.

37. Parks and Carosso, op. cit., p. 305; the text of the Wallace speech can be found in the Billings Gazette, Sept. 13, 1946, p. 1; Bozeman Chronicle, Sept. 21, 1946, p. 1.

Erickson had traveled to Washington and met with Wallace only days before the New York speech.[38] It was agreed on and announced at that time that Wallace would come to Montana to campaign on behalf of the Democratic Party.[39] On September 12th, the same day that Wallace gave his speech in New York, Erickson returned to Montana.

The Republican candidates used Erickson's connection with Wallace to great political advantage. From September 12th until Wallace was released from the cabinet on September 20th, the Republican Party unrelentlessly exploited Erickson's uncomfortable circumstance. As has been demonstrated in relation to the M.V.A. and the O.P.A., the Republicans feared socialistic tendencies and Communist subversion in government. The Wallace speech provided Ecton and the Republicans with the tool it needed to ground their attack. Ecton immediately called for Democratic support to prevent "the Moscow-slanted ideas of Henry Wallace from becoming the foreign policy of the United States."[40] When Truman finally relieved Wallace of his responsibilities, the Republican Congressional candidates in Montana released statements to

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38. Leif Erickson left for Washington with Senator Murray immediately after the State Democratic Convention. In addition to Erickson's meeting with Wallace, he talked extensively with President Truman and Postmaster General Robert Hannegan (Hannegan was the National Democratic Party Chairman in 1946).

39. Billings Gazette, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 1.

40. Bozeman Chronicle, Sept. 18, 1946, p. 1.

the press.

Wesley A. D'Ewart, the incumbent Congressman running against John Holmes in the Second District, supported Truman's action: "If the secretary [Wallace] wants to encourage the Communists of the world he should not be allowed to do it as a spokesman of our great republic."[41]

W.R. Rankin, who was attempting to unseat the incumbent Mike Mansfield in the First District, typified the Republican reaction to the Wallace episode: "Wallace's speech was a sabotage of what I consider to be a forward-looking foreign policy as announced by James Byrnes [Secretary of State] at Stuttgart...", maintained Rankin. The controversy was characteristic of the "confused situation and contradictory policies of the present administration."[42]

Ecton, however, was the most assiduous of the Republicans in his use of the incident. He exploited the episode by emphasizing his fear that Communism was a growing menace in America: "I have been convinced from the beginning", Ecton claimed, "that Wallace [is] a rallying point of Communistic influences trying to dominate our government."[43]

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41. Lewistown Democrat News, Sept. 21, 1946, p. 8.

42. Daily Missoulian, Sept. 21, 1946, p. 8.

43. Ibid.

When Mansfield, Holmes, and Erickson declined to comment, Ecton saw an opportunity and pushed it hard, especially as it related to Erickson. Erickson's connection with Wallace proved politically unhealthy as Ecton reminded the Montana constituents that Wallace, before the New York speech, had agreed to campaign for the Democrats in Montana.[44] Where did Erickson stand? It was Erickson's obligation, Ecton trumpeted, "to tell the voters whether he [was]...on the side of Wallace or the Secretary of State Byrnes in the Russian situation."[45] Additionally, Ecton asked "how the bi-partisan policy of Byrnes and Senator Vandenburg, which reportedly has the sanction of President Truman, would be furthered by electing a Montana Senator [Erickson] who by inference, if not open admission, has accepted the support of elements demanding appeasement of Russia and which are trying to undermine Byrnes?"[46]

Because of the political turbulence relative to his New York speech, Wallace decided he would not campaign on behalf of the Democratic Party and thus would not come to Montana.[47] Irregardless,

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44. Billings Gazette, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 1.

45. Lewistown Democrat News, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 1.

46. Havre Daily, Oct. 21, 1946, p. 1; Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 21, 1946, p. 2.

47. Bozeman Chronicle, Sept. 22, 1946, p. 1; Billings Gazette, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 7.

Erickson's prior meetings with Wallace, coupled with his silence on both the Wallace speech and the M.V.A. issue, certainly proved detrimental to his political aspirations.

THE DEMOCRATS AND OUTSIDE HELP

While the Republicans were expressing a fear of state socialism and Communism, the Democrats prepared a defense of their party. The Democrats arranged for the Secretary of the Interior, J.A. Krug; a Democratic Senator from Idaho, Glen H. Tayler; and the Majority leader of the Senate from Kentucky, Alben W. Barkley, to visit Montana in mid-October.[48]

Ecton, upon hearing about the visits responded from Poplar on October 8th. "I hope", he said, "that the conscripted politicians my opponent is bringing into the state to advise the people to vote for him, will tell what is wrong with preventing Communism from dominating this government, with reducing the national debt, with balancing the budget, and putting an end to regimentation by bureaucrats."[49]

Glen Tayler, a former resident in Great Falls and first term Senator, spoke in Great Falls on October 12th and in Butte on

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48. The Republicans did not sponsor any nationally recognized Republicans to speak on behalf of their party in 1946.

49. Billings Gazette, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 7.

the 15th. Tayler did not attempt to meet the Republican scourage of Communist infiltration, but rather he faced the issues with candid remarks. In regards to the meat controversy, he maintained that the United States was producing more meat than at any other time in her history. Tayler went on to say, "the only difference is that more people have the money to buy it."[50] In terms of the national debt, Tayler reminded the audience of President Harding's fear of deficit spending when he noted, "we had balanced budgets before, but we couldn't eat them."[51]

Secretary of the Interior, Krug, attempted to remain aloof from the political battle in Montana. He was interested rather in the Bureau of Reclamation, Office of Indian Affairs, Grazing Service, and other agencies of the Department of the Interior.[52] It was clear, however, that his main interest was the Missouri and Columbia River proposals.[53] In that sense, Krug's trip was not intended to provide Erickson with a viable political spokesman. Senator Murray, most singularly responsible for Krug's presence in Montana, put the

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50. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 13, 1946, p. 1.

51. Ibid.

52. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 15, 1946, p. 4.

53. Immediately upon his return to Washington, Krug recommended to Congress that they establish a regional power authority which would co-ordinate all public power programs in that region.

purpose of Krug's trip into perspective when he noted that it was not a "political barnstorming tour".[54]

Both Leif Erickson and Senator Murray met Krug in Billings on October 12th. After speaking in Billings on "the development of the West", Krug and Erickson flew to Great Falls.[55] Again Krug's talk was sterile of political controversy. The Republicans did not expect Krug to diplomatically avoid the campaign. Erickson had been faithful in his active support to programs for the development of Montana water, and thus the Republicans expected Krug to forcefully support Erickson. As it was, however, Krug left Erickson's defense to Senate majority leader Albin Barkley.

Senator Barkley arrived in Helena on October 21st. He proceeded to overtly engage the Republican challenge at a Democratic rally held that same day. Barkley defended his party by recalling the ostensible conditions of fear and need during the early years of the depression, and classically, relating these problems to the Harding Administration:

> "The truth is that the policies of the Republican Party actually foster Communism. Communism grows out of discontent and fear of economic inequality. Policies of the Republican leaders brought this country to the lowest economic level in history in 1932 and if that condition had continued for

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54. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 15, 1946, p. 4.

55. Ibid.

> a little longer it would have afforded the breeding place for more Communism than was ever dreamed of in the United States."[56]

Barkley went on to say that the Republicans were guilty of "political bankruptcy and cowardice", on what he said was a nationwide attempt to "scare the American people" on the subject of Communism.[57]

Barkley had arrived in Montana the day after Truman released Wallace from his cabinet. Barkley did not mention the incident specifically, but did note that he felt it would be disastrous if the "world should obtain the impression that the President, the Secretary of State, and the [U.S.] delegates to the international conferences were repudiated by the American people."[58]

Both Tayler and Barkley attempted to defend the Democratic Party by relating the policies of the Hoover administration and the Republicans to the "Great Depression". In that respect, Tayler and Barkley met the Republican's fear of governmental controls with a recollection of the alleged causes and corresponding problems of the depression.

It is difficult to ascertain the impact of the Democrat's

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56. People's Voice (Helena), Oct. 25, 1946, p. 1.

57. Montana Standard (Butte), Oct. 22, 1946, p. 2.

58. People's Voice (Helena), Oct. 25, 1946, p. 1.

attempt to secure support from party members of national rank. Krug's appearange in Montana was not a political move designed to provide active support for Erickson. Senators Tayler and Barkley, on the other hand, made an explicit attempt to defend the Democratic Party. The Senators' efforts were somewhat nullified, however, when the Montana press overlooked most of their press releases. If Tayler and Barkley were given press room it was, for the most part, relagated in a brief summary form to the inside folds of the newspaper. Only the Great Falls Tribune and the People's Voice (Helena) covered the situation on page one. There can be little doubt that the limited press coverage detracted from potential impact Barkley and Tayler could have made on the Democratic campaign.

THE MONTANA CITIZENS COUNCIL

The Montana Citizens Council, organized in Helena on September twenty-ninth, did much to further Ecton's claims that Communist subversion was destroying democracy. Although it publicly endorsed no candidate and maintained it was non-partisan, the Council left no doubt that its principle opponent in the 1946 campaign, as in 1944, was Leif Erickson.[59]

E.G. Toomy, Helena attorney, was the featured speaker during the organizational meetings in Helena. In his presentation, Toomy

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59. Great Falls Tribune, Sept. 30, 1946, p. 1.

mentioned Erickson by name and sought to link him to the Political Action Committee (P.A.C.) and through it to the Communist party. The objective of the group, Toomy explained, was to oppose "...the P.A.C., C.I.O., or any other organization that tries to come in and dominate the state."[60]

There has been some speculation that the Montana Citizens Council was not non-partisan and that it was influenced by the Anaconda Company. Miles Romney, editor of the Western News in Libby, contended that the Council was organized by George I. Martin, the state manager of the Associated Industries of Montana.[61]

In any case, the Council was vigorous in its attempt to reinforce faith in the American system. Larry Smith and Fulton Lewis, N.B.C. news commentators, campaigned on behalf of the Council. Both Lewis and Smith canvassed the state discussing the preservation of "real American principles" and its relation to the "spread of Communism and other subversive ideas."[62]

In addition to Smith and Lewis, the Council acquired the services of George Washington Robnett of Chicago. He was Secretary of the

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60. Ibid.

61. Romney's inference is that Martin, as state manager of the Associated Industries, received much influence from the Anaconda Company, Western News (Libby), Oct. 24, 1946, p. 4.

62. Larry Smith speaking to five-hundred people at the Judith Theatre in Lewistown, Lewistown Democrat News, Oct. 27, 1946, p. 1.

National Laymen's Council, Church League of America, and editor of their official publication, "News and Views".[63] Robnett was a professed expert on Communism and consequently toured the state discussing the "ills" of such a system. He discussed the subversive techniques employed by Communists, arguing that "Communism can do damage in America only through the collaboration it gets from the well meaning persons who lend their prestige and names to high-sounding causes."[64]

Remarks such as these, coupled with the Republicans' attempt to associate Erickson with the P.A.C. and ultimately Communism, provided the foundation for the Republican campaign.

THE POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE AND ERICKSON

The Political Action Committee was developed in 1939 by the C.I.O. labor organization. It was organized in an attempt to enable the C.I.O. to gain influencial political support for its interests.[65] The P.A.C. was exempt from the Corrupt Practices Act, insofar as political expenditures were concerned. Consequently, it maintained a huge political fund and thereby ably helped to finance the campaigns

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63. Lewistown Democrat News, Oct. 11, 1946, p. 8.

