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SHORT TITLE

LOUISIANA ELECTIONS

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES IN  
LOUISIANA ELECTIONS (1924-1956)

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Historical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by

Benjamin Franklin Veit

June 1958

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

During 1955-1956, the writer was assigned to a vicarage in St. Tammany and St. Bernard parishes (counties) in Louisiana. It was in this period that the present Governor of the state, Earl K. Long, brother of the highly controversial Huey P. Long, made his second successful bid for the governorship. Governor Long was opposed by several candidates, among whom was deLesseps Morrison, the popular and progressive mayor of New Orleans. Mr. Long is a Baptist, Mr. Morrison a Roman Catholic. What aroused the writer's interest were the numerous remarks he heard from his Protestant acquaintances to the effect that while they had the highest regard for Mr. Morrison, still they would not vote for him because of his religious affiliation. A current rule of thumb in Louisiana politics is that only Protestants can seriously aspire to the gubernatorial office. The author became interested in the validity of this assumption.

The summer of 1956 saw a number of periodicals review the question of the possibility of a Roman Catholic winning the Vice-Presidential nomination.<sup>1</sup> These periodicals again renewed the old question, "Is it possible for a Roman Catho-

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<sup>1</sup>"Can a Catholic Win," Time, LXIX (August 6, 1956), 17; "Can Catholic Vote Swing an Election," U. S. News and World Report, XLI (August 10, 1956), 41-46.

lic to win election to a national office?" It was reported that the Democratic Party had conducted a lengthy investigation into this matter. These articles served to heighten the author's interest in religion effecting one's voting behavior.

The problem of religious faith influencing the citizen's exercise of his electoral right is of more than academic interest. If such influence can be found, the churches of America must face some extremely serious questions. What are the causes of such a prejudice? Does it stem from the vindictive preaching of the clergy and laity of the churches, or does it stem from a wholesome and rational concern for the well-being of the nation? Does such an influence hamper the cause of good government, resulting in the election of less competent or dishonest officials simply because they do not bear the stigma of membership in an unpopular church body? Ultimately, the churches must answer the question, "Is the churches effect on this area of American life a wholesome one, or have the churches, indirectly or otherwise, spread disunity within the nation and denied to this country the full measure of its qualified leaders?" Such questions are beyond the scope of this paper. The author has attempted only to discover the existence of religious influences which might suggest such questions.

This paper attempts to discover the existence, if any, of religious influences in Louisiana elections since 1924. Several reasons bear upon both the selection of the state

and the period. The author chose the State of Louisiana because it occupies a rather peculiar place in American politics. Typically a Southern state, Louisiana lacks, at least on the surface, a two-party system. Hence the complication of conflict between party loyalty and religious affiliation is removed. Louisiana is typical of the states of the South in that it contains a considerable Roman Catholic population. Indeed, the National Council of Churches has listed Louisiana as a state where the Roman Catholic Church predominates.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the religious dichotomy of the state makes it relatively easy to isolate religious influences, if any exist. In south Louisiana, Roman Catholicism is found in the preponderance, while in the north the Protestant churches maintain a strong majority. The year 1924 marks the beginning of the rise of Longism in Louisiana. Huey P. Long and his disciples (for better or for worse) have left an indelible mark upon the state's history. Any consideration of recent Louisiana politics that ignores the transformation of the state wrought by Longism would be no history at all.

The author has used the following method in attempting to discover religious influences in Louisiana election from 1924. First, the parishes (counties) of Louisiana have been divided into categories dependent upon the preponderance of the Roman Catholic or Protestant faith. Consideration has

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<sup>2</sup>"Protestant and Catholic Profile," Time, LXVIII (October 15, 1956), 88.

also been given to other factors that have a direct bearing on the voting behavior of citizens, for example, economic status, urbanity, racial factors, parish bossism, etc. All the gubernatorial elections since 1924, and the Presidential election of 1928, have been considered. The campaign tactics of the various gubernatorial candidates during these years have been examined, as well as the achievements of the administrations during this period. The religious affiliations of the candidates have been established. Finally, election returns on a parish basis have been consulted to determine the percentage of votes won by candidates in predominately Roman Catholic and Protestant areas. By this method, the author hoped to find existent religious influences in Louisiana elections.

No works dealing entirely with this problem were found by the author. Several excellent sociological works on Louisiana, however, have been used. These works give clear insight into the economic, religious, and social condition of Louisiana in recent years.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Allen P. Sindler's Huey Long's Louisiana is invaluable in assaying current political trends in the Pelican State.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The author has drawn much material of this nature from Perry Howard, "The Political Ecology of Louisiana," unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La., 1952; T. Lynn Smith and Homer Hitt, The People of Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952).

<sup>4</sup>Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956).

## CHAPTER II

### THE RELIGIOUS DICHOTOMY OF LOUISIANA

The statistics used in this thesis will be those gathered in the Census of Religious Bodies of 1936. When one considers that this material is now twenty years old, one realizes that its value is somewhat dubious. The Census of Religious Bodies of 1936, however, is the latest census available since the statistics of the Census of 1946 has not been published. Since this census serves as the basis for all further study in this thesis, it is only proper that an investigation should be made into its method and accuracy.

First of all, it should be noted that the data collected is not gathered under the regular decennial census. Although the census act which was passed in 1900, the primary law under which the decennial census is conducted, expresses concern over the need to discover religious preferences and affiliations of the population, nevertheless, items of religious preference and affiliation have never found a place on the regular schedule of census population. Instead, in the years 1906, 1916, 1926, 1936, and 1946, the Census of Religious Bodies was taken.

The data is compiled by addressing questionnaires to the denominations, not by an enumeration of the population. Those denominations with a strong hierarchical organization seem to have reported a rather complete census. But those

denominations that lack central control and organization are vastly underrepresented in this census. Perhaps, two examples will illustrate this underrepresentation.

The Southern Baptist Convention reported 766 churches and a membership of 117,220 for the census of 1926. For the census of 1936, this same denomination reported 444 churches with a total membership of 87,926.<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence existent that would indicate that this body actually suffered such a loss, rather it probably made strong gains within the decade. Nationally, the membership of the Southern Baptist Convention increased in this ten-year period from 3,616,964 to 4,482,315.<sup>2</sup> The population of the state showed no decline, which might explain such a loss for the Convention, rather the population of the state grew from 2,101,593 to 2,363,880 in the period from 1930 to 1940.<sup>3</sup> When one considers that Mississippi, Texas, and Arkansas, all states with heavy Baptist populations, were the major source of migration into Louisiana, it would seem safe to conclude that this sect experienced a considerable growth and not a loss in membership.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. Lynn Smith, Population Analysis (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1948), p. 178.

<sup>2</sup>William Wright Barnes, The Southern Baptist Convention (Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1954), Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup>T. Lynn Smith and Homer Hitt, The People of Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1952), p. 32, Table XIX.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

St. Tammany parish, according to the statistics listed in the Census of Religious Bodies, would fall into the category of parishes having a Roman Catholic proportion of one-half to two-thirds.<sup>5</sup> Yet this parish seems to follow the voting behavior of Protestant north Louisiana, as further evidence will bear out. Such evidence would strongly suggest that actually St. Tammany's proportion of Protestants is one-half to two-thirds of the total membership for the parish. The author, who lived in St. Tammany parish for fifteen months, feels that this latter contention is correct. The explanation for this discrepancy probably lies in the fact that the rural farm north of this parish is dotted with Protestant churches belonging to the loosely organized sects and serviced by circuit ministers or part-time lay preachers; thus, the accounting of members might well be lax and inaccurate. Of these Religious Census, Smith and Hitt conclude:

We do not know the absolute and relative importance of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and other religious elements. We do not know the number and percentages of the population who are unaffiliated with any of the churches. We know nothing whatever about the religious preferences of those who are not formally affiliated with a church. We know, in a general way only, the distribution of the memberships of the various denominations.<sup>6</sup>

While this statement should be admitted as correct,

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<sup>5</sup>United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Religious Bodies: 1936 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1937), I, 763-764.

<sup>6</sup>Smith and Hitt, op. cit., p. 129.

nevertheless, until more accurate figures are available, the Religious Census is the best compilation of statistics with which one can work. Any study considering the religious influences of the political scene must use them while acknowledging the possibility of error.

### The Diversity of Religion

The most obvious division of the population by religious belief would be into Christian and non-Christian. Practically, this means a division into Christian and Jewish categories, since the other great religions of the world, if represented at all in Louisiana, had too few adherents to be listed in the census. A large segment of the population is listed as belonging to no denomination. It should not be construed, however, that Louisiana has a large segment of atheists or agnostics. Most of those considered as not belonging to a religious sect, if interviewed, would probably list themselves as "belonging" to this or that religious denomination, or at least having a very strong preference for it. Probably a large majority of those listed as having membership in no church body are persons who have not been active enough within a congregation or parish to have their names included on the official roles.

As should be expected, the overwhelming majority of those affiliated with religious bodies profess Christianity. In 1936, there were only 13,464 members of Jewish congrega-

tions reported out of a total church membership of 1,136,123.<sup>7</sup> The population of Louisiana was estimated at 2,259,000, so that 49.7 per cent of the total population were considered as members of some church.<sup>8</sup> Of these, 98.2 per cent were members of some Christian denomination, while 1.2 per cent confessed Judaism.

The Pelican State is rather equally divided between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The adherents to Roman Catholicism number 632,583, while 490,079 belong to Protestant sects.<sup>9</sup> Actually, the state is even more closely divided between these two major divisions of American Christianity. Probably the returns for the Roman Catholic Church are more complete than those of the highly fragmentized and loosely organized Protestants. Also, the method of soul accounting varies for various bodies. Evidently, the Roman Catholic Church places children on the rolls of its membership, since 31 per cent of her members were children under the age of thirteen in 1936. This does not seem to be the practice of many of the Protestant bodies; only 21.5 per cent of those listed as Protestants were children under the age of thirteen.<sup>10</sup> Hence, the numerical distance between the two bodies would seem to be narrower than appears in the

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Religious Bodies: 1936, p. 764.

<sup>10</sup>Smith and Hitt, op. cit., p. 131.

statistics.

The Census of 1936 identified 62 religious denominations as having congregations in Louisiana. All but 3 of these were fragments of the category known as Protestantism. The exceptions were the Holy Eastern Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and Judaism. A mere listing of the denominations and the number of congregations of each denomination will clearly point up the great diversity of religious belief and practice in the state of Louisiana.

An alphabetical listing of the denominations should begin with the Adventist bodies. Three are found in Louisiana. The Seventh-Day Adventists had 14 congregations; the Church of God had 2 congregations; and the Advent Christian Church had 1 congregation. The General Council of the Assemblies of God listed 30 congregations in Louisiana.

The leading Protestant denomination in Louisiana is the Baptist Church, as is true of the entire South. However, great diversity of faith even within the Baptist conviction is shown by the fact that there were 8 divisions on this sect listed in the Census of 1936. The leading sect within this general denomination was the Negro Baptist reporting 1,482 congregations. The Southern Baptist Convention, of which some discussion was made on page 6, enumerated 444 churches. The following Baptist sects also were represented within Louisiana: The American Baptist Association had 24 churches; the Colored Primitive Baptists had 5 churches; National Baptist Life and Soul Saving Assembly of the United

States of America had 7 churches; Primitive Baptists had 11 churches; the United Freewill Baptist (Colored) had 6 churches; and the Seventh-Day Baptists had 1 church.

The Dunker movement was represented in Louisiana by only 1 sect and the Church of the Brethren had 2 churches. Of the various branches of the Plymouth Brethren, only the Plymouth Brethren II was found and it had but 1 church. The Christadelphians, also, listed 1 church.

Louisiana Protestantism, with its strong Baptist background, has placed strong emphasis on revivalism. It seems likely, therefore, that the following Holiness bodies have more churches and a larger membership than appeared on the official census roles: the Churches of God (Holiness), 1; Christ's Sanctified Holiness Church (Colored), 16; the Church of Christ (Holiness), U. S. A., 10; and the Church of God in Christ, 31. Three distinct sects within the category of the Churches of God were found in Louisiana: the Church of God, 21 churches; the Church of God (Headquarters: Anderson, Indiana), 31 churches; and the Church of God (Tomlinson), 6 churches.