64. Ibid.

65. U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 92, Part 12, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1946), p. A. 3859.

of carefully selected candidates.[66]

It was alleged that the P.A.C., early in its development, provided the major avenue by which the Communists infiltrated labor.[67] The complete validity of such an accusation has always been difficult to substantiate. It is necessary to understand, however, that by 1946 the Montana press almost assumed there was an inate connection.

It will be remembered that the Democratic primary stimulated the claim that Erickson was supported by the P.A.C. and outside funds. With that as a base, the Republicans reminded voters of the role the P.A.C. played in the 1944 Gubernatorial race. The Daniels County Leader (Scobey) and the Big Timber Pioneer printed these remarks about Erickson and his relation to the P.A.C. in 1944:

> "Glen Zorn, a recognized Montana Communist and former State Chairman, who was also secretary to the Silver Bow County P.A.C., had this to say in his summary to the P.A.C. after the 1944 election: 'We think the State Council [P.A.C.] was correct in choosing Erickson as its candidate.... We feel that our State Council and candidate Erickson would have fared much better by...telling the people that...Communists and C.I.O. and A.F.L. trade unionists and farmers and others are working together for the common people....' Ira Siebrasse of Great Falls, who is the unofficial secretary of the Communist party in Montana, bragged at the Communist convention there last July 6th

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66. Ibid.

67. Representative George Dondero of Michigan discussed a School for Political Action Techniques and its close association with suspected Communists in: U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 92, Part 5, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 6699.

/1946/ that they are holding Erickson to his promise of two years ago that if elected this time 10% of his appointments will go to the Communist party."[68]

Such comments and notions were central to what was easily the most potent aspect of the Republicans' attack on Erickson.

J. Edgar Hoover supplied validity to the Republicans' fear of Communist subversion in an anti-communist speech to the American Legion on September 13th. George Gossman, the Montana Republican Campaign Chairman, made it a point to attend Hoover's speech, and on his return to Montana, used it to quicken the pace of the Republican attack. "J. Edgar Hoover declared that Communism was the number one problem of the country", Gossman reported in Missoula, "and I know that some support for the Democratic candidate for the United States Senator /Erickson/ is coming from subversive elements - and our big fight is against Communism - it is the big danger to this country."[69]

While the Republicans were attempting to connect Erickson to Communism, he was endeavoring to remind the constituents of the disastrous drop in farm prices under the Coolidge administration after World War I.[70]

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68. Daniels County Leader (Scobey), Oct. 3, 1946, p. 4; Big Timber Pioneer, Oct. 24, 1946, p. 4.

69. Wolf Point Herald, Sept. 30, 1946, p. 6.

70. Erickson recalled that on January one, 1920, wheat was

On October 19th in Glasgow, Erickson attacked Ecton by questioning the viability of his plan to cut back federal spending. He suggested that Ecton's proposals rang of "false economy". "[Ecton] is cutting the throat of potential progress", Erickson argued, "Dams will not be built nor any reclamation projects completed. I am for economy naturally but not at the expense...of Montana development."[71]

Erickson's return relative to the Communist speal permeating the political arena was simple and concise, "My record and experience in public life constitute an open book and if anyone can read any Communistic tendencies into it, I should like to see the page."[72]

In 1946, Chet Kinsey was the executive secretary of the Montana Chapter of the P.A.C. Kinsey retained the position from Jerry O'Connell who was the executive secretary in 1944.[73]

From Glendive on October 11th, Kinsey publicly announced that

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$2.50 a bushel in his home town of Sidney. By January one, 1921, wheat had dropped to $.83 a bushel. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 4.

71. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 19, 1946, p. 4.

72. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 9, 1946, p. 4.

73. After the 1944 campaign, O'Connell joined the Democratic Organization in the state of Washington. By 1946, he had become the executive secretary of the Democratic Central Committee in that state.

he would follow O'Connell's 1944 P.A.C.'s endorsement of Erickson.[74] Not only did the P.A.C. endorse Erickson, but they explicitely proclaimed support for John Holmes and Mike Mansfield, both Democratic candidates for the House.

Immediately the P.A.C. began circulating handbills calling for the defeat of Ecton. The handbills discussed the labor record of Ecton while he was a member of the Montana Legislature.[75] They were signed, "Circulated and paid for by the Montana Council for Progressive Political Action, Chester Kinsey, Executive Secretary, Great Falls."[76] The Republicans used the handbills as evidence that Erickson was actively supported by the P.A.C.

George Demko, Valley County Republican Central Committee chairman, exploited the incident when he said, "The Democrats cannot deny the P.A.C. support they are getting in this election, which was also revealed in campaign contributions accepted...from P.A.C. sources outside Montana."[77]

Additionally, Ecton used the P.A.C.'s support of Erickson to

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74. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 12, 1946, p. 4.

75. Zales N. Ecton, Personal Manuscript Collection, Montana State University Library, Bozeman, 1946-1952.

76. Ibid.

77. Glasgow Courier, Oct. 31, 1946, p. 1.

question the silence of the Democrats on the Wallace speech. "Perhaps their silence has been inspired by the awareness that the P.A.C. has a large campaign fund," Ecton said, "but I cannot believe that money ...can dupe the workers and farmers to sell their birthplace - Americanism...for a mess of Soviet pottage."[78]

What Ecton called the "kiss of death" for Erickson took place when A. Ossipor, broadcasting for Moscow radio via England, endorsed those Congressional candidates that were backed by the C.I.O., P.A.C. The transmission was in English and noted that the election was not between Democrats and Republicans but between "progressives and reactionaries".[79]

Ecton immediately exploited the Moscow endorsement. "My opponent [Erickson] has the P.A.C.'s backing and, hence", Ecton said, "has the Moscow radio's endorsement."[80]

At this same time, Governor Sam Ford blasted the P.A.C. in a campaign tour in Northeastern Montana. In Scobey on October 19th, Ford said, "The Communist controlled P.A.C. is avowedly and wholeheartedly devoted to overthrowing the constitutional laws of the

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78. Montana Standard (Butte), Sept. 24, 1946, p. 2.

79. Montana Standard (Butte), Oct. 28, 1946, p. 2; Miles City Star, Oct. 30, 1946, p. 2; Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 28, 1946, p. 3; Billings Gazette, Oct. 28, 1946, p. 3.

80. Billings Gazette, Oct. 28, 1946, p. 3.

state of Montana.... The P.A.C. movement is one of the most serious threats to our nation ever developed."[81] By the last day in October, Ford was in Opheim telling listeners that "the Communists of this country have practically taken over the Democratic Party in Montana."[82]

On October 22nd, Daniel C. Dempsey, a Cascade County attorney, spoke to a Democratic rally at Sun River. He was attempting to discuss the Great Depression and relate it to the Republican Party. "The Republicans are clamoring for a change", Dempsey said, but "our memory is not so poor that we cannot remember what the Republicans term the 'good old days'".[83]

On October 19th, Erickson again reacted strongly to the Republican 'smear tactics' and cast doubt on the Republican's claim that they could reduce taxes.[84] He repeatedly hinted that G.O.P. control offered only another depression. According to Erickson, Republican arguments centered around Communism and taxes:

> "We are just as anxious," he said, "as the Republicans to retain the free economic system. Communism cannot exist when people are secure.... Communism can only

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81. Daniels County Leader (Scobey), Oct. 24, 1946, p. 1; Dawson County Review, (Glendive), Oct. 31, 1946, p. 1.

82. Glasgow Courier, Oct. 31, 1946, p. 1.

83. Great Falls Tribune, Oct. 31, 1946, p. 1.

84. Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Oct. 25, 1946, p. 2.

come out of chaos. The road of reaction is the road to Communism. We were closest to Communism in 1933."[85]

In Anaconda on October 26th, Erickson attacked the Republican election campaign as "Hitlerlike". "Hitler and Smith, head of the American First Party, followed a set pattern of calling everyone opposed to them Communists and unpatriotic." Erickson continued, "This is the pattern followed in the campaign...against me."[86]

Before and during the 1946 Congressional elections, both James Farley (a former Democratic National Chairman) and Bob Hannegan (the 1946 National Chairman) made statements illuding to Communist infiltration into the Democratic Party. On September 5th, Farley declined an invitation to attend the New York Democratic Convention. At that time Farley argued that "the Democratic Party is now in the throes of trying to rid itself of the Communist and Communist fellowtraveler element which attached itself to the Party for its own subversive ends. Leadership which continues to play ball with that un-American element faces rejection by the rank and file of the Democratic Party and make no mistake about it."[87]

Only days before the election, Hannegan, in a national radio

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85. Ibid.

86. Bozeman Chronicle, Oct. 27, 1946, p. 1.

87. People's Voice (Helena), Nov. 1, 1946, p. 3.

broadcast, demonstrated a concern that the Communists had made gains in the Democratic Party.[88]

Both Farley and Hannegan, unintentionally, aided the Republicans in their campaign effort in Montana. In the closing days of the campaign, the Republicans used their corresponding statements in news releases, campaign speeches, and political advertisements.[89]

Again in Missoula on October 30th, Governor Ford insisted that "Communism [was] an important issue," and asserted that "Communists, through the P.A.C., have virtually taken over the Democratic Party."[90]

On November 2nd in Billings, Ecton summarized the last two weeks of the Republican campaign when he said that Erickson "has not repudiated the endorsement of the P.A.C., with its Moscow blessing, and we must assume he accepts it with all its implications."[91]

At no time during the election did any Republican candidate ever claim that Erickson was a Communist. It is apparent, however, that they felt Erickson was in "bad company" and consequently guilty by association.

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88. Miles City Star, Nov. 3, 1946, p. 11.

89. Independent Record (Helena), Oct. 25, 1946, p. 10; People's Voice (Helena), Nov. 1, 1946, p. 3; Miles City Star, Nov. 3, 1946, p. 11.

90. Bozeman Chronicle, Oct. 31, 1946, p. 6.

91. Independent Record (Helena), Nov. 2, 1946, p. 1.

There were many local issues in Montana in 1946. A brief survey could include the wool market, the sugar beet harvest, displaced veterans, a shortage of housing, rural electrification, farm subsidies, high freight rates, the silver problem and a need for better stock marketing. These as well as others, however, had little political significance in 1946.

As has been demonstrated, the 1946 campaign saw the Republicans take to offensive and continually attempt to force Erickson to react to charges and insinuations. Like Erickson's defeat in the 1944 Gubernatorial race and the controversial tenor of the primary, the defensive nature of the Democratic campaign provided the Republicans with an advantage. Irregardless, there were no visible signs of disillusionment or pessimism among the Montana Democrats. The general sentiment of Erickson's supporters on the eve of the election was best expressed by the New York Times when it predicted a "close race".[92]

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92. New York Times, Nov. 3, 1946, Part IV, p. 11.

IV

"The Issues and a Turn Right?"

MONTANA: A REFLECTION

To the delight of the conservatives, the first Republican Senator in Montana's political history was elected on November 4th. Ecton dominated the voting statistics by gathering 101,901 votes and forty-one counties, while Erickson claimed only fifteen counties and 86,476 votes.[1]

Although Ecton's victory broke a certain continuity in Montana politics, his victory was part of the 1946 natural political pattern. In examining the reasons for Ecton's victory, it is significant to recognize that the G.O.P. stimulated a landslide more productive of Congressional seats than in any election since the 1920's.[2] The administration's defeat was so total that Arkansas Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright suggested that "President Truman should appoint a Republican Secretary of State and resign from office" thereby giving

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1. See Appendix II.

2. Nelson Poynter, ed., Politics in America 1945-68, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1969, p. 2; Henry B. Parks and Vincent P. Carosso, Recent America A History Since 1933, (New York: Thomas Y. Cronwell Company, 1963), p. 306; Time, Vol. 48, Nov. 18, 1946, p. 21: The G.O.P. won thirteen Senate races, increasing its total there to 51; the Democrats lost 12 and thus found their number in the upper house reduced to 47. In the House of Representatives the two party line-up was 246 to 188 in favor of the Republicans. In addition, the G.O.P. elected 25 governors and a host of lesser state officials.

the G.O.P. control of the White House as well.[3]

Many of the national issues which stimulated the resounding Republican victory were readily reflected in Montana. Nationally, price controls, meat shortages, foreign policy (the Wallace speech), and the P.A.C. and Communism proved to be key issues.[4] Housing shortages, strikes, labor laws, high taxes, and government spending were other grievances that stimulated the Republicans to coin their campaign slogan, "Had Enough".[5]

This same public discontentment was also prominent in Montana. The O.P.A., the M.V.A., and the meat shortages issues were couched in a rhetorical resentment of governmental controls and bureaucracy.[6] Ecton continually claimed that the "New Deal" and its relation to a planned economy was leading America towards Communism. The Democrats (i.e., Erickson, Tayler, Barkley) retorted by attempting to cause the constituents to recall the depression and ultimately relate it to the

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3. For the totality of Fulbright's remarks see, New York Times, Nov. 7, 1946, p. 3.

4. For a survey indicating the key issues see, U.S. News, "Key Issues in 1946 Election: Price Control at Top of List", Vol. 21, Oct. 25, 1946, p. 25.

5. The Democrats, on the other hand, coined the slogan, "Action Not Reaction". Sanders County Independent Ledger (Thompson Falls), Oct. 23, 1946, p. 3.

6. The New Republic, "Election Roundup", Vol. 115, Nov. 18, 1946, p. 647; U.S. News, "Key Issues in 1946 Election: Price Control at Top of List", Vol. 21, Oct. 15, 1946, p. 28.

Hoover administration.

ECTON AND THE "COMMUNIST BOGEY"

Ecton feared that Communist subversion was destroying democracy in America, and in that sense, he attempted to connect Erickson to Communism. Ecton claimed that Erickson was in "bad company" in relation to his association with the P.A.C. Erickson's endorsement by the P.A.C., both in 1944 and 1946, coupled with Wallace's speech and radio Moscow's endorsement of P.A.C. candidates, only served to reinforce Republican claims that Erickson was associated with Communism.[7] Additionally, J. Edgar Hoover's anti-communist speech was used effectively by the Republicans (i.e., Ecton, Ford, Morrow) to lend validity to their claim that creeping Communism had become a serious menace in America. Ecton initiated his attack using Erickson's meeting with Wallace just prior to his "soft-line" foreign policy speech in New York, and Erickson's corresponding silence on the issue, to cast doubt on Erickson's opposition to Communism. In extending that attack, Ecton was able to question Erickson's character and professionalism by publicizing Erickson's simultaneous service on both the Railroad Mediation Board and the State Supreme Court.[8]

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7. The P.A.C. was strong enough in Montana in 1946 to mail to every registered voter a booksized pamphlet attacking Ecton. The handout served to advertise their support of Erickson.

8. See Footnotes 19 and 26, Chapter V.

All of these political tools allowed the Republican Party to capitalize on the public's general dissatisfaction with wartime controls and shortages.[9] The attempt to identify all liberal programs (i.e., M.V.A. and O.P.A.) and individuals (i.e., Erickson) with Communism was a reflection of the Republican Party's national campaign.[10] Communism, in this respect, was a major issue, nationally as well as locally, in the 1946 elections.[11]

Without the advent of scientifically designed survey data, it is difficult to determine the impact of the "red scare" tactics in Montana. Burton K. Wheeler has indicated that the continual use of the "Communist bogey" in Montana politics from 1920 should have prevented the constituents from being "misled".[12] Both Mike Mansfield and Westley D'Ewart, on the other hand, relayed the belief that the fear of

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9. U.S. News, op. cit., Vol. 21, Oct. 25, 1946, p. 24.

10. Few candidates supported by the P.A.C. did well in 1946. Of the 318 candidates endorsed by the P.A.C., only 73 were elected. For additional information on the P.A.C. and the 1946 election see, New York Times, Nov. 11, 1946, p. 1.

11. Arthur Krock felt that the public's resentment of a Communist influence in the Democratic Party was the fundamental issue. New York Times, Nov. 10, 1946, IV, p. 3; see also Denna A. Flemming, Origins of the Cold War, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1961), Pp. 430-31. For a review of the candidated and issues by state see, New York Times, IV, Nov. 3, 1946, p. 11.

12. Burton K. Wheeler, Washington, letter, 27 November, 1970. To the author.

Communism was of considerable importance in the campaign.[13] Additionally, the People's Voice (Helena) felt that such tactics were significant in swinging the independent vote to the Republicans.[14] Although the exact impact is nebulous, the use of the fear of Communism was fundamental to Ecton's attack of Erickson.

OTHER POLITICAL TOOLS

In addition, Montana's traditional sensitivity to the national political environment was also of singular importance in 1946.[15] The national mindedness of the Montana constituent allowed Ecton to easily reshape the national Republican campaign and apply it to Erickson and Montana. Ecton was certainly aided along these lines by the overwhelming support he received from the facilities of the Anaconda press.[16] Little mention was made of the Anaconda Company during the election, but it was well recognized that the Company and its

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13. Mike Mansfield, Washington, letter, 8 December, 1970, to the author; Westley D'Ewart, Wilsall, Montana, letter, 9 December, to the author.

14. People's Voice (Helena), Nov. 22, 1946, p. 3.

15. Thomas Payne, "1956 Elections in Montana", Western Political Quarterly, X. No. 1, March, 1957, p. 127; Thomas Payne, "Montana: Politics Under the Copper Dome", Politics in the American West, ed., Frank H. Jonas. (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1969), p. 204.

16. The New Republic, Vol. 115, Nov. 18, 1946, p. 647.

corresponding newspapers strongly supported Ecton.[17]

In addition, the virulence of the Wheeler-Erickson primary not only caused party diffusion, but provided Ecton with a springboard by which he initiated his campaign.[18] Coupled with the voters' fresh recollection of the primary, Erickson's political background (i.e., association with the M.V.A., P.A.C. in 1944, and the Railroad Mediation Board issue) provided Ecton with a solid foundation upon which he apparently connected Erickson to Communism and governmental controls.

THE CONSTITUENTS: A TURN RIGHT?

Upon examining just the rhetoric of the campaign, it is easy to conclude that Erickson was the victim of a reaction against the "New Deal". The victorious Republican "class of 1946" gained recognition for their opposition to liberalism and certainly represented the Republican Party's most conservative wing.[19] Upon the election of the

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17. In 1944 Erickson spoke out directly against Ford and his relationship to Anaconda, but in 1946 no such attack was prominent. See Merrill G. Burlingame and K. Ross Toole, A History of Montana, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1957), Vol. I, p. 273; People's Voice (Helena), Sept. 22, 1944, p. 1, Col. 1.

18. Burton K. Wheeler, op. cit., letter; Wheeler feels that the "Interests" contributed to the defeat of the Democratic Party in 1946 by supporting Erickson in the primary, and then switching their support to Ecton during the general election, Burton K. Wheeler, personal interview with Michael P. Malone, Assistant Professor of History, M.S.U., May 23, 1970.

19. Among the new Senators were John W. Bricker (R - Ohio); Irving M. Ives (R - N.Y.); William E. Jenner (R - Ind.); William F.

conservative 1946 Congress, there was immediate speculation that a new cycle in American politics had been initiated and in that sense, 1946 saw the destruction of the Democratic coalition (labor, farmers and minorities).[20] Ultimately, the Republican-dominated Eightieth Congress bitterly opposed the "New Deal" and attempted to re-assert the pre-Rooseveltian governmental limitations.[21] Such conservative notions and policies were only temporary, however.[22]

Since the attack on the "New Deal" by the Eightieth Congress, the general policies initiated, in large part, by Franklin D. Roosevelt have never seriously been threatened. The general belief that the Republican victory indicated a reaction against the "New Deal" is incorrect. While the Republican candidates themselves opposed many aspects of the "New Deal", their election did not constitute a reaction

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Knowland (R - Calif.), who had been appointed to the Senate in 1945; George W. Malone (R - Nev.); Joseph R. McCarthy (R - Wis.); Arthur V. Watkins (R - Utah); John J. Williams (R - Del.); with the exception of Ives, all represented their party's most conservative wing.

20. U.S. News, "The New Cycle In Politics: Break in Democratic Coalition", Vol. 21, Nov. 15, 1946, p. 3.

21. Barton J. Bernstein, Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), p. 204.

22. President Truman defeated Thomas Dewey in 1948 by, in part, concentrating heavily on one subject - "that notorious Republican Eightieth Congress". The Truman strategy climaxed in a hammering on the Republican Congressional record of 1947-48 as a consistent assault on the interests of ordinary Americans and the "New Deal". See Eric F. Goldman, The Crucial Decade, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and Random House, Inc., 1956), p. 85.

by the voters against the totality of the "New Deal". It was, rather, a "mass" revulsion of Truman's handling of post war problems coupled with an alleged Communist influence in the Democratic Party.[23] In that respect, Ecton effectively connected Erickson to many of the negative aspects of the unsettled atmosphere of the post war era. Erickson, then, was ultimately the victim of the Montana constituents' interregnum dissatisfaction with Truman and the Democratic Party.[24]

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23. In a survey taken by Fortune after the 1946 election, it was determined that the American voter favored the basic concepts of the "New Deal", Fortune, Vol. 35, March, 1947, p. 6. Dan Whetstone felt that the Republican victory represented a massive human movement that was relatively unaffected by publicity, speeches, and propaganda, Pioneer Press (Cut Bank), Nov. 15, 1946, Editorial page.

24. The 1948 elections in Montana were a virtual Democratic landslide. Truman defeated Dewey for the Presidency by 22,301 votes. Senator Murray (Dem.) overwhelmed the conservative Davis by 30,740 votes. Representative Mansfield (Dem.) won over Angstman (Rep.) in the First District by a plurality of 30,740. Additionally, Governor Sam Ford (Rep.) was defeated by the Democrat John Bonner by 26,475 votes. The sweep was so successful that the Democrats won every contest for state office. The sole Republican survivor of the Democratic landslide was Westley D'Ewart. He defeated Fraser (Dem.) in the Second District by the meager plurality of 2,413.

APPENDIX

Appendix I

V

"An Analysis of the Election Results"

The election was certainly not as close as had been predicted.[1] Ecton's victory was a convincing one as he was able to gain a clear plurality of 15,425 votes.[2] It is the purpose of this analysis to determine the source of Ecton's support and ultimately the catagorical key to the Republican success. In addition to an analysis of the Senatorial race, the Congressional races in Districts One and Two will also be surveyed. A comparative study is significant as it will help to determine the depth of the 1946 Republican victory in Montana.