The Church of Christ Scientist reported 14 churches. The General Convention of the Christian Churches listed 1 church. Two Greek Orthodox churches were found within the state. There were 2 Independent churches, the one being colored and the other white. The Evangelical and Reformed Church enumerated 10 churches.

Most of Louisiana's Protestantism is of Scotch-Irish

and English origin. Few Scandinavians, Germans, or their descendants are found in the Pelican State. It is not surprising, therefore, that Lutheranism has few adherents here. Three branches of Lutheranism were found in 1936. They were: the American Lutheran Church with 9 congregations; the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States (presently known as the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod) with 29 congregations; and the Negro Mission of the Evangelical Synodical Conference of North America reported 9 churches.

Within Protestantism, the chief contender to the Baptists in membership, as is generally true for the Southland, were the Methodist bodies. In 1936, the Methodists did not present a united front; there were 8 segments of Wesley's church found in Louisiana. One hundred forty-four churches were joined to the African Methodist Episcopal Church; 40 to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; 112 to the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church; 19 were affiliated with the Congregational Methodist Church; and 5 with the Free Methodist Church of North America. The following Methodist bodies have since united into the Methodist Church: The Methodist Episcopal Church, 122 congregations; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 258 congregations; and the Methodist Protestant Church, 40 congregations.

Census reports reveal that Mormonism has had little effect on Louisiana. Only 3 churches of this group were listed in the census. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints had 2 churches and the Reorganized Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-Day Saints had 1 church.

The Mennonites, the Old Catholics, and the Pilgrim Holiness Church each reported 1 church. The Pentecostal groups were represented by 2 sects on the list of denominations in Louisiana. They were: the Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus Christ, 25 churches; and the Pentecostal Church, Incorporated, 28 churches.

Three Presbyterian groups were found on the census roles. The Presbyterian Church in the United States was by far the largest with 75 churches; the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America placed second with 10 churches; and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church listed 9 congregations.

The Protestant Episcopal Church's Diocese of Louisiana reported 67 parishes and the Roman Catholic Church reported 414 churches. Concluding the list are 6 "commanderies" of the Salvation Army, 1 Unitarian Church, and 2 congregations of the United Brethren in Christ.<sup>11</sup>

#### The Principal Religious Bodies in Louisiana

There is, then, great variety in the faith and practice of Louisiana citizens. However, most of the 62 denominations dealt with above are very small. The 1936 compilation listed

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<sup>11</sup>The author is indebted to the following sources for this list of Church bodies and member congregations: Religious Bodies: 1936, I, passim; Smith and Hitt, op. cit., pp. 130-134.

only 11 denominations in the state with a membership of more than 5,000. The membership of these accounted for 95.9 per cent of all those carried on the membership role or religious organizations. These denominations were: the Roman Catholic Church with 632,583; the Negro Baptist, 213,055; the Southern Baptist Convention, 87,925; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 53,259; the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, 23, 140; the Protestant Episcopal Church, 17,151; the Presbyterian Church in the United States, 13,986; Jewish congregations, 13,464; African Methodist Episcopal Church, 13,367; the Methodist Episcopal Church, 12,243; and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, 9,367.<sup>12</sup> On the basis of these statistics, it becomes evident that the great majority of Louisiana's church members are Catholic, Baptist, or Methodist.

Figure 1 was prepared to show the relative strength of these three denominations in each parish of the state. The remaining denominations are listed in the "other" category. While the reader should bear in mind that this figure can only be an approximation of the relative strength of the religious bodies, due to the incompleteness of the religious census, some interesting results are found. In predominately Roman Catholic Louisiana, the Baptists are the chief Protestant sect with the exception of Vermillion and Lafayette parishes, where that honor falls to the Methodists. St. Martin

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<sup>12</sup>Religious Bodies: 1936, pp. 763-764.

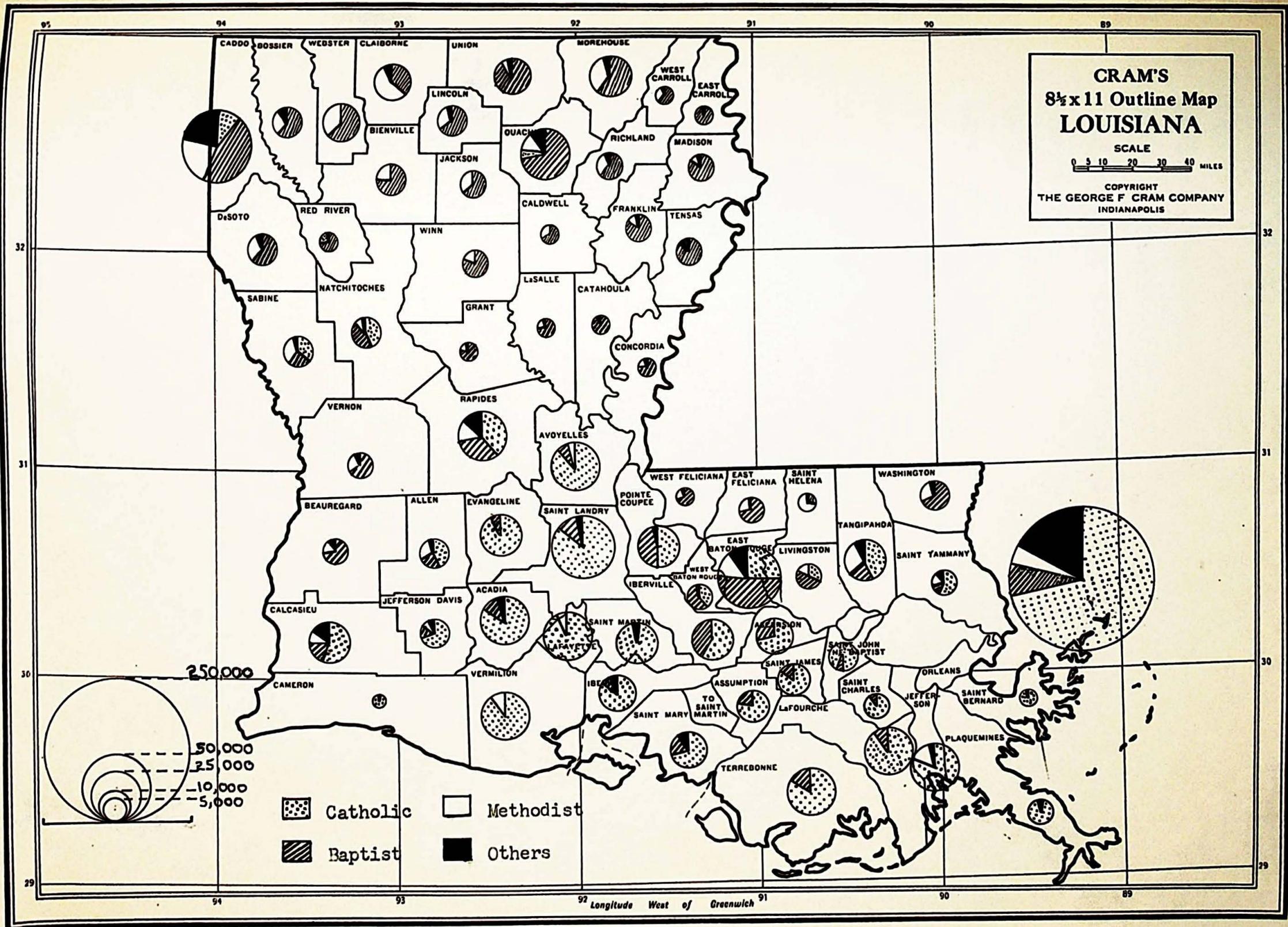


FIGURE 1  
 DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTED MEMBERSHIP IN PRINCIPAL FAITHS BY PARISHES, 1936\*

\*Religious Bodies; 1936, Vol. I, 763-764.

parish is the most Roman Catholic parish in the state, with but a scattering of Protestant representation. In northern Louisiana, Protestantism maintains a vast majority. The figure reveals that the Baptists, for the most part are strongly in the majority, the only visible exception being Claiborne parish where the Methodists form the leading Protestant body. Those persons belonging to bodies other than the three leading religious bodies of Louisiana are found concentrated in the parishes containing strong urban centers: Orleans (New Orleans), Caddo (Shreveport), East Baton Rouge (Baton Rouge), Rapides (Alexandria), Ouachita (Monroe), and Calcasieu (Lake Charles).

On the basis of this figure, Smith and Hitt state:

That north Louisiana is Anglo-Saxon and Protestant while south Louisiana is French and Catholic has long been axiomatic in the state. It is ever uppermost in the minds of those who would aspire to political leadership in the Pelican State, must be considered in many of the decisions on policy made by those in control of governmental machinery and permeates a great many other social relationships as well.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 2 represents the relative strength of the Catholic and Protestant faiths in Louisiana. Predominately French and Roman Catholic, Louisiana can be pictured as a vast triangle whose base is the Gulf of Mexico and which rises to its apex and the junction of the Red River with the Mississippi. Thus, it is safe to conclude that religiously Louisiana is a dichotomous state. The south remains staunchly

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<sup>13</sup> Smith and Hitt, op. cit., p. 135.

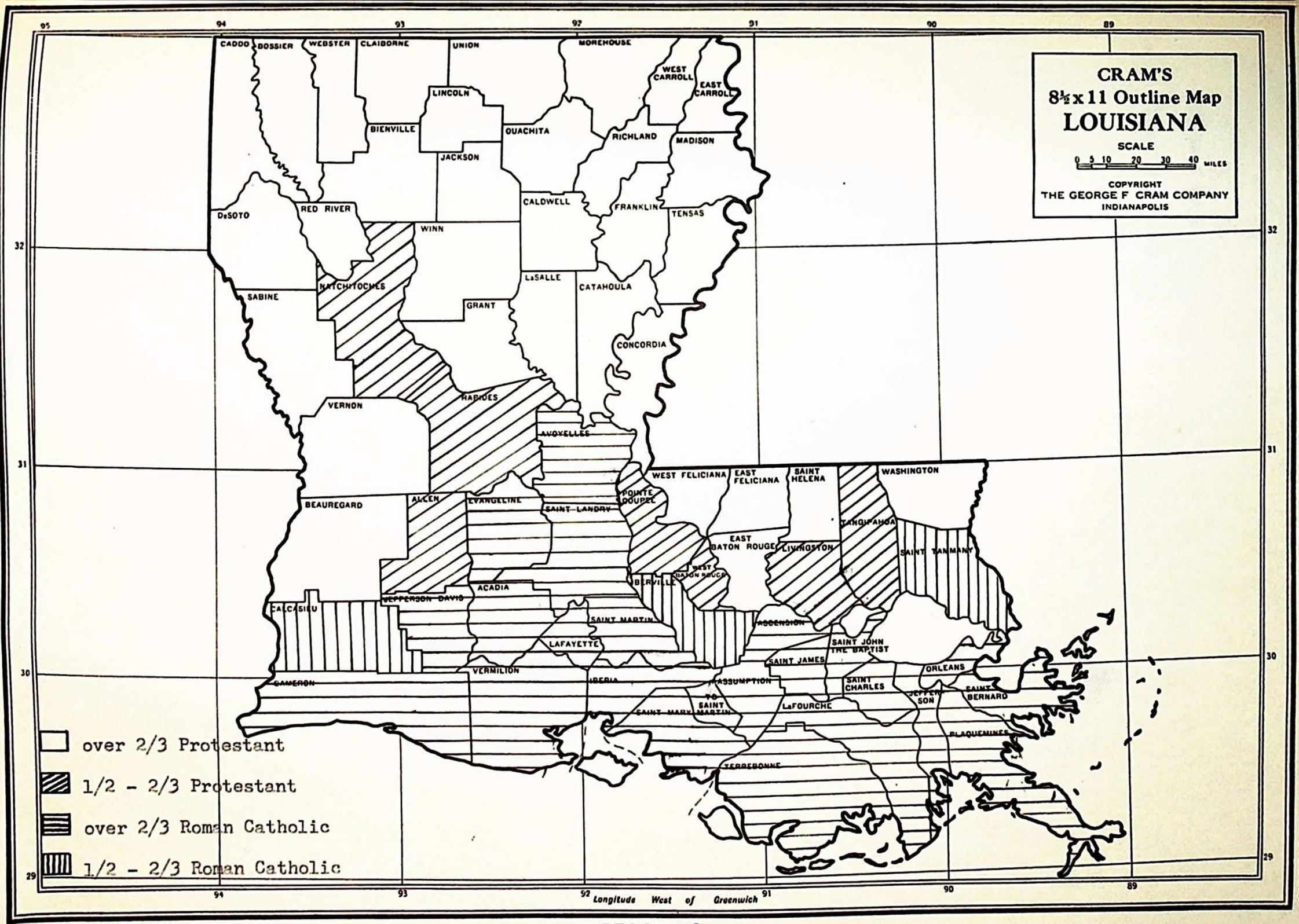


FIGURE 2  
RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS\*

\*Religious Bodies: 1936, Vol. I, 763-764.