It should be mentioned that besides Ecton and Erickson, Floyd Jones (Socialist) was also in competition for the Senatorial seat. He gained a total of only 2,189 votes which, of course, was of little significance.[3] Only the county of Mussellshell could have been affected by the numerical influence of Floyd Jones. Erickson won a majority in Mussellshell by the slight advantage of only twenty-eight votes.[4] The forty-five votes cast for Mr. Jones could have altered

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1. New York Times, July 21, 1946, Section IV, p. 6, Col. 5.
2. Appendix II.
3. Appendix II.
4. Appendix II.

the political allegiance of that particular county, but he certainly had little or no numerical influence on the outcome of the Senatorial race.

Mike Mansfield (Democrat) was able to defeat W.R. Rankin for Representative by a clear margin of 12,460 votes.[5] Mansfield gained ten of seventeen counties located in the First District providing the Democrats with their only Congressional delegate to be derived from the 1946 election. It is of some interest to note that Mike Mansfield defeated incumbent Zales N. Ecton for the Senatorial seat in 1952, and has since gained national recognition as Majority Leader of the Senate.

Wesley D'Ewart clearly defeated John J. Holmes in the Second District for Representative by a plurality of 9,743.[6] D'Ewart managed to acquire support from twenty-seven of the thirty-nine counties in the Eastern District.[7] Floyd Jones, running on the Socialist ticket, again proved the impotence of that party by polling only 841 votes.[8]

The voter turn-out did not express any greater enthusiasm on

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5. Appendix II.

6. Appendix II.

7. Appendix V.

8. Appendix II.

behalf of the constituency than was expressed in any previous year.[9] The total votes cast in the election did not break the continuity of the election totals compiled from 1928 to 1952. Voting enthusiasm, as expressed at the polls, then, did coincide with the normal pattern and certainly remained consistent with past results.

In an attempt to incorporate furthur analysis, I have provided for the economic, numerical, and geographic categorization of Montana. Those counties dominated by labor, the wheat farmer, ranching, the dairy industry, and lumber will be studied and their respective voting allegiances traced. The population will be analyzed, not only as it relates to either the urban or rural areas of Montana, but also by size based on population. Finally, the voting patterns of the Congressional Districts will be studied in an attempt to discover significant voting allegiances and ultimately the source of the candidates support.

It should be noted that a single county will, at times, qualify under more than one category. It is suggested that precinct comparisons would have been a valuable tool in this study, but unfortunately such returns are not obtainable. The analysis must, of necessity then, be based on official aggregate data. It should be

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9. Appendix XII.

recognized that certain weaknesses are apparent in relation to the use of aggregate data in an election analysis. It is possible that the data available disallows the analyst from determining variations within categories. In other words, it is possible that there will be, at times, a greater variation within the specified categories than between them.[10]

Scientifically designed surveys are sometimes more reliable in determining group voting patterns. Personal characteristics, for example, can be used to great advantage in indicating voting patterns regardless of geographical location. Aggregate data can stimulate false assumptions about the allegiances of particular subgroups (i.e., the blue collar vote in a county). Although the blue collar faction might, for instance, be of major significance in a county, the voting patterns of that county do not necessarily represent the allegiances of the blue collar worker.

Unfortunately, there were no scientific surveys conducted in Montana during the 1946 election, thus eliminating any large body of hard data that certainly would have facilitated a more intrinsic study.

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10. For further insight into the problems related to the use of aggregate data see, Erwin K. Scheuch, "Cross-National Comparisons Using Aggregate Data: Some Substantive and Methodological Problems", eds., Richard L. Merritt and Stein Rokkan, Comparing Nations (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), Pp. 131-67; W.S. Robinson, "Ecological Correlations and the Behavior of Individuals", American Sociological Review, Vol. 15, June, 1950, pp. 351-57.

It might also be mentioned that the author recognizes that a multivariat analysis relative to the use of charts would have been more high powered, but the bivariat investigation fulfills the limited purposes of this study.

The basic framework for the functional categorization used in this study was derived, in part, from Joseph Kelly's unpublished Masters Thesis.[11]

THE LABOR FORCE

The labor counties were categorized by compiling the counties with the largest percentage of blue collar workers including such industry groups as construction, manufacturing, mining, forestry and fisheries, and transportation and utilities. Any county having a blue collar labor force of over 40% was considered significant in terms of representing the role of labor in the election.[12]

Leif Erickson was able to elicit support from four of the six labor counties. (See table one)

Two of those four, Silver Bow and Deer Lodge, represented the major centers of unionization in Montana. Both counties housed elements of organized labor partially as a result of the urban

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11. Joseph P. Kelly, "Study in the Defeat of Senator Wheeler", Unpublished Masters Thesis, Montana State University, 1959, p. 59.

12. Appendix VI.

centers of Butte and Anaconda. It should also be pointed out that Mussellshell and Lincoln, the remaining labor counties that supported Erickson, are also categorized as more urban than rural.

TABLE ONE

VOTE ON SENATORIAL RACE BY LABOR COUNTY

	Deer Lodge	Flathead	Lincoln	Mineral	Mussellshell	Silver Bow
Erickson:	3,527	3,116	1,375	339	1,154	11,442
Ecton:	2,062	3,875	1,158	357	1,126	7,442
	5,589	6,991	2,533	696	2,280	18,884

The labor county analysis shows that Erickson controlled the blue collar vote by a plurality of 5,000.[13] The wide margin was largely due, however, to the overwhelming support fostered in Silver Bow County for Erickson. Silver Bow turned out nearly 18,000 voters in 1946, or about ten percent of the total vote cast in all of Montana. While Erickson was able to control Silver Bow with a strong plurality of 4,000, he managed victory by a margin of only 1,000 votes in the five remaining labor counties.

Erickson, then, certainly did not completely dominate all of the blue collar vote in the 1946 election. In this same respect, however, over thirteen percent of the total vote collected by Erickson was derived specifically from his victory in Silver Bow County. Thus,

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13. Appendix II.

a significant portion of Erickson's support (labor and otherwise) came from Butte and Silver Bow County, rather than from a cross-sectioned, heterogeneous following.

Five of the six labor counties discussed are located in the First District. Mike Mansfield gained the resounding support of the labor vote by claiming all of the labor counties in that district. Mansfield's over-all support by the blue collar worker was more convincing than Erickson's. Mansfield not only claimed Silver Bow County by a plurality of 7,000 votes, but he also received a 4,000 vote margin from the remaining four labor counties, in District One.[14] The reason can be most readily explained by recognizing that while Mansfield gained the support of Mineral and Flathead Counties, Erickson lost to Ecton.

In terms of the Second District, the lone labor county, Mussellshell, went to John Holmes, the Democratic candidate for Congress.

WHEAT COUNTIES

The wheat counties, namely north of the Missouri River and east of the Continental Divide, were defined as any county having 70% or more of its agricultural cash receipts derived from crops.

Erickson managed a slight majority as he captured four of the

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14. Appendix II.

six wheat counties.[15] Erickson's advantage becomes more distinct, however, when the voting statistics are compared. (See table two)

TABLE TWO

VOTE ON SENATORIAL RACE BY WHEAT COUNTY

	Chouteau	Daniels	Hill	Pondera	Roosevelt	Sheridan
Voted for:						
Erickson	1,524	582	2,043	1,174	1,504	1,330
Ecton	1,318	831	1,959	857	1,667	1,040
	2,842	1,413	4,002	2,031	3,171	2,370

As was previously mentioned, Ecton carried two wheat counties (i.e., Daniels and Roosevelt). He won the first by the slim margin of 249 votes, and the last by only 412.[16] In totality, Erickson out-polled Ecton in the wheat counties by claiming 8,175 votes to Ecton's 6,572.

The Montana Farmer's Union, in 1946, claimed 6,403 dues-paying members. The six wheat counties contained 3,218 - more than half of the group's members.[17] Erickson's showing in the wheat counties, then, is some indication that he received the support of the farming community in Montana.

It is interesting to note that in the Second District, John

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15. Appendix VII.

16. Appendix II.

17. Kelly, op. cit., p. 63.

Holmes carried the same wheat counties as Erickson. D'Ewart, like Ecton, carried Daniels and Roosevelt Counties by the slim margin of 153 votes.[18] Holmes, however, was not as decisively victorious as Erickson, winning the wheat counties by a margin of only 1,010 votes.

LIVESTOCK COUNTIES

If a county had 70% or more of its agricultural income being derived from livestock, then it was classified as a livestock county.[19] Sixteen counties in Montana met the required specification and were so categorized. These counties are located in southern Montana and are scattered evenly across the state.

Of the sixteen livestock counties, Leif Erickson gained support from only Mussellshell winning by a slim margin of 26 votes. It should be remembered, however, that Mussellshell was the only county in the Eastern District to also be categorized as a labor county.[20] Consequently, the livestock communities' support of Ecton is relatively significant in reflecting the political allegiance of the ranching constituency.

Again the campaign in the Second District, between Wesley D'Ewart and John Holmes, followed the pattern of the Senatorial race in that

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18. Appendix II.

19. Appendix VIII.

20. Appendix VI.

district. D'Ewart carried a majority in all of the eight livestock counties except Mussellshell. Wesley D'Ewart was, however, the director of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, and president of the Farmers Elevator in Wilsall.[21] This, of course, says much in explaining his dominance of the livestock vote.

In the strongly Democratic Western District, Rankin (Republican) managed a majority of the livestock counties by gaining four of seven.

Thus it would appear that the livestock counties adhered to their traditional voting patterns by supporting the Republican Congressional candidates.

LUMBER COUNTIES

Any county that cut 50,000 board feet of lumber or more per year was defined as a lumber county.[22] All of these counties are located on the western side of the Continental Divide in the northwest corner of Montana.

Of the five lumber counties, Zales N. Ecton gained a majority in four. The only lumber county in which Erickson won a plurality, Flathead, is also classified as a labor county.

Since all of the lumber counties are located in the First District, they will not influence the analysis of the Second District.

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21. Glasgow Courier, Oct. 24, 1946, p. 1.

22. Appendix IX.

In the First District, Mansfield again demonstrated Montana's non-partisan voting habits by winning a majority in all five of the lumber counties. The victory, however, was not an easy one as the total plurality vote in the five counties was 3,187.[23]

THE URBAN & RURAL CENTERS

The Bureau of Census, in 1950, indicated that thirteen counties in Montana were supported by cities with a population of more than 5,000.[24] The census also noted that seventeen counties had no town with a total population of more than 1,500 persons. Those counties, then, with a city of more than 5,000 persons will be considered urban, and the counties with no town having a population of more than 1,500 will be considered rural.

Leif Erickson gained a majority in only four of the thirteen urban counties in Montana. (30.8%)[25] (See table three)

As has already been suggested, two of the four, Deer Lodge and Silver Bow, were strong centers of organized labor. In addition, Hill County derived much of its economic support from the wheat farmer.

Zales N. Ecton, then, gained the support of the majority of the urban centers by winning pluralities in the remaining nine urban

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23. Appendix II.

24. Appendix X.

25. Appendix X.

counties.

Of the seventeen rural counties in Montana in 1946, Leif Erickson could gain a majority in only two (Judith Basin and McCone). Not a single wheat county could claim a rural majority, while fifty percent of the sixteen livestock counties were rural in origin. It should be remembered that Ecton successfully polled all but one of the livestock counties.

TABLE THREE

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTIES (URBAN, RURAL, NEITHER) GIVING ALLEGIANCE TO EITHER ECTON OR ERICKSON

	Urban (N=13)	Rural (N=17)	Neither urban or rural (N=26)
Ecton	69.2%	88.2%	96.2%
Erickson	30.8%	11.8%	3.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

There were twenty-six counties that could not be classified as either urban or rural, and of those Erickson received a majority in one.[26] Thus Ecton gained 69.2% of the urban counties, 88.2% of the rural counties, and 96.2% of those counties classified as neither urban or rural. (See table three)

In District One, Mike Mansfield again dominated W.R. Rankin by winning three of the six rural counties, but more significantly,

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26. Appendix X.

five of six urban counties.[27] Although each candidate gained fifty percent of the rural counties, W.R. Rankin out-polled Mansfield in total by 245 votes.[28] Conversely, however, Mansfield was given a plurality of 12,356 in the urban counties of the First District. The counties of Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, and Missoula were critical in the Western District as they contributed forty-three percent of the total vote. Mansfield won all three with a plurality of 12,057 votes.

There are only four urban counties located in the Eastern District. Of these, Wesley D'Ewart won two, Cascade and Hill, while John Holmes won Yellowstone and Fergus counties. Wesley D'Ewart, however, won the total plurality vote by 1,503 votes.[29] In addition, Wesley D'Ewart won nine of the eleven rural counties in the Second District, and eleven of the nineteen counties that were classified as neither urban or rural.

POPULATION

Any county with a total population of over 10,000 was defined as large, and any county with a population under 5,000 was correspondingly defined as small.[30] Those counties categorized as

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27. Appendix IV, X.

28. Appendix II.

29. Appendix II.

30. Appendix XI.

neither large or small (Population between 5,000 and 10,000) will be referred to as middle counties. Bighorn, Carbon, Chouteau, Lake, Ravalli, and Richland were counties not considered urban but still had a population of over 10,000 persons.[31]

By way of analysis, Zales N. Ecton gained pluralities in fifteen of the large counties, while Erickson won majorities in the remaining five. In addition, Erickson managed to gain support from only two of eighteen small counties. Of the eighteen counties that ranged in population from 5,000 to 10,000, Ecton again gained a majority with ten. The large counties were obviously the most critical, and while Erickson won the two largest - Cascade and Silver Bow - he could gain support from only three others winning a total of only twenty-five percent of the large counties.

TABLE FOUR

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTIES (LARGE, SMALL, MIDDLE) GIVING ALLEGIANCE TO EITHER ECTON OR ERICKSON

	Large (N=20)	Small (N=18)	Middle (N=18)
Ecton	75.0%	88.8%	55.5%
Erickson	25.0%	11.2%	44.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

31. Henry K. Shearer, Director, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, The Montana Almanac 1957 (Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1957), pp. 194-95.

Ecton's victory, then, was a convincing one as he gained clear majorities in all of the three population categories (large, small, middle). It is significant to note that Erickson's failure to gain a stronger following from the large counties was certainly detrimental.

In the Western District, Mike Mansfield only won fifty percent of those counties with a population of under 10,000, but he won large pluralities in six of the nine large counties which of course provided him with a decided advantage.

There were only seven large counties located in the Eastern District, and John Holmes gained the majority by winning four. In addition, Holmes won a majority (i.e., six of ten counties) in those counties that ranged in population from 5,000 to 10,000 persons. Thus of the seventeen counties in the Eastern District with a population of 5,000 or more, John Holmes gained a plurality in ten. Wesley D'Ewart, however, won eighteen of the twenty small counties. It is unique, that of the three Congressional races, only in the Second District was the critical vote cast by the constituents of the small counties.

A SUMMARY BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

In District One, the Rocky Mountain area, Leif Erickson managed to win only three of the seventeen counties. His defeat in the Western District is interesting as it is traditionally the Democratic stronghold of Montana.

Of the five counties dominated by a large labor force in the First District, three provided support for Leif Erickson.[32] Deer Lodge and Silver Bow, two of the more unionized counties in Montana, provided Erickson's most reliable pockets of strength throughout the entire election. Lincoln, classified in both the labor and lumber categories, provided the additional county to Erickson.[33] Thus Erickson won only three counties in the Western District, and all of those were labor counties. There were no major crop counties in the Western District, but all seven livestock counties provided additional support for Ecton.

In District Two, Zales N. Ecton received support from twenty-seven of the thirty-nine counties. Six counties were economically subserviant to cash crops (i.e., wheat), and of those Erickson claimed a majority of four. The only labor county in the Eastern District went to Erickson. There are nine counties in Eastern Montana significantly demonstrating an interest in livestock, and of that total, Erickson won a majority in only one.

Erickson, then, was able to claim support from only the labor and wheat counties. In all of the other categories investigated, Ecton easily dominated Erickson.

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32. Appendix XII.

33. Appendix IX.

In the Western District, Mansfield dominated all the areas of categorical analysis except the livestock counties. W.R. Rankin gained a majority of the livestock counties by winning four of seven. There were five labor counties in that District, and Mansfield won a plurality in all five. In addition, Mansfield won all five of those counties that were the major lumber production centers in Montana. Probably the most significant analytical categorization in this Congressional race was the urban designation. Mike Mansfield won five of six of the urban counties, thus controlling those areas that produce over fifty percent of the vote in that district.

The Congressional race in the Eastern District found Wesley D'Ewart winning by a lesser margin that either Mansfield or Ecton. John Holmes won a majority of the wheat counties by gaining pluralities in four of six. The livestock counties supported D'Ewart exclusively, however, by giving him a majority in seven of eight counties. In addition, the overwhelming majority of those counties with a population under 5,000, eighteen of twenty, provided support for D'Ewart. Thus, D'Ewart's domination of the small counties, as well as the livestock counties, probably provided him with the victorious margin.

Traditionally, labor (particularly mine, craft and railroad), and the Farmers Union have furnished the strength for Montana's

liberals.[34] In that sense, Erickson was able to hold the labor and wheat constituencies in line. It will be remembered, however, that even in these categories, Erickson's victory was not overwhelming. Conversely, the traditionally conservative livestock counties provided Ecton with solid support. It is apparent that while neither the liberal nor the conservative strongholds broke the continuity of their respective voting allegiances, the independent voter overwhelmingly supported the conservatives. The inability of Erickson to stimulate a broad based following contributed to his loss of the "swing" vote which ultimately resulted in Ecton's victory.

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34. Jules A. Karlin, "Progressive Politics in Montana", Vol. 1 of A History of Montana, eds., Merrill Burlingame and K. Ross Toole, 3 Vol. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1957), p. 248.

Appendix II

General Election Returns Nov. 5, 1946

United States Senator

County	(Democrat) Leif Erickson	(Republican) Zales Ecton	(Socialist) Floyd Jones
Beaverhead	979	1,732	23
Big Horn	824	1,589	19
Blaine	1,152	1,061	13
Broadwater	368	855	9
Carbon	1,614	2,141	48
Carter	444	549	17
Cascade	9,039	7,120	206
Chouteau	1,524	1,318	19
Custer	1,447	2,164	39
Daniels	582	831	19
Dawson	877	1,573	39
Deer Lodge	3,527	2,062	78
Fallon	420	781	19
Fergus	2,367	2,799	38
Flathead	3,116	3,875	113
Gallatin	1,830	4,416	35
Garfield	397	545	3
Glacier	1,516	1,323	14
Golden Valley	147	415	2

Appendix II (cont.)

County	(Democrat) Leif Erickson	(Republican) Zales Ecton	(Socialist) Floyd Jones
Granite	379	782	11
Hill	2,043	1,959	42
Jefferson	668	795	13
Judith Basin	897	868	10
Lake	1,594	2,463	35
Lewis and Clark	3,750	4,730	77
Liberty	397	436	8
Lincoln	1,375	1,158	51
Madison	630	1,325	18
Mc Cone	663	609	25
Meagher	337	650	12
Mineral	339	357	17
Missoula	4,350	5,793	160
Mussellshell	1,154	1,126	45
Park	1,583	2,613	86
Petroleum	182	205	4
Phillips	1,027	1,254	34
Pondera	1,174	857	21
Powder River	352	697	4
Powell	1,006	1,433	33
Prairie	344	678	12

Appendix II (cont.)

County	(Democrat) Leif Erickson	(Republican) Zales Ecton	(Socialist) Floyd Jones
Ravalli	1,559	2,316	26
Richland	1,264	1,523	18
Roosevelt	1,504	1,667	29
Rosebud	624	1,317	31
Sanders	1,005	1,257	66
Sheridan	1,330	1,040	28
Silver Bow	11,442	7,442	289
Stillwater	641	1,256	10
Sweet Grass	334	941	9
Teton	1,172	1,143	13
Toole	1,416	1,325	19
Treasure	217	383	6
Valley	1,664	1,859	31
Wheatland	442	732	7
Wibaux	313	471	9
Yellowstone	5,155	9,246	127
Total*	86,476	101,901	2,189

(PLURALITY 15,425)

Appendix II (cont.)

Representative In Congress

First District

County	(Democrat) Mike Mansfield	(Republican) W.R. Rankin
Beaverhead	1,265	1,470
Broadwater	530	707
Deer Lodge	4,081	1,642
Flathead	4,034	3,178
Gallatin	2,639	3,667
Granite	553	618
Jefferson	806	692
Lake	1,976	2,128
Lewis and Clark	4,524	4,053
Lincoln	1,546	1,048
Madison	793	1,147
Mineral	414	302
Missoula	6,489	3,993
Powell	1,475	1,022
Ravalli	1,789	2,134
Sanders	1,280	1,055
Silver Bow	13,224	6,102
Total*	47,418	34,958

(PLURALITY 12,460)

Appendix II (cont.)