Roman Catholic, the north possesses an overwhelming Protestant majority.

## CHAPTER III

### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF LOUISIANA

Properly speaking, a study of the religious scene in Louisiana should be included under this section. Because the purpose of this thesis is to attempt to discover religious influences in Louisiana politics, religion in Louisiana has been dealt with to a fuller extent in the preceding chapter. The demographic features that will be dealt with in this chapter include types of farming, industry, racial proportions, and urban and rural distributions of population. Many of the outstanding scholars of Louisiana political history feel that the rise and tenacious durability of Longism within Louisiana is the fruition of class tensions that originated in the ante-bellum period.<sup>1</sup> Whether one admits to this view or not, these demographic features must be considered in order to ascertain the relative importance of religious influences on the state's politics. Certainly, it will be admitted that economic and social tensions bear strongly on political programs, policies, and elections.

Louisiana is a low-land state. From an elevation of

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<sup>1</sup>Representative of this view are: Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956); Perry Howard, "The Political Ecology of Louisiana," unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La., 1952; and Roger W. Schugg, Origin of the Class Struggle in Louisiana, 1840-1875 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939).

five hundred feet at the Arkansas border, Louisiana slopes gently to the south, until its vast coastal marshes dissolve into the Gulf of Mexico. The entire state has an average altitude of only one hundred feet, one-third of the state only half as high, and lies below the level of the rivers flowing through it. This sprawling lowland is saved from floods by a giant system of levees stretching over 1,700 miles. The wanderings of the Mississippi have created numerous swamps and marshlands, but it also has brought down rich soils which border its banks from the Delta parishes to the Sugar Bowl. From the northwest, the Red River flows southward to converge with the Mississippi; together they form a Y-shaped drainage basin rich in alluvial soils. Most of northern Louisiana (with the exception of the alluvial area) and the Florida parishes<sup>2</sup> (excepting the Felicianas and East Baton Rouge) consist of hilly land of inferior soil. Prairie lands are characteristic of southwestern Louisiana, while a wide belt of marshlands runs across the southern part of each parish bordering on the Gulf of Mexico.

The temperate zone of the state lies north of the junction of the Red and Mississippi rivers and supports a cotton economy similar to that of its neighboring states, an economy ranging from large plantations to subsistence farming. Heavy rainfall, combined with tropical heat, discourages the growth

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<sup>2</sup>If the outline of Louisiana is likened to a "boot," the Florida parishes would form the "toe" of the "boot" north of Lake Ponchartrain.

of cotton in the southern portion of the state but is favorable to the cultivation of rice, citrus fruits, and sugar cane. As a general rule, rich river lands are under plantation cultivation, while the inferior soils of the piney woods and hilly areas are occupied by farmers with small holding and living on a subsistence economy.<sup>3</sup> Sindler and other experts maintain that this agricultural division has been the source of Louisiana's political factionalism, for example, the small farmers pitted against the rich plantation owners and their urban associates.

Louisiana lacks an abundance of high-productivity industry which contributes most to per capita income and to the tax coffers of the state. Although the state has an abundant cheap labor market, the dearth of raw material and remoteness from markets have tended to discourage industries from locating within its borders. The result has been that the state is forced, in order to carry on its welfare program, to tax heavily those industries exploiting the natural resources of Louisiana. The Port of New Orleans, serving as the gateway to South America, has retained its shipping and commercial activity which is of importance to the state's economy.

The unfavorable balance within Louisiana industry may be gauged by comparing the proportion of workers employed in

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<sup>3</sup>The geographic data is drawn from Perry Howard, op. cit., pp. 5-39.

primary industry (fishing, agriculture, forestry) and those employed in manufacturing in Louisiana and the nation for the years 1940 and 1950. Louisiana's proportion of those employed in 1940 was 33.2 per cent, while the national proportion was 18.6 per cent. In 1950, Louisiana's proportion had dropped to 18.8 per cent but the national proportion had fallen to 12.4 per cent. The manufacturing proportion of the working population was 12.9 per cent for Louisiana in 1940, while the national average was 23.4 per cent. By 1950, this proportion had risen to 15.1 per cent in the Pelican state but the national average had also risen to 25.9 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

Not only is Louisiana's share of industry low but, unfortunately, the kinds of manufacturing found within the state are not the kind that add great profit to the product manufactured and income to the workers employed. In the years 1939 and 1947, Louisiana's major industries, measured in number of production worker employed, ranked in order of importance as follows: (a) Lumber and allied products (excluding furniture); (b) Food and allied products; (c) Paper and allied products; (d) Chemicals and allied products;

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<sup>4</sup>Data for 1940 is found in Rudolph Heberle, The Labor Force in Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1948), p. 17. The 1950 statistics are to be found in the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1950 Census of Population (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1952), II (United States Summary) "Characteristics of the Population," Part 1, Table 132, and Part 18 (Louisiana), Table 84.

(e) Petroleum and coal products.<sup>5</sup> All of the foregoing consume raw materials and the first three are industries common to the South in which production adds little value to the raw material. As a result, the wage in these industries must be low. This data helps to explain why in 1939, for example, Louisiana's employed labor-class income was only seventy per cent of the national average; its median wage about sixty per cent of the national average.<sup>6</sup>

Centers of secondary industry (manufacturing, building, mining) were found in New Orleans, and neighboring Jefferson Parish, Shreveport, and in Baton Rouge. These three localities, in 1940, accounted for nearly half of the laboring population employed in secondary manufacturing, more than one-half of the value of goods manufactured and of total value added by manufacturing.<sup>7</sup> But less than one-third of the total laboring population in this four-parish area were employed in such industries.<sup>8</sup> Smaller industrial areas are found in Calcasieu, Oachita, and Rapides parishes.

The centers of industry were also the centers of urban population. Figure 3 represents the wider definition of "urban" used in the 1950 Census, where the parishes of Orleans,

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<sup>5</sup>Stanley W. Preston, "Survey of Louisiana Manufacturing, Louisiana Business Bulletin, VIII (December, 1948), 34.

<sup>6</sup>Heberle, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>7</sup>Allen P. Sindler, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

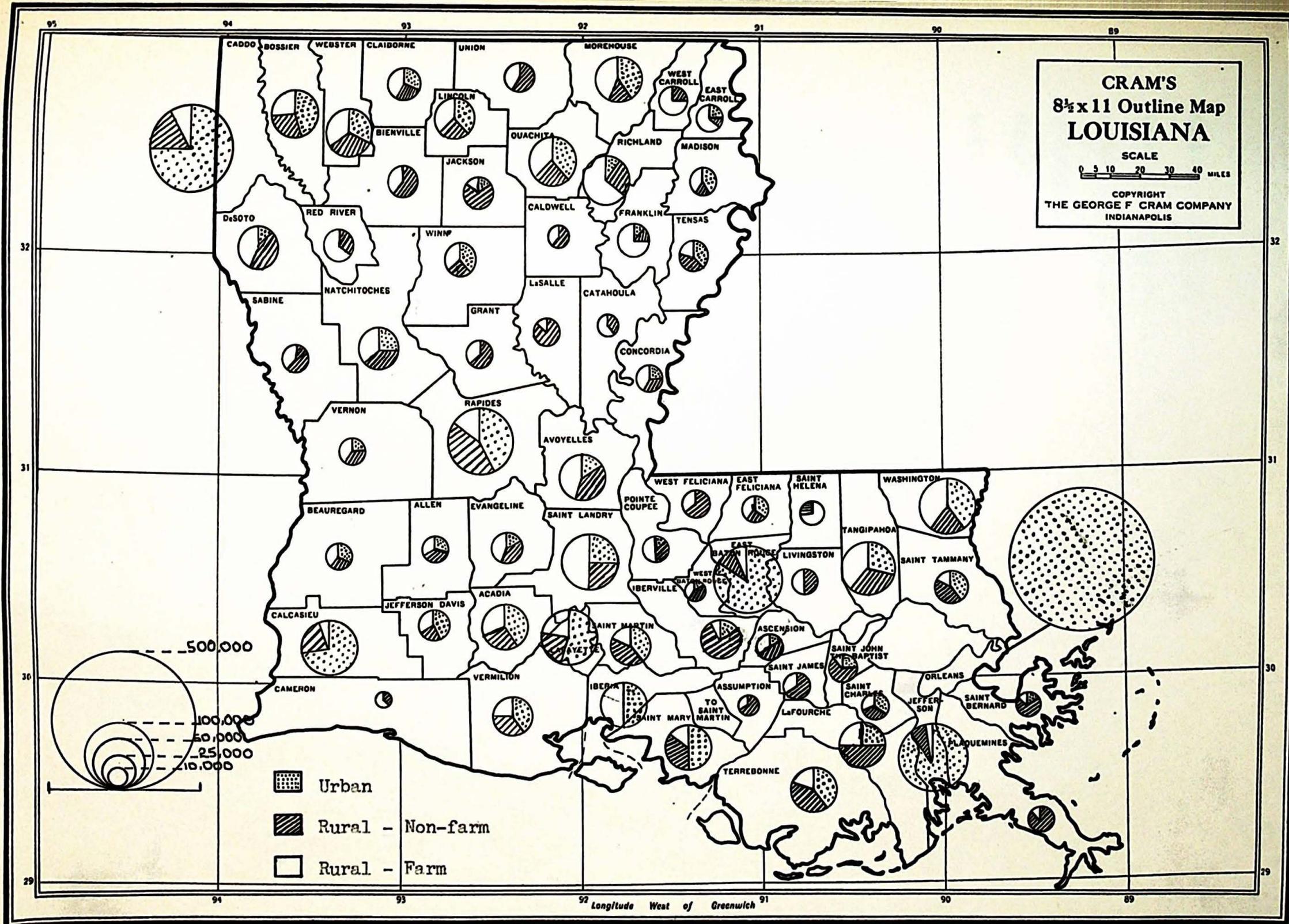


FIGURE 3  
 POPULATION OF LOUISIANA PARISHES BY RESIDENCE\*

\*1950 Census of Population, Vol. II, Part 18 (Louisiana) Table 12, p. 12.

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 MAP NO. COS16-LOUISIANA

Caddo, Oachita, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Lafayette, Calcasieu, Iberia, and St. Mary are classified as predominately urban.<sup>9</sup> Rapides parish still failed to come under the urban category, although one-third of its population lived in Alexandria and the other two-thirds in the area surrounding the city.<sup>10</sup>

Though New Orleans (494,537) was the largest city in the South, in the 1940 Census, Louisiana had a population that was 58.5 per cent rural and 41.5 per cent urban. In that year, 61.5 per cent of the population was rural farm (36 per cent of the total population). This proportion was concentrated in the Florida parishes, the upland areas of the cotton region, and in the upper Delta. The rural-farm population constituted a majority in 34 parishes and from one-half to one-third in 18 other parishes. Twenty-three parishes had no urban area at all, although this rather unrealistically included Jefferson, St. Bernard, and West Baton Rouge, all of which adjoin an urban area.

Since 1920, the rural population of Louisiana has undergone a continued relative decline, while the urban population has experienced a comparable increase. In this thirty-year period, the rural-farm population of Louisiana sank from 43.6 per cent to 21.2 per cent. The 1950 Census reported

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<sup>9</sup>1950 Census of Population, II, Part 18 (Louisiana), Table 12.

<sup>10</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 29.