Representative In Congress

Second District

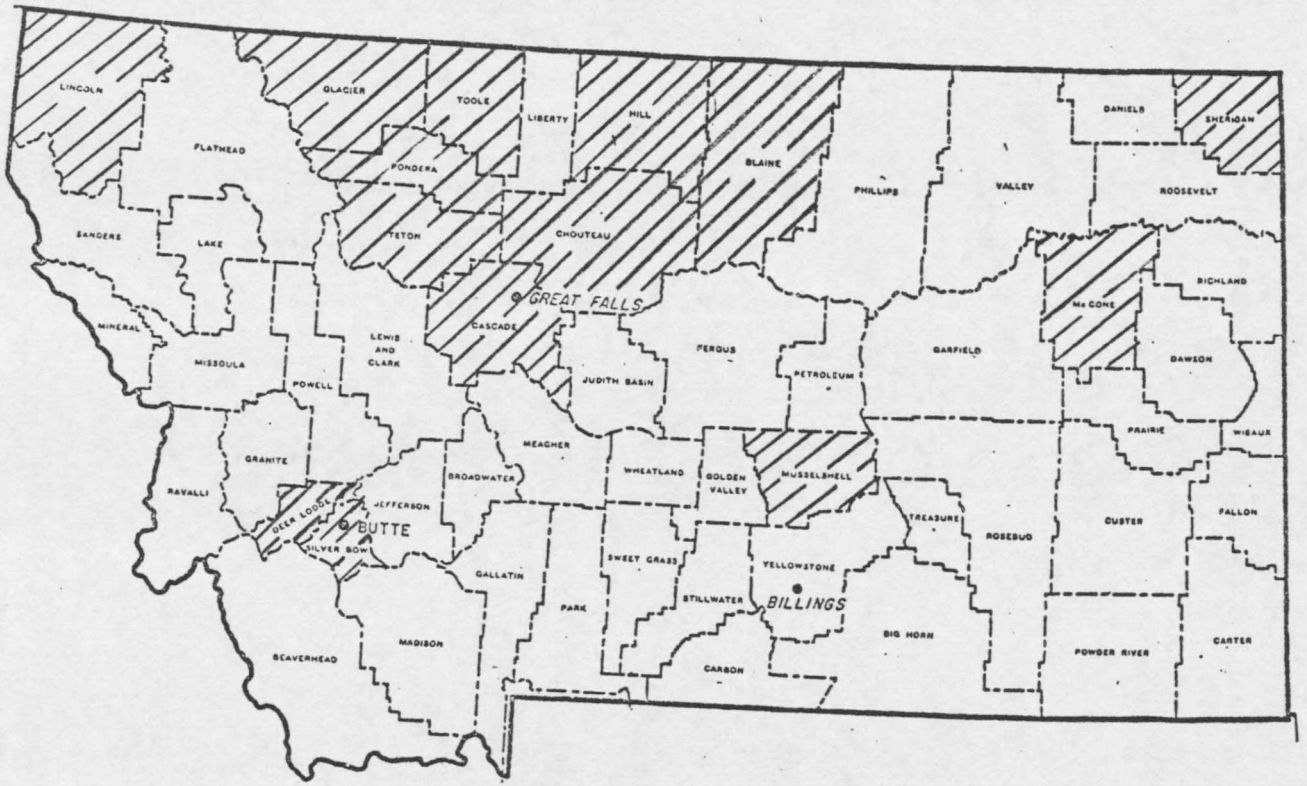
County	(Democrat) John J. Holmes	(Republican) Wesley D'Ewart	(Socialist) Edgar Spriggs
Big Horn	773	1,605	34
Blaine	1,169	1,020	11
Carbon	1,573	2,145	45
Carter	393	556	5
Cascade	8,914	7,305	165
Chouteau	1,550	1,329	10
Custer	1,495	2,093	27
Daniels	629	749	12
Dawson	1,006	1,454	12
Fallon	466	730	10
Fergus	2,462	2,656	40
Garfield	359	561	3
Glacier	1,379	1,385	8
Golden Valley	172	392	3
Hill	2,058	1,967	30
Judith Basin	953	804	10
Liberty	403	405	3
Mc Cone	679	568	21
Meagher	300	676	8

Appendix II (cont.)

County	(Democrat) John J. Holmes	(Republican) Wesley D'Ewart	(Socialist) Edgar Spriggs
Mussellshell	1,213	1,046	34
Park	1,309	2,945	54
Petroleum	166	211	3
Phillips	1,068	1,171	19
Pondera	1,210	802	10
Powder River	309	724	5
Prairie	341	665	11
Richland	1,211	1,484	21
Roosevelt	1,542	1,575	19
Rosebud	606	1,330	17
Sheridan	1,366	929	31
Stillwater	657	1,238	5
Sweet Grass	298	967	5
Teton	1,214	1,078	7
Toole	1,358	1,315	10
Treasure	209	385	4
Valley	1,806	1,692	31
Wheatland	422	730	4
Wibaux	336	421	2
Yellowstone	5,190	9,199	92
Total*	48,564	58,307	841

(PLURALITY 9,743)

Appendix III

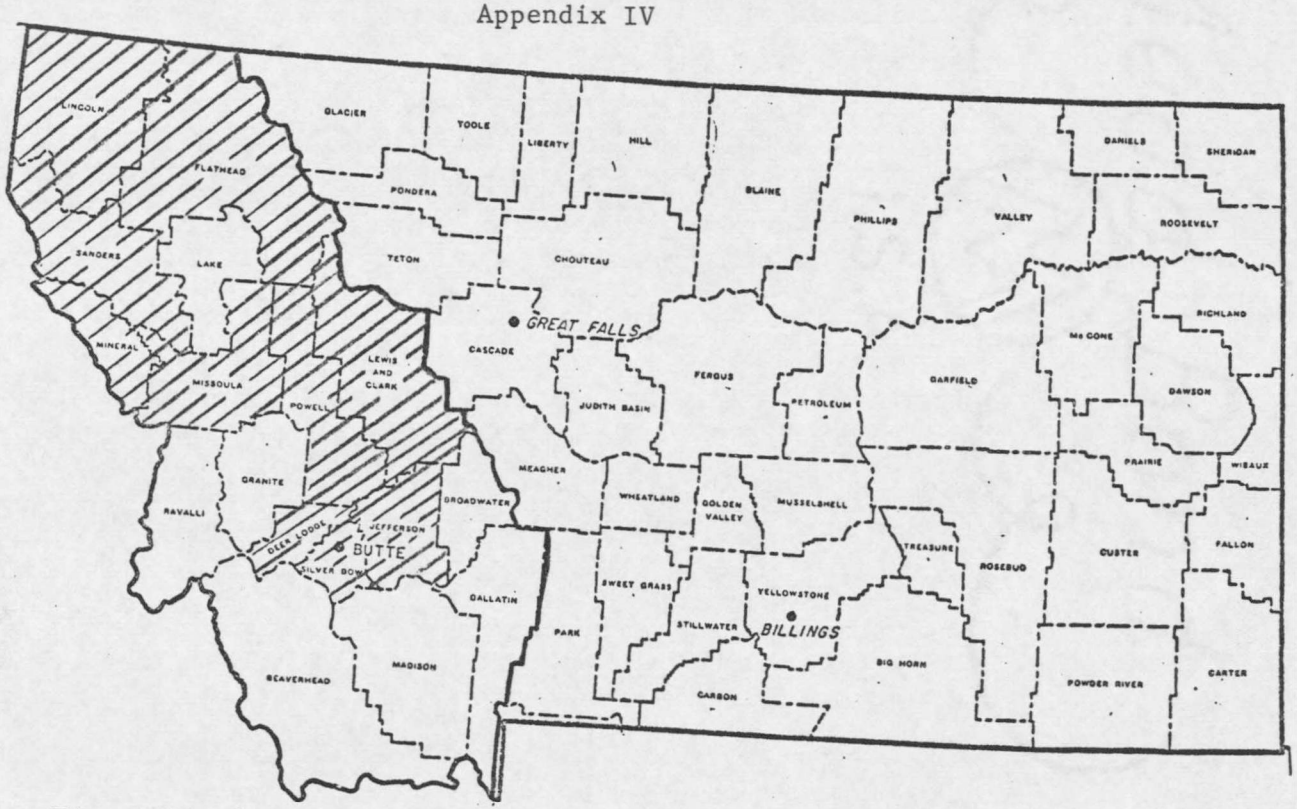


Zales N. Ecton (Republican)... 101,901
41 counties

Leif Erickson (Democrat)... 86,476
15 counties

Source: Ellis L. Waldron, ed., Montana Politics Since 1864. Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1958.

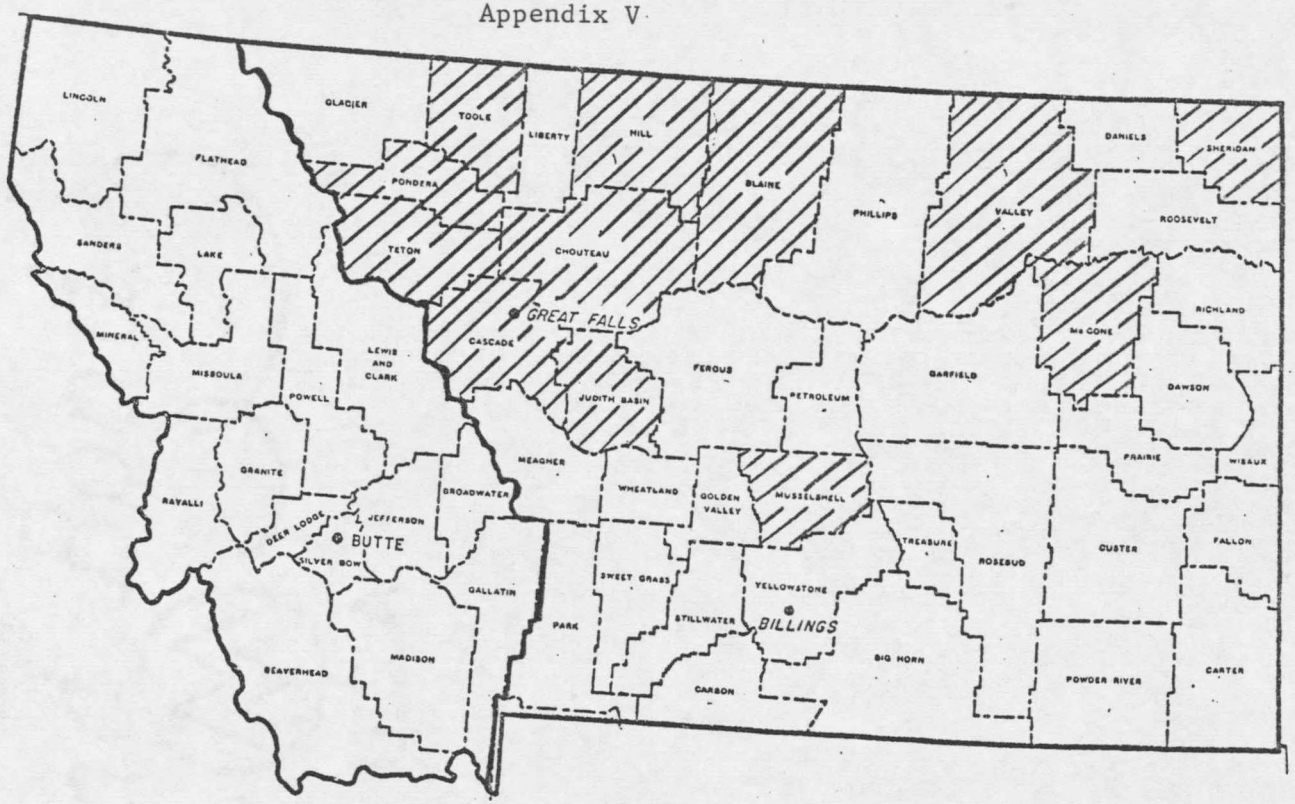
Appendix IV



Firsrt Distirct
Mike Mansfield (Democrat) 47,418
10 counties
W. R. Rankin (Republican) 34,958
7 counties

Source: Ellis L. Waldron, ed., Montana Politics Since 1864. Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1958.