Louisiana as 54.9 per cent urban.<sup>11</sup> The growth of urban areas has caused the old axiom of "New Orleans against the rural parishes" to lose much of its significance. In 1940, the combined urban population outside of New Orleans approximately equaled the population of that city. By 1950, due partly to the changed definition of the term "urban," 61.2 per cent of the urban population of the state lived outside the confines of New Orleans.<sup>12</sup>

One-third of the state's population was classified as Negro in the 1940 Census (35.9 per cent). Figure 4 was prepared to show that the situation had changed little in the 1950 Census (32.9 per cent). Generally, the Negro is more rural in his habitat than the white, but no inverse ratio between races and urbanity has been found. Lake Charles, Alexandria, Monroe, and Shreveport had a higher proportion of Negroes than did the state, while the opposite was true of Bogaluse, Lafayette, and New Orleans. Reports from the 1950 Census show that about 50 per cent of the Negroes were urban in residence as compared to approximately 66 per cent of the whites who lived in urban areas.<sup>13</sup>

The Negro population is not evenly distributed throughout the state. Comparatively few Negroes are found in the

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<sup>11</sup>1950 Census of Population, II, Part 18 (Louisiana), Table 10.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., Tables 10 and 12.

<sup>13</sup>T. Lynn Smith and Homer Hitt, People of Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1952), p. 38.

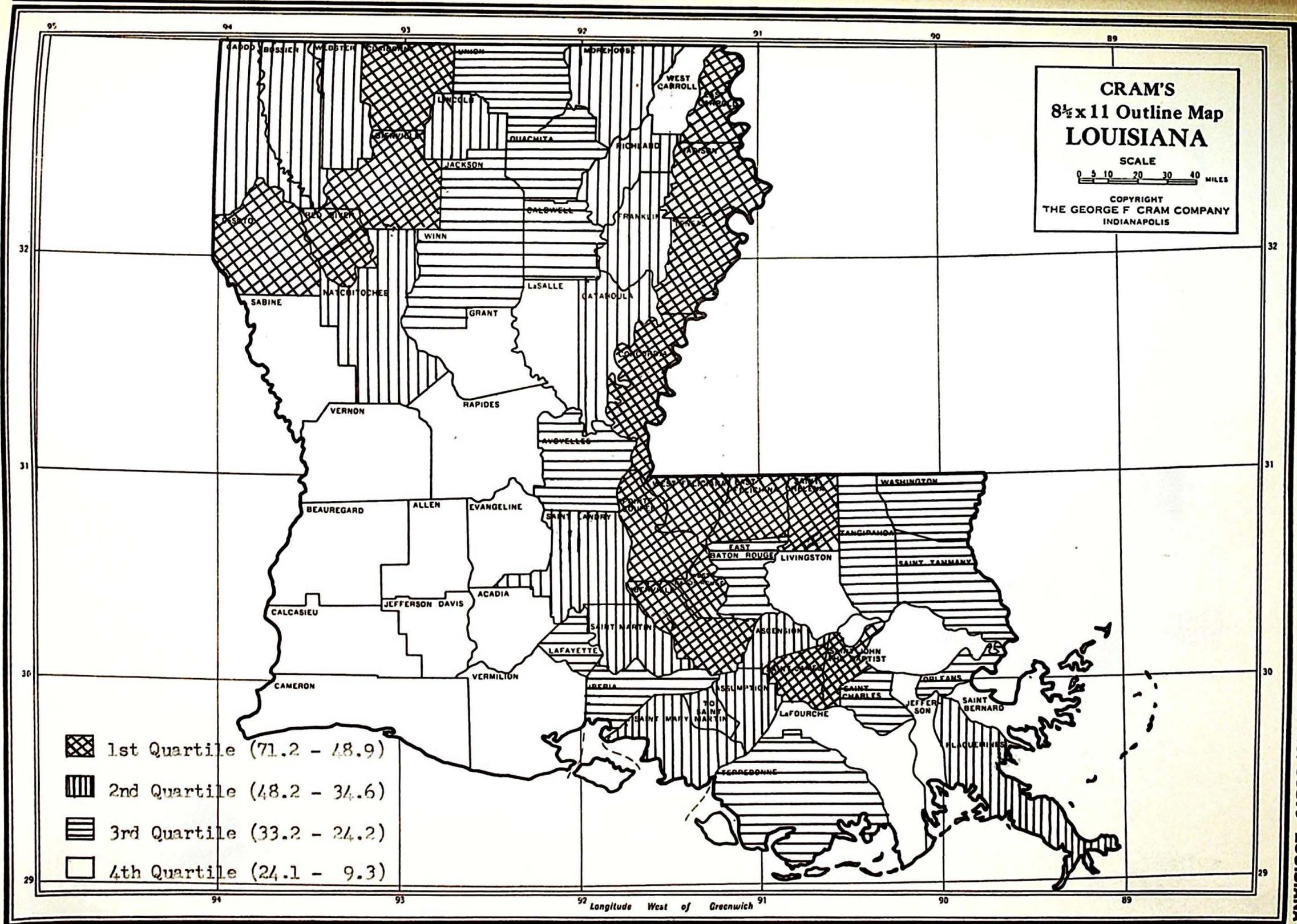


FIGURE 4  
 CONCENTRATION OF COLORED POPULATION\*

\*1950 Census of Population, Vol. II, Part 18 (Louisiana) Table 12, p. 12.

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 MAP NO. COS16—LOUISIANA

northern hill lands, the eastern Florida parishes, and in the swamps, marshland, and truck farms of south Louisiana. Highest Negro concentrations of population were found in those areas where the plantation economy predominates. These areas would be the Delta, the bluff lands of the Felicianas, the Sugar Bowl, and the northern cotton lands of Claiborne, De Soto, and Morehouse parishes.

The importance of the distribution of the Negro population cannot be overlooked. It has a very definite bearing on the white reaction to the legal, economic, political, and educational gains of the Negro during the past few years. While Louisiana politicians, much to their credit, have seldom appealed to the extreme racism of other Southern states, still the presence of a large Negro population has had strong influence on Louisiana politics. If the assertion is correct that recent Louisiana politics is the result of the class struggle within the state, then it is likely that this struggle will continue for some time, for despite the gradual economic emancipation of the Negro, his standard of living has considerably trailed that of the white population.

Demographic figures should also include the political affiliation of Louisiana's citizens. Republicans within the Pelican State like to make much of the fact that their registration has tripled in the fourteen years between 1940 and 1954. However, this statement loses much of its significance when the respective figures of 1,573 and 5,772 are considered. The Democratic figures in the same period increased

from 701,783 to 860,977.<sup>14</sup> For all practical purposes, Louisiana is a one-party state. Any semblance to a two-party system must be found within the factionalism of the Democratic Party.

No discussion of Louisiana demography would be complete unless it turned its focus to the Cajuns, that people who have been described as "the largest unassimilated nationality group in America."<sup>15</sup> The Cajuns should not be confused with the Creoles. Although both are of French extraction, the Creoles are the descendants of the early French and Spanish settlers and make up a large part of the social aristocracy in and around New Orleans. The Cajuns, on the other hand, are the descendants of the Acadians who fled religious persecution in British Nova Scotia during the eighteenth century to the protection of the French administration in Louisiana. While the Creoles, for the most part, seem to enjoy a high standard of living, the Cajuns are rural, living in the south-central and south-eastern part of the state, oftentimes in the most inaccessible locations, and have a much lower standard of living. The Creoles and the Cajuns hold

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<sup>14</sup>Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1939-1940, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1941), Appendix A. The 1954 figures are found in Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor (Baton Rouge: Secretary of State, 1955), Appendix A.

<sup>15</sup>Harlan W. Gilmore, "Social Isolation of the French Speaking People of Rural Louisiana," Social Forces, XII (October, 1933), 82.

only their Roman Catholic faith and French extraction in common. But those sections where the Roman Catholic faith predominates, there heavy concentrations of Cajuns will be found. In both 1930 and 1940, the Louisiana French were estimated to comprise 44 per cent of Louisiana's population.<sup>16</sup>

The Cajuns, who form tight-knit communities, also, seem to form tight-knit political machines. Often, these French parishes have been accused of thoroughly corrupt politics. It is undeniable that evidences of corruption can easily be found in some of these parishes.<sup>17</sup> A classic example of electoral corruption can be found in the returns of the 1932 senatorial election; St. Bernard parish, which had a registration of 2,454 in that year, cast nine votes for Huey P. Long's opponents and 3,979 for Mr. Long.<sup>18</sup> The author of Deep Delta Country relates that in one community 913 votes were cast; this exceeded by one vote every white and Negro man, woman, child, and adolescent in that community.<sup>19</sup> Those candidates who have secured the endorsement of political leaders in that area in many of these parishes seem to attract a healthy majority of the votes cast there.

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<sup>16</sup>Smith and Hitt, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>17</sup>For latest charges of election fraud in St. Bernard Parish, see front-page articles in Times-Picayune (New Orleans), editions for January 17-23, 1956.

<sup>18</sup>Harnett Kane, Deep Delta Country (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1944), p. 201.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Thus, the peculiar political behavior of some of these southern parishes, notably Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and Jefferson may be due to the changing allegiance of the local leaders.<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of this paper, many of the election returns from these parishes will have to be disregarded and credited to "bossism" rather than to any religious motivation.

It is the author's opinion that his brief review of the basic demographic data on Louisiana will be sufficient for his purposes of analysis. The investigation will begin with the gubernatorial election of 1924 because it was loaded with a religious issue and serves as a backdrop to the Coolidge rise of Longism and the historic Smith-Coolidge election of 1928.

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<sup>20</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 29.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE KLAN (1924)

Louisiana's Democratic Primaries are held on the third Tuesday of January of the election year. If a run-off, or second primary, is needed, it usually falls on the third Tuesday in March; the general election, which will not be considered in this paper, because it is usually a mere formality, is conducted on the first Tuesday next, following the third Monday in April. Primaries for congressional offices, some district and parish officials are held on the second Tuesday in September. The general election for these offices are held on the same day as the national elections in November.<sup>1</sup>

The election of 1924 opened with three candidates filing for the gubernatorial election. Hewitt Bouanchaud, Lieutenant Governor under Parker and supported by him, was a resident of southwest Louisiana, a Roman Catholic, and of French descent. Bouanchaud had the active support of the new regulars, a faction of the New Orleans' machine, in the city of New Orleans. Under the leadership of John Sullivan, the new regulars had broken with the Choctaws of New Orleans.

Henry L. Fuqua, a Protestant from Baton Rouge, and Su-

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<sup>1</sup>Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), p. 41.

perintendent of Angola State Penitentiary, was the second candidate. He received the active support of J. Y. Sanders, a former Governor of Louisiana, and from the old regulars in New Orleans who made up the majority of the Choctaw machine.

Huey Pierce Long, the third candidate, could not file his candidacy until three days before registration closed because he attained his thirtieth year, the legal minimum for a gubernatorial candidate, only at that time.<sup>2</sup> Long, who was later to become the famous "Kingfish" of Louisiana and almost absolute dictator, was at this time Third District Member of the Public Service Commission. Born of poor parents in Winn parish, he had put himself through the University of Oklahoma and Tulane University. Elected to the Railroad Commission in 1918, which later became the Public Service Commission, he had used that office to publicize himself throughout the state. In 1922, he had been responsible for the Public Service Commission's reversal of a rate increase for the Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company. Since the reversal was made retroactive to the time of the company's application, a large refund was assured all users. As a result, his name was well known throughout the state by the time of the 1924 primary.<sup>3</sup> Long, at the outset of the campaign, lacked both a city and a county parish organiza-

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 42-46.

tion. New Orleans is almost indispensable to a candidate who wishes to win election to state office. New Orleans politics, until the election of deLesseps Morrison, was under the domination of the Choctaws (New Orleans' counterpart to Tammany Hall). A candidate with serious aspirations for state office had to strive to win the endorsement of the machine, or split the machine to win at least a faction of its power to his cause. Since it is a rule of thumb that an Orleanian cannot be elected to the gubernatorial chair, the Choctaws usually waited until all the candidates had entered the race, and then endorsed the candidate with whom the most lucrative agreement could be made.<sup>4</sup> A great part of Long's failure in 1924, and his success in subsequent campaigns, can be attributed to his relations with the Choctaws of New Orleans.

The election of 1924 was dominated by the issue of the Ku Klux Klan, an issue with deep religious significance. Immediately after World War I, the Klan had experienced a national revival. With a program of open hostility towards all persons who were not both white and Protestant, the Klan was exceedingly unpopular in French Louisiana. In 1922, there had been two murders in Morehouse Parish in which the Klan was directly involved.<sup>5</sup> The incident had received na-

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-46.