Appendix V



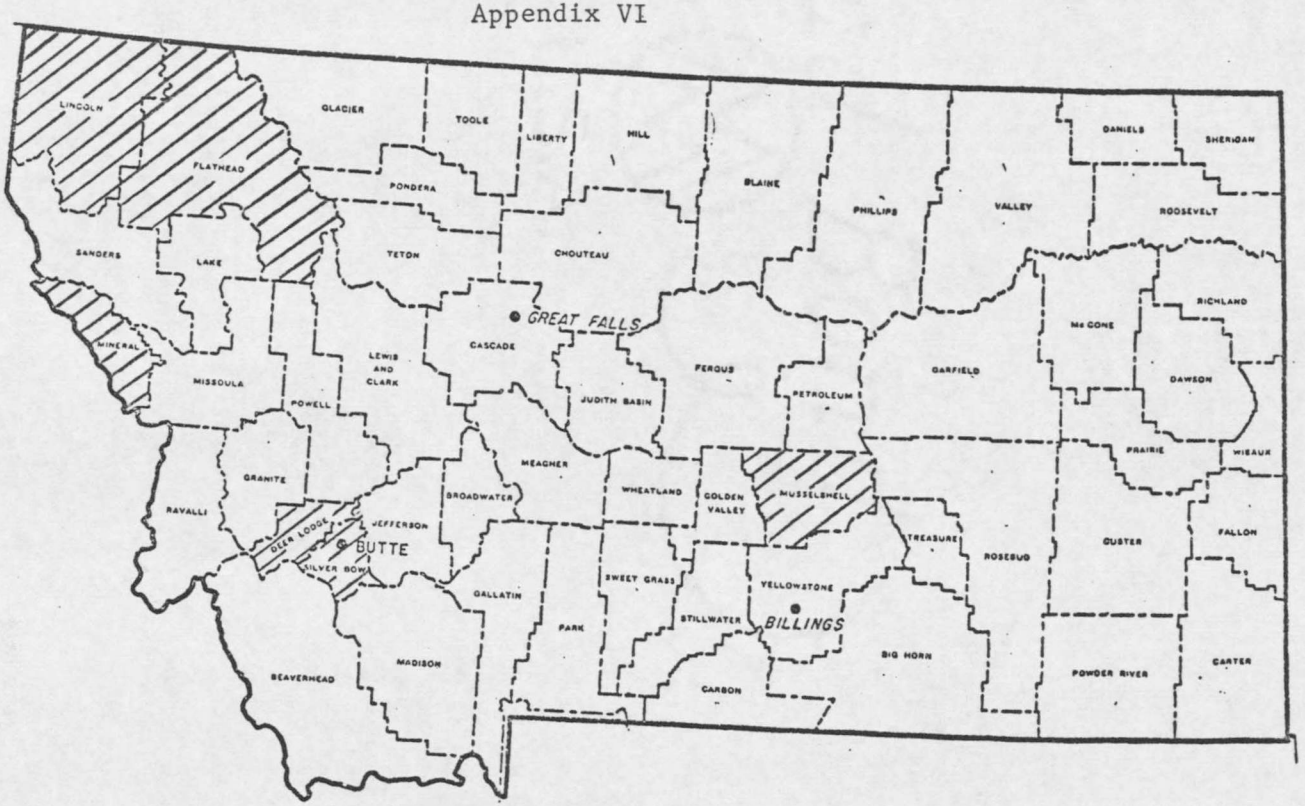
Second District

Wesley D'Ewart (Republican) 58,370
27 counties

John J. Holmes (Democrat) 48, 564
12 counties

Source: Ellis L. Waldron, ed., Montana Politics Since 1864. Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1958.

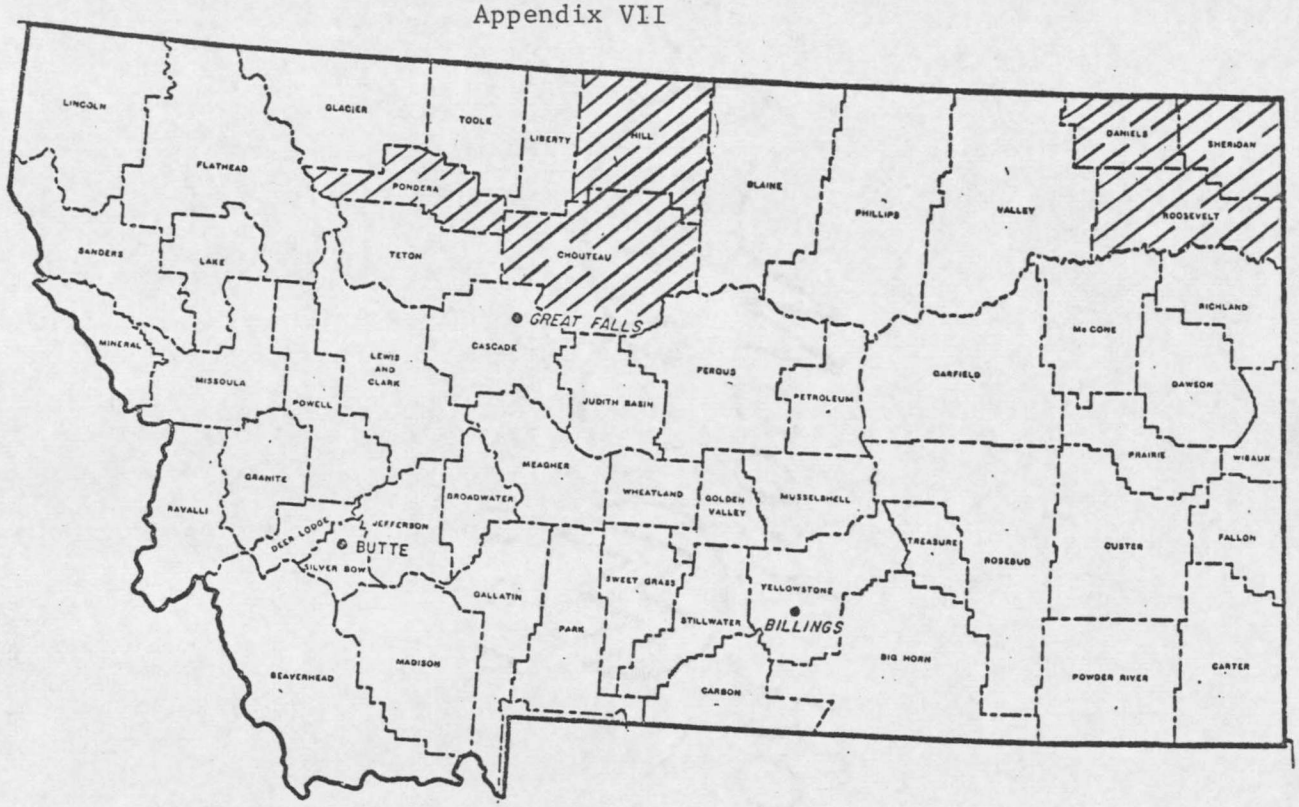
Appendix VI



Counties having a blue collar labor force of over 40%.

Source: Henry K. Shearer, Director, of Business and Economic Research, The Montana Almanac 1957. Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1957.

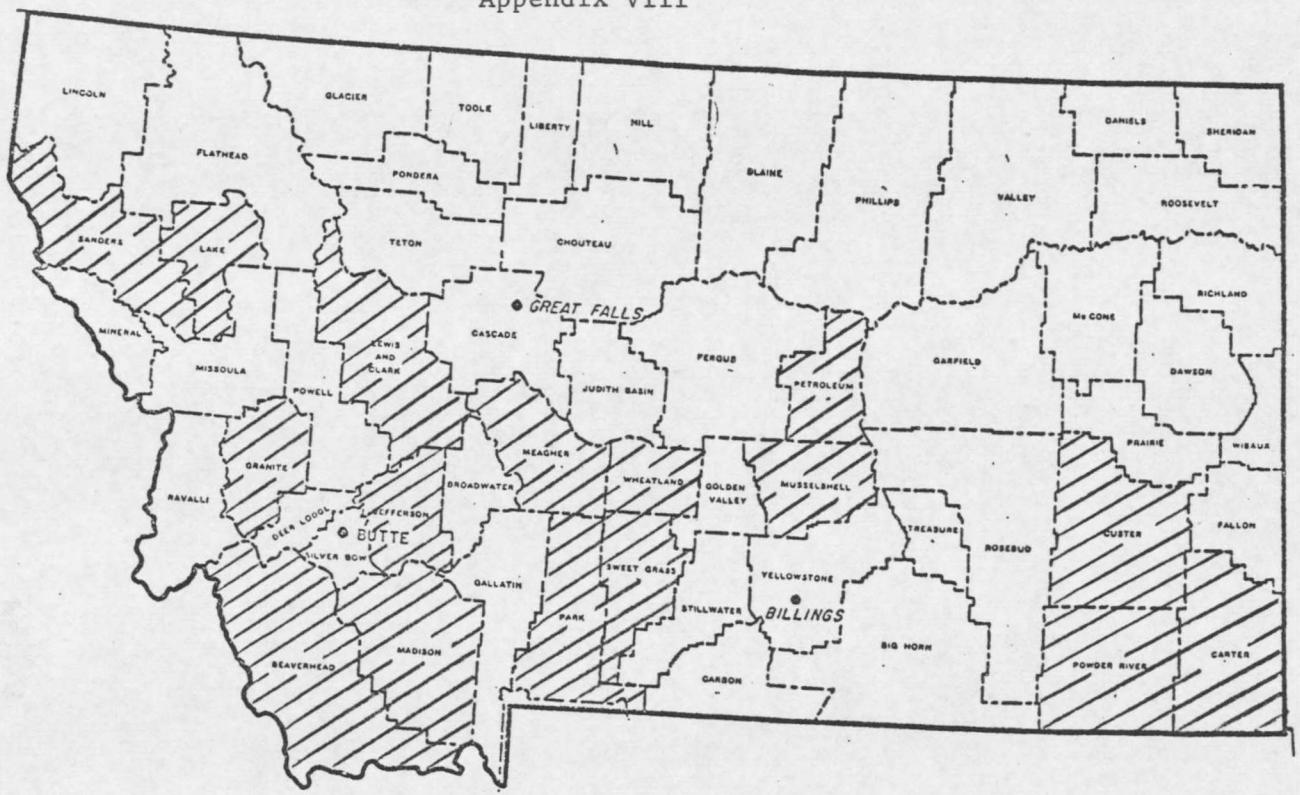
Appendix VII



Counties with 70% or more in cash crops (wheat)

Source: J. P. Kelly, "Study of the Defeat of Senator Wheeler". Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Montana State University, 1959.