<sup>5</sup> Webster Smith, The Kingfish: A Biography of Huey Long (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), pp. 34-36.

tional publicity and many citizens were outraged at the disgrace to the state that the Klan had caused. As a result, an almost universal demand was made that the organization be suppressed. Each candidate was forced to make known his position on the issue of the Klan.

For Bouanchaud, this posed no problem; as a Catholic, it was to be expected that he was in favor of suppressing the Klan. Fuqua outwardly opposed the Klan, although later events made his opposition somewhat suspicious. To Huey Long, alone, the Klan presented a serious problem. He was from the area where the Klan was most active and he hoped to make his major appeal to that area. He had announced his opposition to making public membership in the Klan and had already opposed a law prohibiting the wearing of masks.<sup>6</sup> While these actions would indicate that Long was favorable to the Klan, yet he made no outright appeal to the Klan in the early part of the race.

Long, because of his vulnerability on the Klan issue, attempted a diversion by sticking to the "real" issues of the campaign. Attacking both his opponents as members of the "do-nothing" Parker regime, he promised an administration loaded with public works and progress. He promised the citizens of New Orleans that he would bring natural gas into the city. For the state at large, he promised an entire new system of good roads, free textbooks, free trapping and fish-

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

ing, and new state hospitals and asylums. He openly opposed the further expansion of Louisiana State University by acidly remarking, "Our kind don't need college." He favored reductions of personal taxes but intended to pay for his program by increasing severance taxes on natural resources.

Shortly before the election, Long's chances seemed to be excellent. Then days before the primary, Long visited a relative near Alexandria, Swords Lee, a power in local politics. Together, they worked out a plan for garnering to Long's cause what little support the Klan could muster. Within a few days, a rumor was current among Alexandria's sheeted brethren that Huey was a Klansman and a certificate of Long's membership was circulated. Unfortunately for Long, the certificate fell into the hands of the Fuqua camp which immediately set about to prove it a forgery. Enlisting the help of E. P. Duncan, Grand Dragon of Louisiana, the Fuqua forces were able to prove that Huey had never been a member of the Klan and his membership card was counterfeit. The revelation of his attempted ruse brought him no enthusiastic support from the Klan and probably seriously damaged him in south Louisiana. Fuqua, by his actions, had raised serious doubts about the genuineness of his opposition to the Klan but the major casualty was Long.

Long carried none of the predominately Roman Catholic parishes, with the exception of St. Tammany (which, to the author, is doubtfully Roman Catholic). In the twenty-four Roman Catholic parishes, Long placed second only in six.

Bouanchaud placed first in every Roman Catholic parish with the exception of four. In New Orleans, he lacked the backing of the largest Choctaw faction, which explains his loss of that parish. Sheriff Clancy's machine in Jefferson parish announced for Fuqua and carried the parish for him. Roman Catholic Louisiana, however, voted rather solidly its religious faith (see Table 1).

Turning to Protestant Louisiana, the same cleavage can be denoted. Bouanchaud failed to win a plurality in Protestant Louisiana with the exception of three parishes, Beauregard, Pointe Coupee, and West Baton Rouge, two of which have strong Catholic minorities and all have an economy similar to Bouanchaud's home territory; this might explain their allegiance to him. In all the rest, Bouanchaud consistently placed a poor third. Religious influences, therefore, are plainly visible in the Protestant parishes.

Between the first and second primary, Bouanchaud frantically adopted Long's textbook plan and his program for better roads in an attempt to win some of Long's support. But as will be noticed from Table 1, few significant results were gained from this maneuver. Bouanchaud lost only four Roman Catholic parishes and won only two Protestant parishes. His slight gains in the Protestant area are probably the result of the elimination of Mr. Long and Bouanchaud's espousal of parts of Long's program.

Long blamed his defeat on the day itself because it rained. Hence, he claimed, his large rural following in

TABLE 1

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES OF 1924  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	First Primary			Second Primary	
	Bouanchaud	Fuqua	Long	Bouanchaud	Fuqua
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>					
Acadia	55.3	34.9	9.8	58.6	41.4
Ascension	54.2	17.5	28.1	82.0	18.0
Assumption	77.9	3.5	18.4	64.1	35.9
Avoyelles	61.1	15.7	23.6	63.4	46.6
Cameron	67.7	6.6	25.6	54.8	45.2
Evangeline	75.6	12.8	13.4	70.7	29.3
Iberia	73.4	16.9	9.8	81.4	18.6
Jefferson	35.3	24.2	40.4	48.7	51.3
Jeff. Davis	55.3	37.9	6.6	52.1	47.9
Lafayette	70.1	18.8	11.1	73.1	16.9
Lafourche	67.7	8.5	23.8	74.7	25.3
Orleans	33.9	48.3	17.7	39.0	61.0
Plaquemines	50.9	46.1	3.0	50.6	49.4
St. Bernard	62.2	32.1	5.1	68.7	31.3
St. Charles	56.2	18.5	25.3	73.3	26.7
St. James	77.0	8.5	14.5	67.3	32.7
St. John the Bap.	67.6	7.0	25.3	63.4	36.6
St. Landry	65.4	32.2	13.4	62.2	37.8
St. Martin	79.4	12.0	8.6	74.7	25.3
St. Mary	62.4	25.6	12.0	63.0	36.0
Terrebonne	62.5	32.2	12.3	71.9	28.1
Vermillion	46.4	11.3	42.3	66.2	22.8
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>					
Calcasieu	37.2	41.3	21.5	31.2	68.8
Iberville	65.6	9.8	24.6	72.8	27.2
St. Tammany	28.8	24.8	46.4	41.2	58.8
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>					
Allen	31.4	36.3	32.3	17.5	82.5
Livingston	14.9	25.7	59.4	34.9	65.1
Natchitoches	31.8	21.4	46.8	43.4	56.6
Point Coupee	84.4	11.5	4.1	85.0	15.0
Rapides	24.1	25.1	50.8	29.1	70.9
Tangipohoa	22.5	35.2	42.3	37.6	62.4
W. Baton Rouge	76.1	14.0	9.9	76.9	23.1

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Parish	First Primary			Second Primary	
	Bouanchaud	Fuqua	Long	Bouanchaud	Fuqua
2/3 or more PROTESTANT					
Bienville	8.5	36.1	55.4	65.4	34.6
Beauregard	59.8	17.1	23.2	82.9	17.1
Bossier	8.6	36.3	55.1	10.2	89.8
Caddo	6.7	25.7	67.6	43.4	57.6
Caldwell	19.5	40.1	40.3	23.7	76.3
Catahoula	9.2	43.9	46.9	12.0	86.0
Claiborne	4.7	40.1	55.2	19.6	80.4
Concordia	17.5	49.0	32.6	15.2	84.8
De Soto	10.2	50.5	30.4	30.1	69.9
E. Baton Rouge	29.9	55.6	14.1	15.4	84.6
E. Carrol	9.4	74.6	42.0	13.5	86.5
E. Feliciana	13.2	58.8	28.0	14.3	85.7
Franklin	17.6	43.7	38.7	38.5	61.5
Grant	10.7	21.5	67.8	34.5	65.5
Jackson	9.7	15.0	75.3	21.3	78.7
La Salle	5.0	27.7	62.3	15.0	85.0
Lincoln	3.5	33.3	63.2	5.0	95.0
Madison	4.8	86.2	9.0	30.9	69.1
Morehouse	12.9	22.2	64.9	22.0	78.0
Ouachita	24.5	34.1	41.4	20.3	69.7
Red River	3.0	21.6	76.4	38.6	61.4
Richland	8.4	34.0	57.6	44.3	55.7
Sabine	7.6	21.3	71.7	42.9	57.1
St. Helena	7.1	23.2	67.6	21.0	69.0
Tensas	18.6	71.2	4.1	13.4	86.6
Union	5.7	27.2	67.1	26.7	75.3
Vernon	2.4	29.6	68.0	31.8	68.2
Washington	13.5	19.0	67.5	32.8	67.2
Webster	3.3	37.9	58.7	17.1	82.9
W. Carrol	24.5	40.1	35.4	19.9	80.1
W. Feliciana	4.8	25.2	69.9	34.9	65.1
Winn	3.4	37.9	58.7	28.2	71.8

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1924, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1925), First Primary, p. 324; Second Primary, p. 427.

northern Louisiana could not get to the polls to vote. However, the returns indicated that Long's failure to win the election was caused by the Klan issue which lost him a great deal of support in southern Louisiana, and the lack of Choctaw support in New Orleans. Had Mr. Long been able to carry New Orleans by Mr. Fuqua's margin, he, and not Fuqua, would have been in the run-off and probably elected. Entered in an election in which he lacked machine support, and dominated by a religious issue to which he was the most vulnerable of all candidates, Long's defeat is not surprising. As for Bouanchaud, he served as living evidence, that in 1924 the old axiom, "A Catholic can't be Governor" was still true. Although his following in Roman Catholic parishes was exceedingly strong, he could not overcome the powerful opposition to his candidacy in the Protestant areas. In 1924, the electorate voted its religious faith.

## CHAPTER V

### SMITH AND THE HOOVERCRATS (1928)

A wealth of material has been written about the Smith-Hoover election of 1928. It is almost universally recognized that religious factors had a strong influence on the outcome of the 1928 presidential election. Only passing attention, therefore, must be given to this election. Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and Texas deserted the Democratic ranks, for the first time since the ends of reconstruction, to cast their electoral votes for the Republican nominee.<sup>1</sup>

Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic nominee, was distasteful to the rural South in many respects. He was an urbanite and opposed to prohibition. As Governor of New York, he was often portrayed in the South as a typical "city slicker." Herbert Hoover, on the other hand, was an avowed "dry" and a Protestant. He was truly more representative of the southern view than was Catholic, wet, Al Smith.

Louisiana remained in the Democratic column in the presidential election of 1928 but the election behavior of the state was not without religious connotations. Key maintains that desertions took place only within those districts where Negro concentration was exceedingly low.<sup>2</sup> In Louisi-

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<sup>1</sup>V. O. Key, Southern Politics, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1949), p. 318.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 318-322.

ana, this view is questionable (cf. Table 2); Smith's majority in Protestant Louisiana is lower in every parish, with the exception of Jackson, than that of John W. Davis, the Democratic nominee of 1924. Some of these parishes, notably the cut-over region of north-central Louisiana, and the eastern Florida parishes had a comparatively low Negro concentration, while others, for example, the Delta parishes, had a high concentration of colored population.

Howard has pointed out in his work on Louisiana that south Louisiana possessed a relatively strong Republican tradition. The tariff policy of the Republican Party was favorable to the sugar planters of south Louisiana, since they could not hope to compete against such sugar areas as Cuba without a strong protective tariff.<sup>3</sup> An indication of his Republican tendency can be seen by the percentage of votes that Coolidge won in southern Louisiana in 1924. The sugar area roughly corresponds to the area of Louisiana that is predominately Roman Catholic. In 1928, when Catholic Alfred Smith ran on the Democratic ticket, the Democratic Party performed considerably better in Roman Catholic, sugar-growing Louisiana. Smith increased his majority in every Roman Catholic parish but Cameron.

Religious influences, therefore, are to be seen in Louisiana in the election of 1928. The Roman Catholic parishes

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<sup>3</sup>Perry Howard, "The Political Ecology of Louisiana," unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La., 1952, p. 73.

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY PERFORMANCE  
IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 1924-1928\*

Parish	1924		1928	
	Total Vote	Davis' %	Total Vote	Smith's %
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Acadia	2,880	64.9	4,704	77.2
Ascension	1,007	72.4	1,838	76.3
Assumption	907	33.6	1,255	75.5
Avoyelles	1,342	76.7	3,315	87.4
Cameron	374	94.6	433	90.5
Evangeline	876	82.4	2,175	86.2
Iberia	1,419	52.1	2,975	86.1
Jefferson	2,221	76.9	6,068	87.8
Jeff. Davis	1,859	52.3	2,823	60.3
Lafayette	1,833	53.4	3,789	84.4
Lafourche	1,295	52.5	2,239	89.1
Orleans	47,791	78.9	69,455	80.7
Plaquemines	571	75.7	1,145	91.5
St. Bernard	539	97.9	2,436	96.8
St. Charles	620	78.7	1,224	91.4
St. James	897	68.6	1,614	92.1
St. John the Bap.	553	61.3	1,089	89.1
St. Landry	1,711	79.1	4,112	82.5
St. Martin	656	70.3	2,134	88.7
St. Mary	1,300	49.2	2,359	74.3
Terrebonne	897	53.7	1,908	86.1
Vermillion	1,017	59.0	3,031	85.1
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Calcasieu	3,666	68.0	5,532	63.9
Iberville	954	58.3	1,908	85.4
St. Tammany	1,315	74.0	2,760	65.8
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>				
Allen	1,426	71.2	2,033	64.3
Livingston	767	85.7	2,022	51.8
Natchitoches	1,346	84.4	2,625	80.0
Pointe Coupee	529	70.0	1,432	92.9
Rapides	3,290	65.6	6,966	64.2
Tangipohoa	2,135	46.8	4,250	66.7
W. Baton Rouge	324	59.0	686	88.6

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Parish	1924		1928	
	Total Vote	Davis' %	Total Vote	Smith's %
2/3 or more PROTESTANT				
Beauregard	1,428	83.4	1,981	76.4
Bienville	981	91.4	1,668	78.0
Bossier	822	91.4	1,412	84.1
Caddo	5,990	75.6	10,599	65.4
Caldwell	532	84.5	1,091	73.5
Catahoula	301	73.7	1,052	67.6
Claiborne	1,306	95.7	1,809	86.2
Concordia	365	87.4	724	81.6
De Soto	1,277	89.9	1,962	73.6
E. Baton Rouge	3,394	81.4	7,570	60.4
E. Carrol	357	80.1	5,660	77.0
E. Feliciana	529	95.3	786	79.3
Franklin	830	82.8	1,633	69.9
Grant	770	76.0	1,528	67.0
Jackson	770	88.6	907	100.0
La Salle	570	80.2	1,331	66.2
Lincoln	1,166	86.2	1,729	60.5
Madison	287	95.5	469	67.8
Morehouse	523	73.0	1,180	71.2
Ouachita	2,108	73.1	4,119	66.5
Red River	647	89.5	1,118	71.6
Richland	794	85.4	1,325	81.7
Sabine	1,403	83.8	2,148	65.8
St. Helena	203	91.4	754	80.8
Tensas	324	94.6	531	68.2
Union	883	99.0	507	71.9
Vernon	1,548	88.6	2,692	81.4
Washington	1,647	77.6	3,155	64.0
Webster	2,328	89.4	1,327	83.2
W. Carrol	422	81.3	887	75.9
W. Feliciana	362	95.7	511	82.4
Winn	923	86.3	1,694	84.1
Totals	121,951	72.0	215,815	76.3

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1924, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1925), Table 1; Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1928, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1929), Table 1.

turned in a better performance in this year than in 1924. The Protestant parishes, on the other hand, consistently showed smaller majorities. While Smith was in no danger of losing the state, and even turned in a better performance than Davis, yet there were perceptible shifts in the area of his strength from the traditional seat of Democratic power. It would seem, therefore, that a considerable number of voters were willing to cross party lines because of the religious connotations of the election.

It seems immaterial whether some Protestants rejected Smith, because of their hostility to his Roman Catholicism, or whether they opposed him because of his wetness.<sup>4</sup> The prohibition cause had been espoused by many Protestant churches and its virtues preached from many pulpits. To many Protestants, their dryness was so closely joined to their Protestantism as to become a veritable religious conviction. Whether Smith was rejected because of his stand on prohibition, or because of his religious faith, Protestant Louisiana opposed him because of its religious convictions.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), p. 29.

<sup>5</sup>Robert Roats Miller, "A Footnote to the Role of the Protestant Churches in the Election of 1928," Church History, XXV (June, 1956), 145-159.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE REIGN OF THE KINGFISH (1928-1940)

To the author, "The Reign of the Kingfish" seems to be an appropriate title for the period of 1928 to 1940 in Louisiana history. Politically, at least, Huey was Louisiana and he ruled her as her personal fief until his death. That his machine was able to continue in power, for four years after his death, was due only to the personal adulation he cultivated in the hearts of thousands of his admirers and the diligence with which he had built his political organization. The main issue in Louisiana politics, during this era, was Huey Pierce Long, the Kingfish, his program, and his actions. It is not within the scope of this paper to delve into all the intricacies and shennanigans of Long's regime, only the major achievements of Longism and their interrelation with religious factors will be considered here. Religious factors can be seen underlying the major political maneuvering of this period, especially in the earlier years, for the election of 1924 clearly revealed to Long that he must win Catholic Louisiana to his cause if he hoped to win Louisiana.

When the campaign of 1928 opened, the issue of the Klan had ceased to exist. Three anti-Klan acts had been passed by the legislature in 1924 that had effectively eliminated

the Ku Klux Klan from state politics.<sup>1</sup> Three candidates were in the field. O. H. Simpson had run for lieutenant-governor on Fuqua's ticket in 1924 and had succeeded to the governorship upon the latter's death in 1925.<sup>2</sup> Simpson had been clerk of the state senate for twenty years and was reputed to have a large following in the state. His major campaign tactic was to stand on the achievements of his administration. Riley J. Wilson, Eighth District Congressman, was the second candidate in the race. He had the strong support of the united New Orleans Choctaws. His only claim to fame was his active opposition to Coolidge's program of flood relief, which placed the major burden of financing upon the states. The third candidate in the race was Huey Long, who campaigned on the same platform he advocated in 1924. The only new feature in his campaign was his condemnation of the Watson-Williams toll bridge across Lake Ponchartrain. He promised the construction of numerous free bridges throughout the state.

Of particular interest are the pre-election tactics of Long. After his defeat in 1924, he took great pains to win Louisiana's Roman Catholics to his assistance. In the summer of 1924, he actively stumped the state in behalf of the

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<sup>1</sup>Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>The Louisiana Constitution prohibits a governor from succeeding himself, but Simpson was exempt from this provision since he had not run for governor in 1924.

candidacy of Joseph E. Ransdell, the incumbent United States Senator and a north Louisiana Catholic. When Senator Ransdell won re-election, Huey was quick to claim part of the credit. Again in 1926, Long backed a Roman Catholic, this time from the south of the state. Edwin S. Broussard was candidate for United States Senator and opposed by former Governor J. Y. Sanders. Because Broussard was a "wet," Huey skirted the liquor question in his home territory of north Louisiana and centered his fire on Sanders. Although Sanders was supposed to be highly popular in the state, Broussard was able to win by a scant 4,000 votes. Long immediately claimed the credit for his victory.<sup>3</sup> There is little doubt that these maneuvers by Long did much to win the confidence of the Roman Catholic population.

The success of Huey's actions can be readily seen from Table 3. Of the twenty-five predominately Roman Catholic parishes, Long had been able to achieve a plurality only in St. Tammany in 1924; in the rest, he usually placed a poor third. In 1928, he was able to carry sixteen of these parishes by an absolute majority and win a plurality in three others. It would seem, therefore, that Long had successfully overcome Catholic suspicions to his candidacy. But it must not be overlooked that the election returns reveal a strong class cleavage. The cut-over area of the state, together with the subsistence farming areas, showed strong Long ten-

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<sup>3</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 54.

TABLE 3

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES OF 1928  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total Vote	Long	Simpson	Wilson
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Acadia	6,889	55.9	33.5	10.6
Ascension	2,201	53.7	41.7	4.5
Assumption	1,764	66.8	30.4	2.8
Avoyelles	4,237	48.2	31.4	20.4
Cameron	1,006	73.6	8.3	18.1
Evangeline	3,907	73.0	23.0	4.0
Iberia	4,079	55.1	23.5	21.4
Jefferson	7,704	36.1	54.1	9.8
Jeff. Davis	3,736	55.1	21.2	23.7
Lafayette	6,129	58.0	26.9	15.1
Lafourche	2,732	63.3	26.6	10.1
Orleans	78,837	22.7	28.5	48.8
Plaquemines	2,865	23.4	27.8	48.8
St. Bernard	1,538	61.6	36.6	1.8
St. Charles	1,926	42.7	51.0	6.3
St. James	2,166	34.1	64.4	1.5
St. John the Bap.	2,088	46.1	40.8	13.1
St. Landry	6,318	41.9	45.0	13.1
St. Martin	3,616	56.5	33.5	10.0
St. Mary	3,026	53.3	34.6	12.1
Terrebonne	2,469	57.2	34.9	7.9
Vermillion	5,607	60.5	30.2	9.3
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Calcasieu	7,509	57.3	17.3	25.4
Iberville	3,132	52.2	42.5	5.3
St. Tammany	3,895	49.9	33.8	16.3
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>				
Allen	4,995	39.2	46.2	14.6
Livingston	3,207	62.3	32.3	5.4
Natchitoches	3,688	64.0	15.2	20.8
Pointe Coupee	1,986	40.2	54.6	14.2
Rapides	9,891	46.8	31.2	22.0
Tangipohoa	5,653	52.3	30.0	17.7
W. Baton Rouge	943	50.3	45.1	4.6

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Parish	Total Vote	Long	Simpson	Wilson
2/3 or more PROTESTANT				
Beauregard	3,073	69.2	12.8	18.0
Bienville	3,073	59.8	22.8	17.4
Bossier	2,108	53.5	15.1	31.5
Caddo	12,862	38.9	14.1	47.0
Caldwell	1,741	60.0	17.4	22.6
Catahoula	1,962	40.0	17.9	42.1
Claiborne	2,428	56.8	7.3	35.8
Concordia	877	41.6	19.3	39.1
De Soto	2,982	47.9	19.7	32.5
E. Baton Rouge	9,247	23.5	60.6	15.9
E. Carrol	1,181	37.3	49.8	12.9
E. Feliciana	647	37.4	15.5	47.7
Franklin	2,933	57.3	9.3	33.4
Grant	2,419	66.9	11.5	21.6
Jackson	1,897	62.7	6.1	31.2
La Salle	2,687	60.5	5.1	34.4
Lincoln	2,728	46.8	9.7	43.5
Madison	455	18.2	29.2	52.6
Morehouse	1,862	41.0	5.4	48.1
Ouachita	5,536	38.8	16.3	44.9
Red River	2,236	68.7	16.7	14.6
Richland	1,926	47.6	11.3	40.1
Sabine	3,797	67.1	17.0	15.9
St. Helena	1,345	69.2	25.4	5.4
Tensas	516	15.9	11.0	73.1
Union	2,771	68.9	13.3	15.8
Vernon	4,520	73.5	11.2	15.3
Washington	5,269	46.0	45.9	8.1
Webster	No Returns			
W. Carrol	1,646	66.0	8.3	25.7
W. Feliciana	764	38.2	54.1	7.7
Winn	2,968	69.7	12.2	18.1

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1929, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1929), p. 360.

dencies. In both Roman Catholic and Protestant Louisiana, the chief centers of opposition to Long were to be found in the plantation parishes of the Delta, Upper Mississippi, the Sugar Bowl, and in those parishes that contained a relatively high degree of urbanity, for example, Orleans, Caddo, and East Baton Rouge. Sindler and Howard both have effectively demonstrated that the centers of Long opposition were located on the plantations and in the small towns and great cities of Louisiana.<sup>4</sup>

While Long failed to achieve an absolute majority in the primary, because of the hopelessness of the situation, Wilson withdrew, making a second primary unnecessary. Long became governor by default.

#### The Election of 1930

Passing notice is given here to the senatorial election of 1930 because it reveals how completely Long, by the accomplishments of his administration, was able to capture the Roman Catholic areas of the state. A brief review of Long's administration, from 1928 to 1930, reveals the following accomplishments: (a) Natural gas was brought into New Orleans at a reduced rate; (b) A \$30,000,000 road-bond issue was floated; (c) Free textbooks were supplied to all public, private, and parochial schools in the state. The Louisiana Constitution specifically prohibited public aid to religious

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

schools. Long skirted the issue by asserting that the state was distributing the texts directly to the children and using the schools only as a central distribution point. Protestant churches within Louisiana violently condemned the law. The Kingfish's own denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, denounced him for his position of the textbook law.<sup>5</sup> The Protestant churches fought the bill to the United States Supreme Court, where Long's position was upheld.<sup>6</sup> Sindler believes that this law, more than any other single act of Long, won for him the loyalty of thousands of Roman Catholics in south Louisiana.<sup>7</sup>

During the spring session of the state legislature in 1929, Long attempted to bring several of the state administrative agencies under his control, much to the ire of his opponents in the legislature.<sup>8</sup> This, together with the introduction of his program for higher severance taxes for the oil industry, led to the introduction of the impeachment bill against him, in which he was charged with attempted murder, blackmail, malfeasance, and other crimes.