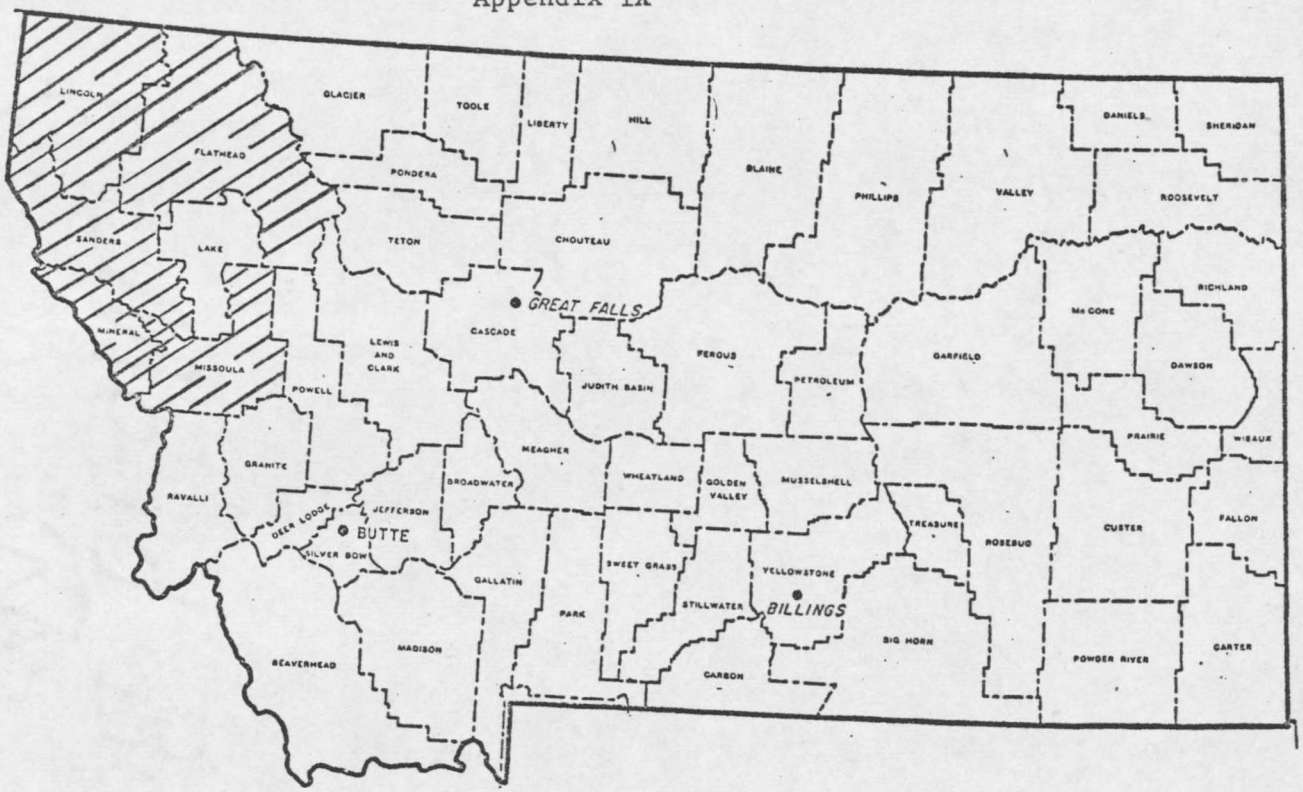
Appendix VIII



Counties with 70% or more invested in livestock.

Source: J. P. Kelly, "Study of the Defeat of Senator Wheeler". Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Montana State University, 1959.

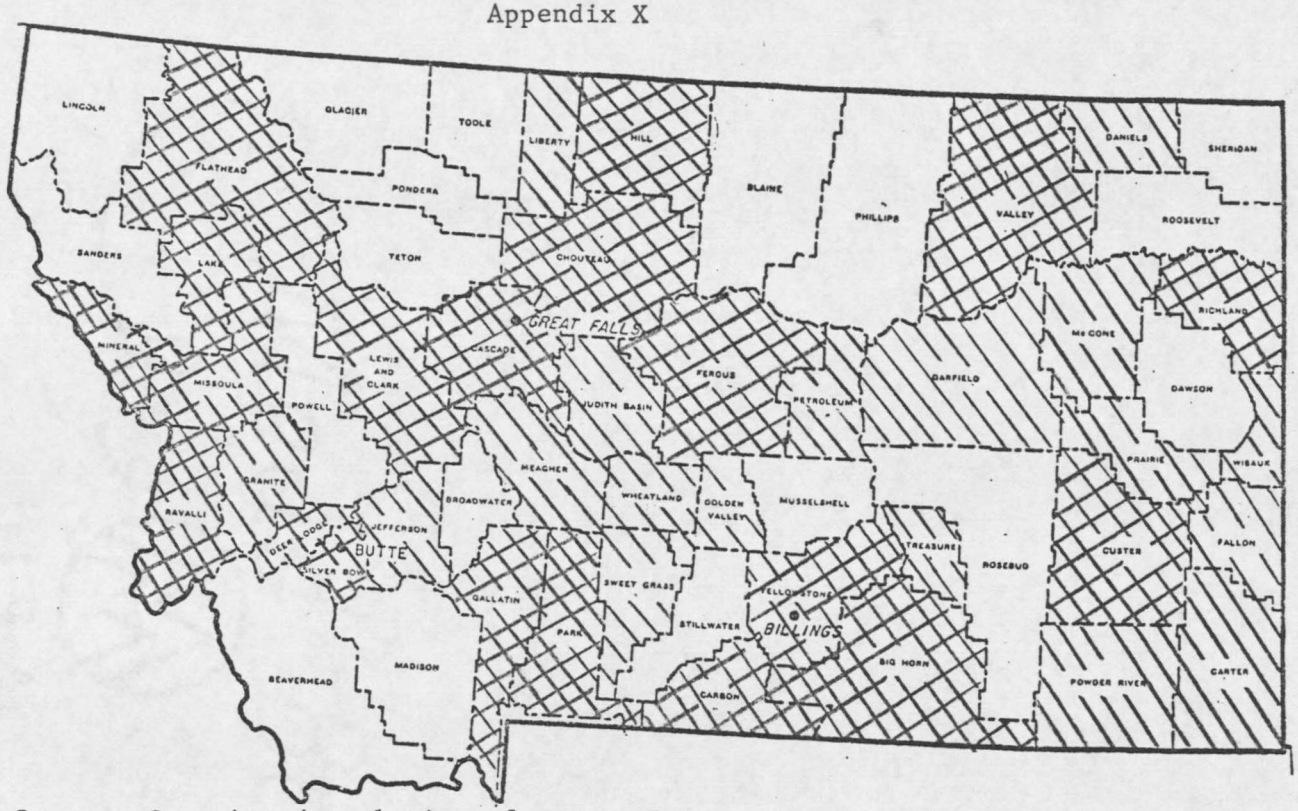
Appendix IX



Lumber Counties (any county cutting 50,000 board feet per year or more).

Source: Henry K. Shearer, Director, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, The Montana Almanac 1957. Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1957.

Appendix X



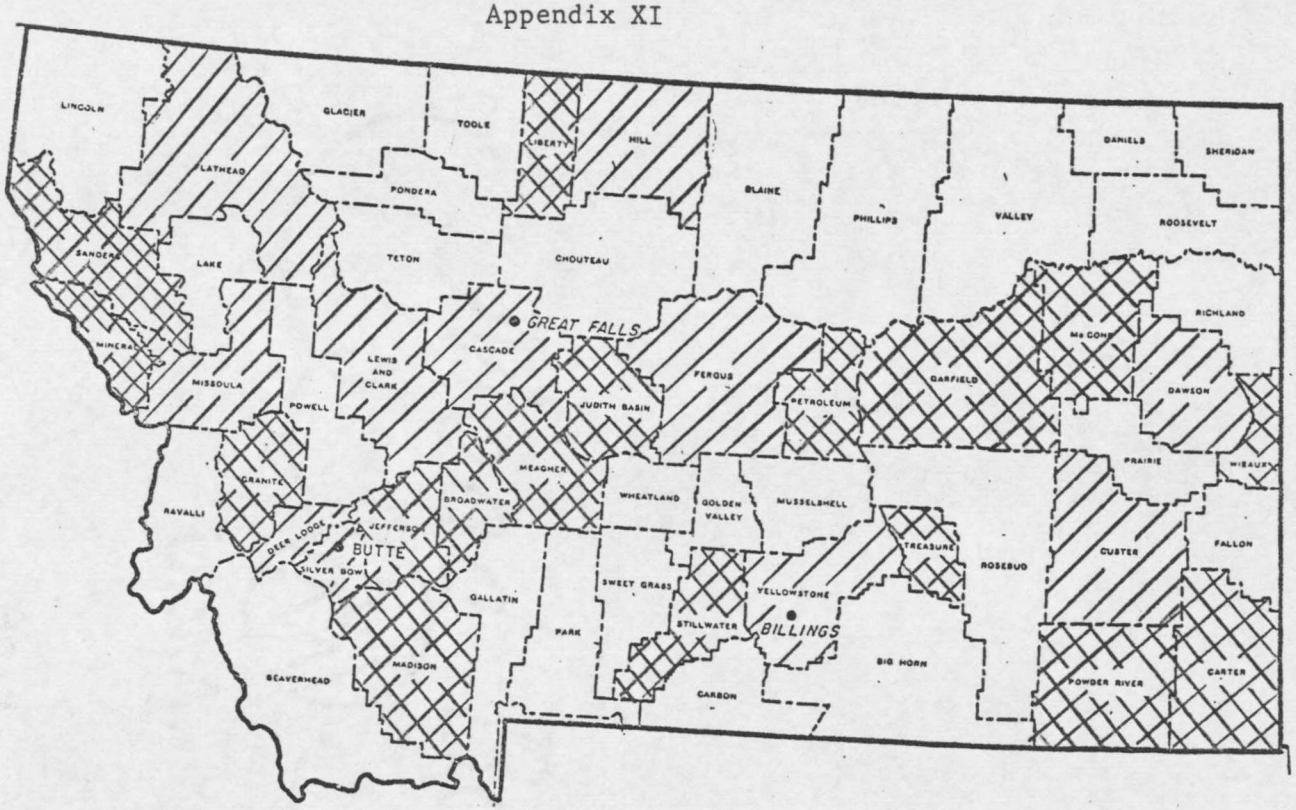
Largest Counties (population of 10,000 or more)

Smallest Counties (population of 5,000 or less)

Middle Counties (population of between 5,000 and 10,000.

Source: Bureau of Census: United States Department of Commerce. United States Census of Population: 1950, Vol.II, Characteristics of the Population, pt. 26, Montana.

Appendix XI



Counties having a city with a population of 5,000 or more.

Counties having a city with a population of 1,500 or less.

Counties having a city with a population of between 1,500 and 5,000.

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1950, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, pt. 26, Montana.

Appendix XII

Vote Cast In Elections to the U.S. Senate,
By Major Political Parties, 1928-1952

Year	Democrat	Republican	Other	Total
1928	103,655	91,185	None	194,840
1930	106,274	66,724	3,163	176,161
1934	142,823	58,519	2,284	203,626
1936	121,769	60,038	39,655	221,462
1940	176,753	63,941	None	240,694
1942	83,673	82,461	4,380	170,514
1946	86,476	101,901	2,189	190,560
1948	119,071	96,770	8,437	224,278
1952	133,109	127,360	1,828	262,297

*See next page for vote cast in elections to the House of Rep.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Vote Cast in Presidential and Congressional Elections, 1928-1944. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946.

Ellis L. Waldron, ed., Montana Politics Since 1864. Missoula, Montana: Montana State University Press, 1958.

Appendix XII (cont.)

Vote Cast In Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, By Major Political Parties, 1928-1952

Year	Democrat	Republican	Other	Total
1928	77,669	103,478	826	181,973
1930	84,604	82,736	2,807	170,147
1932	115,262	87,223	6,386	208,871
1934	135,733	59,270	1,736	199,739
1936	134,006	73,658	783	208,474
1938	104,825	103,885	None	208,710
1940	130,453	106,326	1,196	237,975
1942	93,243	73,654	2,611	169,508
1944	118,131	77,513	1,573	197,217
1946	95,982	93,265	841	190,088
1948	122,987	80,061	501	203,549
1950	108,248	99,948	2,331	211,527
1952	110,882	144,296	888	256,066

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Vote Cast in Presidential and Congressional Elections, 1928-1944. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946.

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