The House passed these bills and the Senate began to sit as a court of impeachment, when Long, by a clever manip-

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<sup>5</sup>Huey Pierce Long, Every Man a King (New Orleans: National Book Company, 1933), p. 120.

<sup>6</sup>Cochran vs. Louisiana State Board of Education, 281, U. S. 370 (1930).

<sup>7</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>8</sup>Long, op. cit., pp. 138ff.

ulation, convinced fifteen state senators to announce their opposition to the charges. Since they constituted more than one-third of the Senate, they foredoomed the proceedings to failure. The Senate, therefore, adjourned without completing the hearing on the charges. It should be noted that Huey had not cleared himself but merely stalemated the proceeding. The session of 1930 brought about no renewal of the impeachment proceedings but the legislature refused to act on Long's program. The governor felt, therefore, that he must make a direct appeal to the electorate.<sup>9</sup>

His opportunity came in 1930. He appealed to the people by entering the Senate race against Senator Ransdell, for whom he had stumped in 1924 and with whom he had later broken. Long had no intention of immediately occupying the seat, if elected. Rather, he promised, if defeated, that he would resign from the gubernatorial office but, if elected, that he would assume his seat as soon as his program was enacted by the Louisiana legislature.<sup>10</sup> He justified his intended absence from Washington by stating, "With Ransdell as Senator, the seat is vacant anyhow."<sup>11</sup> There followed an exceedingly bitter campaign in which Huey blasted the goat-eed Ransdell as "Old Feather Duster" and Long was roasted as

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<sup>9</sup>John Davis, Huey Pierce Long (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1938), pp. 105ff.

<sup>10</sup>Long, op. cit., p. 124.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

a Caesar, braggard, thief, liar, character assassin, and a non-family man.<sup>12</sup> The racial issue cropped up in the campaign; this was the first major appearance of this issue in Louisiana since 1922. Long attacked Ransdell for supporting the appointment of Judge Parker of North Carolina to the Supreme Court because of his anti-labor record. Ransdell replied that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had opposed Parker and, therefore, he had supported him. Thus Huey, cried Ransdell, was alligning himself with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Long replied by printing a letter, written by Ransdell, to Walter Cohen, a Negro secretary of the Republican State Central Committee, in which he addressed Cohen as "Mister" and "Dear Sir."

Long carried the state by a large margin. Table 4 reveals the presence of definite religious influences. Ransdell, although from the northern section of the state, was a Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, Long was able to amass a large majority in almost every Catholic parish in the state and failed to carry only three, Orleans (where the Choctaws opposed him), Iberia, and Iberville. Undoubtedly, Long's textbook law had helped him to achieve his conquest of south Louisiana. Although a Protestant, he had aided the Roman Catholic Church in its educational endeavor, something which many Catholics were not soon to forget.

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<sup>12</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 69.

TABLE 4

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC SENATORIAL PRIMARY OF 1930  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total Vote	Long	Ransdell
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC			
Acadia	4,845	64.2	35.8
Ascension	1,891	57.4	42.6
Assumption	1,303	67.0	33.0
Avoyelles	3,558	59.5	40.5
Cameron	752	92.3	7.7
Evangeline	2,870	79.0	21.0
Iberia	3,839	50.6	49.4
Jefferson	7,821	88.4	21.6
Jeff. Davis	3,010	66.7	32.3
Lafayette	4,380	74.9	25.1
Lafourche	2,717	72.1	27.9
Orleans	82,055	47.1	52.9
Plaquemines	2,044	93.6	6.4
St. Bernard	3,988	99.8	0.2
St. Charles	1,903	53.6	46.4
St. James	1,681	86.8	13.2
St. John the Bap.	1,671	70.7	29.3
St. Landry	4,480	55.3	44.7
St. Martin	2,219	74.6	25.4
St. Mary	2,712	63.8	37.2
Terrebonne	1,867	72.4	27.6
Vermillion	3,436	68.2	31.8
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC			
Calcasieu	6,306	66.5	32.5
Iberville	2,374	45.9	54.1
St. Tammany	3,021	70.2	29.8
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT			
Allen	1,489	68.2	31.8
Livingston	2,593	65.1	34.9
Natchitoches	3,803	66.8	32.2
Pointe Coupee	1,937	59.0	41.0
Rapides	8,272	53.7	46.3
Tangipohoa	5,160	57.0	43.0
W. Baton Rouge	962	38.0	62.0

TABLE 4 (Continued)

Parish	Total Vote	Long	Ransdell
2/3 or more PROTESTANT			
Beauregard	2,106	72.8	29.2
Bienville	2,706	69.6	30.4
Bossier	2,112	58.7	41.3
Caddo	12,125	40.6	59.4
Caldwell	1,503	78.0	22.0
Catahoula	1,826	67.2	32.8
Claiborne	2,528	52.7	47.3
Concordia	519	53.6	46.4
De Soto	2,240	44.1	55.9
E. Baton Rouge	9,214	17.2	82.8
E. Carrol	697	37.6	62.4
E. Feliciana	1,168	43.2	56.8
Franklin	2,528	67.5	32.5
Grant	1,860	68.6	31.2
Jackson	1,607	71.8	28.2
La Salle	1,983	55.0	45.0
Lincoln	2,317	58.4	41.6
Madison	468	18.8	81.2
Morehouse	1,571	59.3	40.7
Ouachita	5,248	54.6	45.4
Red River	1,260	75.9	24.1
Richland	1,671	66.9	33.1
Sabine	2,603	63.0	37.0
St. Helena	1,059	63.9	46.1
Tensas	493	30.0	70.0
Union	2,394	75.1	24.9
Vernon	3,116	74.2	25.8
Washington	4,400	69.3	30.7
W. Carrol	1,630	77.5	22.5
W. Feliciana	680	59.0	41.0
Winn	2,262	78.1	21.9

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1931, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1931), pp. 362-363.

## The Election of 1932

Long's victorious senatorial campaign marked his conquest of the state. His opposition crumbled. His program of economic liberalism was rapidly enacted. In quick succession, a \$75,000,000 highway-bond issue was raised, appropriations were made for a new state capitol, and provisions were made for the reduction of the debt of the Port of New Orleans.<sup>13</sup> Of greatest significance was the agreement Long entered into with the Choctaws of New Orleans. In return for an annual appropriation of \$700,000 for street paving, and a tax provision for the future construction of a free bridge across the Mississippi at New Orleans, the Choctaws agreed to support Long and his program.<sup>14</sup>

Long's position was strong enough in the fall of 1931 to leave for Washington but, since he had broken with his lieutenant governor, Paul Cyr, Long felt he must first dispose of Cyr. Cyr, who felt that Long had no right to be both governor and senator, had himself sworn in as governor in October, 1931. The Kingfish claimed that, by attempting to assume the governorship in this manner, he had vacated the office of lieutenant governor. Since in Long's eyes Cyr was no longer lieutenant governor, he had Alvin King, a colleague and president pro-tempore of the state Senate, sworn in as

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 71-74.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

governor. He, thereupon, departed for Washington. The State Supreme Court refused to rule on Long's action and the National Guard prevented Cyr from challenging King's position.<sup>15</sup> The Supreme Court's refusal to take action in this case is indicative of how completely Long had seized control of the state.<sup>16</sup>

The Kingfish's Washington residence did not mean that he had given up control of the state. In 1931, he presented to the electorate a "Complete the Work" ticket headed by his old associate, O. K. Allen. Allen had been state senator from Winn parish but had later resigned to become Commissioner of Highways for Long. As the slogan of the ticket indicated, their campaign was based on the past record of the Long administration.

The major opponent was Dudley J. Le Blanc, a Cajun Roman Catholic from south Louisiana and member of the Louisiana Public Service Commission. His platform was almost identical to Long's, with the exception that he also offered the voters a thirty-dollar monthly old-age pension. Long, who did most of the campaigning for his ticket, attacked Le Blanc's pension idea as too costly and claimed that \$20,000,000 a year would go to colored people for pensions.

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<sup>15</sup> Webster Smith, The Kingfish: A Biography of Huey Pierce Long (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), pp. 238-241, gives a full description of the action together with some of its more ludicrous results.

<sup>16</sup> C. A. M. Ewing, "Southern Governors," Journal of American Politics, X (May, 1948), 400-401.

The campaign was bogged down in the racial issue for its duration. Le Blanc was president of the Thibodeaux Benevolent Society, a mutual aid society that catered to very poor whites and Negroes, at a considerable financial gain to its officers. The official publication of Longism, Louisiana Progress, regularly printed pictures of Le Blanc surrounded by Negro fellow officers of the society.<sup>17</sup> At Colfax, in Grant parish, Long attacked Le Blanc by saying:

That other candidate [Le Blanc], he operates a nigger burial lodge, shroud and coffin club. He charges for a coffin and he charges seven dollars for a shroud. I am informed that the nigger is laid out, and after the mourners have left, Le Blanc takes the body into a back room, takes off the shroud, and nails him up at a cost of \$3.67 $\frac{1}{2}$ .<sup>18</sup>

Le Blanc countered by charging Long with preference to the colored race. To illustrate his point, Le Blanc distributed masses of campaign literature showing Long passing out textbooks to Negro children.<sup>19</sup> There is little doubt that the introduction of the racial issue severely hurt Le Blanc. Of the two, he was the most vulnerable on this point. Combined with his Roman Catholic background, this issue probably made him very distasteful to northern Louisianans.

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<sup>17</sup>Cf. issues of the Louisiana Progress for the months of November and December, 1931. Some copies of this paper are available at the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge. Since the issues of this paper appeared spasmodically and without volume numbers, it is difficult to give full references to it.

<sup>18</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), December 6, 1931, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup>Conway Collection of Huey Long Materials (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library, n.d.), LXXIII.

Le Blanc's war with Huey left the third major candidate, Seth Guion, a Protestant of Baton Rouge, the neglected man in the campaign. His campaign was limited to attacking Long for his opposition to tick eradication and charging the senator with being a tool of the power lobby.<sup>20</sup>

The election returns, as shown in Table 5, reveal that Le Blanc did better than Ransdell in 1930 in south Louisiana. Since there was little difference in the platforms of the two candidates, Le Blanc's larger vote in Catholic Louisiana was probably due to ethno-religious reasons. In the Delta parishes, center of former anti-Longism, Allen rolled up an overwhelming majority. Here the class cleavage again appeared. The Delta's traditional allies, the Choctaws of New Orleans, had come to an understanding with Long. The planters of the Delta now felt evidently that they could control and harness the Long machine for their own purposes. In the Delta, Guion was runner-up to Allen, which was due to the Delta's aversion to Le Blanc on racial and religious issues. In the heart of Longism's traditional source of strength, relative to the performance of all other parishes, Allen's majority decreased. The parishes of Allen, Catahoula, Grant, La Salle, Natchitoches, Sabine, and Vernon reveal this clearly. The explanation is the developing class conflict. Many of the upland folk felt that Huey had been corrupted by his alliance with the urban Choctaws. Hence, they

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<sup>20</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 75.

TABLE 5

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1932  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Allen	Guion	Le Blanc	Others
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>					
Acadia	8,125	37.4	8.6	53.9	.1
Ascension	3,902	35.9	26.9	37.0	.2
Assumption	2,901	49.8	24.6	25.4	.2
Avoyelles	5,972	41.3	7.1	50.9	.7
Cameron	1,400	62.8	9.1	27.7	.4
Evangeline	5,226	40.5	2.9	56.5	.1
Iberia	6,500	50.1	8.7	40.9	.3
Jefferson	11,163	78.3	13.4	8.0	.3
Jeff. Davis	4,384	55.2	10.8	33.7	.3
Lafayette	8,269	39.9	4.4	55.6	.1
Lafourche	4,427	61.7	9.0	29.1	.1
Orleans	98,836	70.7	11.4	17.8	.1
Plaquemines	3,566	47.1	.5	52.2	.2
St. Bernard	1,562	100.0	-	-	-
St. Charles	2,651	44.8	12.7	44.0	.5
St. James	2,502	66.8	16.2	16.9	.1
St. John the Bap.	2,395	60.0	12.6	27.1	.2
St. Landry	6,446	42.7	16.3	40.6	.4
St. Martin	4,404	43.5	6.8	49.7	.0
St. Mary	3,752	57.8	12.4	29.6	.2
Terrebonne	3,355	50.2	16.7	33.0	.1
Vermillion	7,262	37.8	1.4	60.6	.2
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>					
Calcasieu	9,748	55.8	19.4	24.5	.3
Iberville	2,816	52.9	19.3	27.5	.3
St. Tammany	5,008	57.1	16.6	26.2	.1
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>					
Allen	3,593	52.5	9.5	37.7	.3
Livingston	4,105	50.6	23.9	24.8	.7
Natchitoches	6,073	43.3	7.9	41.9	5.9
Pointe Coupee	2,487	56.3	15.7	27.7	.3
Rapides	11,788	50.7	21.5	27.3	.3
Tangipohoa	8,130	49.4	22.3	27.9	.4
W. Baton Rouge	1,299	46.4	33.1	43.4	.9

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Allen	Guion	Le Blanc	Others
2/3 or more PROTESTANT					
Beauregard	3,630	59.9	6.2	33.7	.2
Bienville	3,810	50.6	18.0	30.6	.8
Bossier	3,259	50.5	10.8	37.5	1.2
Caddo	17,362	36.7	20.7	41.9	.7
Caldwell	2,390	61.1	7.5	31.0	.4
Catahoula	2,521	50.0	12.1	37.7	.2
Claiborne	3,838	48.5	33.7	15.8	.1
Concordia	1,307	58.1	19.7	22.0	.2
De Soto	3,258	44.3	19.6	24.9	.2
E. Baton Rouge	12,233	45.3	33.9	20.5	.3
E. Carrol	1,059	67.4	21.8	10.6	.2
E. Feliciana	1,601	53.8	29.2	16.5	.5
Franklin	4,362	64.5	12.1	22.8	.6
Grant	3,164	43.3	9.9	46.1	1.7
Jackson	2,645	56.6	12.6	28.9	.9
La Salle	3,465	51.5	10.8	37.1	.6
Lincoln	3,272	49.8	23.6	25.4	.2
Madison	807	60.1	30.5	9.3	.1
Morehouse	2,836	56.4	22.7	20.5	.4
Ouachita	8,725	56.6	17.7	25.2	.5
Red River	2,591	59.7	14.4	25.4	.5
Richland	2,289	68.2	19.7	16.6	.5
Sabine	4,981	50.7	7.9	39.7	.7
St. Helena	1,674	51.9	14.8	33.0	.3
Tensas	1,001	69.1	24.1	6.6	.2
Union	3,687	56.4	14.0	29.3	.3
Vernon	4,826	52.3	6.1	41.4	.2
Washington	6,228	66.0	16.8	26.4	.8
Webster	4,124	52.9	18.8	27.5	.8
W. Carrol	2,246	65.0	8.3	25.9	.8
W. Feliciana	943	46.0	33.5	20.4	.1
Winn	3,722	57.1	8.4	33.7	.8

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1933, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1933), p. 407.

preferred to support a "country boy," even though he was from south Louisiana and a Catholic. The election clearly shows the urban-planter faction in opposition to the subsistence farmers of the cut-over region and the Florida parishes.

On the basis of the returns, it is safe to conclude that religious influences were present. The only parishes carried by Le Blanc were in Catholic Louisiana. While his showing in Protestant sections was better than Ransdell's in 1930, this does not indicate an abatement of antipathy toward Catholic candidates in Protestant areas as much as it indicates a sharpening of the class conflict. It would be safe to assume that Le Blanc's superior performance to Ransdell could be attributed to three factors: (a) His ethnic background won him increased French support (he was French, Ransdell was not); (b) His Catholicism also recommended him in the south; (c) His rurality won for him an increased following in the north.

#### The Election of 1936

The personal power of Huey Long reached its peak in the period from 1932 to 1936. While the intricate details of his rule, through the puppet O. K. Allen, cannot be reviewed here, suffice it to say that Long transformed Louisiana for what had once been a conventional republican democracy, in

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

every sense of the word, a personal dictatorship emerged.<sup>22</sup> His rule was tempered by certain economic benefits to the electorate, for example, \$800 homestead exemptions, reduction of auto license taxes, and exemption of automobiles from the list of assessable property.<sup>23</sup> Because the Kingfish had made opposition to himself impossible through legal channels, the inevitable took place. On the evening of September 8, 1935, Dr. Carl Weiss (son-in-law of Judge B. F. Pavy, who was about to be gerrymandered out of office because of opposition to Long), encountered Long in the lobby of the state capitol and shot him. Weiss was killed instantly but his attempt was successful because Long died a few days later. The assassination wrought havoc in the Long ranks.

In the struggle for power, Richard W. Leche emerged with the Longite support and his running-mate was Earl K. Long, brother to the late Kingfish. While Leche represented the more conservative element of the Long faction, he was supported by all Longites. The theme of the campaign could be summed up in the slogan of Gerald L. K. Smith, who was imported to stump for Leche, "the blood of the martyr is the

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<sup>22</sup>Harnett Kane, Louisiana Hayride (New York: Morrow and Company, 1942), pp. 130ff; Raymond G. Swing, Forerunners of American Facism (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1935); Raymond G. Swing, "The Menace of Huey Long," The Nation, CXL (January 9, 16, 23, 1935), 36-39, 69-71, 98-108. All the above cited works carry rather excellent descriptions of these years of Louisiana politics.

<sup>23</sup>Sindler, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

seed of victory." Leche promised to continue the economic liberalism of Long. To reduce some of the pressure put on him by the opposition, he also promised to eliminate some of the Kingfish's more dictatorial laws.

The opposition in the election presented a united front. Its candidate was Cleveland Dear, Eighth District Congressman. Protestant Dear made his appeal to rural Longites hoping to cause defection by charging (accurately) that Leche was the hand-picked candidate of New Orleans' boss, Robert Maestri. Dear depicted the privation brought upon Louisiana by Long's running feud with President Roosevelt. To clear himself of any association with Long's death, Dear promised to have the matter investigated by Congress.

In this campaign, the person of Huey Long was sacrosanct. Leche and his supporters eulogized Long and Dear had no words of condemnation for the fallen leader of the opposition. Dear pledged himself to much of the Long program: (a) Reduction of auto licenses to three dollars; (b) Elimination of the gas tax on fuel used for farm or fishing purposes; (c) Creation of a state Department of Welfare to supervise social security and old-age assistance; (d) Continuation of the good roads, free textbooks, and homestead exemptions.<sup>24</sup>

The result of the election, as shown in Table 6, was a sweeping victory for Leche. No religious influences can be

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<sup>24</sup>Hodding Carter, "Huey Long, American Dictator," The Aspirin Age, edited by Isabel Leighton (New York: Simon Schuster, 1949), p. 347.

TABLE 6

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1936  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Dear	Leche	Spencer
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Acadia	11,128	30.9	68.8	.3
Ascension	5,220	48.5	51.2	.3
Assumption	3,134	38.1	71.7	.2
Avoyelles	9,294	37.2	62.5	.3
Cameron	2,247	31.5	68.3	.2
Evangeline	9,421	25.2	74.2	.6
Iberia	8,321	28.9	70.7	.4
Jefferson	12,815	12.8	88.1	.1
Jeff. Davis	6,538	40.9	58.8	.3
Lafayette	7,535	25.3	74.5	.2
Lafourche	10,393	45.2	54.7	.1
Orleans	143,923	27.8	72.0	.2
Plaquemines	4,172	2.2	97.7	.1
St. Bernard	3,540	1.8	98.2	.0
St. Charles	2,796	26.5	73.1	.4
St. James	3,317	20.1	79.2	.7
St. John the Bap.	2,977	17.5	76.8	5.7
St. Landry	10,708	42.4	57.7	.1
St. Martin	5,247	38.2	61.7	.1
St. Mary	5,016	27.2	72.3	.5
Terrebonne	11,557	41.2	58.6	.2
Vermillion	6,392	34.6	64.1	.3
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>				
Calcasieu	13,128	29.0	70.6	.5
Iberville	4,678	44.3	55.3	.4
St. Tammany	6,807	29.0	70.6	.4
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>				
Allen	5,792	31.4	68.1	.5
Livingston	5,619	37.8	62.1	.1
Natchitoches	8,102	36.0	63.7	.3
Pointe Coupee	3,457	37.5	62.2	.3
Rapides	16,661	45.1	54.8	.1
Tangipohoa	11,962	33.8	65.5	.7
W. Baton Rouge	1,694	53.0	46.9	.1

TABLE 6 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Dear	Leche	Spencer
<b>2/3 or more PROTESTANT</b>				
Beauregard	4,968	24.8	74.9	.3
Bienville	5,792	31.4	68.1	.5
Bossier	4,280	34.3	64.9	.8
Caddo	22,932	45.5	53.8	.7
Caldwell	3,210	29.8	70.0	.2
Catahoula	3,452	26.9	72.5	.6
Claiborne	5,068	37.2	62.4	.4
Concordia	1,771	34.3	65.4	.3
De Soto	4,347	48.3	51.6	.1
E. Baton Rouge	17,856	48.8	50.8	.4
E. Carrol	1,387	34.7	65.0	.3
E. Feliciana	2,057	53.5	46.2	.3
Franklin	6,487	25.7	73.9	.4
Grant	4,701	36.9	63.0	.1
Jackson	4,182	29.8	69.8	.4
La Salle	4,050	38.9	60.7	.4
Lincoln	5,047	40.9	59.0	.1
Madison	1,872	40.2	58.8	1.0
Morehouse	4,371	32.2	67.6	.2
Ouachita	12,631	30.0	69.6	.4
Red River	3,666	24.4	75.2	.4
Richland	4,724	28.8	70.9	.3
Sabine	7,072	30.5	69.2	.3
St. Helena	2,045	42.3	57.5	.2
Tensas	1,372	33.5	66.0	.5
Union	5,166	32.9	66.7	.4
Vernon	6,911	28.2	71.1	.7
Washington	9,759	22.7	71.7	.6
Webster	5,736	32.0	67.5	.5
W. Carrol	3,624	28.7	70.5	.8
W. Feliciana	1,092	51.0	48.8	.2
Winn	4,929	36.9	62.8	.3

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1937, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1937), p. 367.

found in this election. Longites, Allen Ellender, who made his first successful bid for United States Senator was a Roman Catholic, Protestant O. K. Allen, who ran for the unexpired term of Long's seat, and Leche, who came from a mixed religious background, all emerged victorious in the same areas with comparable results. In judging this election, one would have to agree with Gossell that the primary election of 1936 in Louisiana offered an example of machine and factional cohesion that is unparalleled in existing studies of American voting behavior.<sup>25</sup> In both Protestant and Catholic parishes, the seat of Leche opposition was found in plantation and urban areas, with the exception of New Orleans where Leche had Choctaw support.

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<sup>25</sup>Harry F. Gossel, Grass Roots Politics (Washington, D. C.: American Council of Public Affairs, 1942), p. 342.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ERA OF REFORM (1940-1948)

#### The Election of 1940

The administration of Richard Leche continued the public work and welfare program of Longism. A free bridge was constructed over the Mississippi River at New Orleans, the immense Charity Hospital was completed, and federal monies were used to expand the campus of Louisiana State University.<sup>1</sup> Through the efforts of Governor Leche, the breach with President Roosevelt was healed and this brought about additional federal grants for public works in Louisiana.<sup>2</sup> Of interest is the friendly attitude Leche manifested toward business within the state. He agreed to oppose any further increases on severance and corporation taxes, and inaugurated a program to attract additional business to the state.

The 1938 election placed Leche's administration in a very favorable position. Most of the Longist legislators were returned to office so that the governor's control of the state was assured. Longites were looking forward to the gubernatorial election of 1940 with great optimism. Early in 1938, however, James A. Noe, one of the original backers

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<sup>1</sup>Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

of Huey Long and a state senator, broke with the administration. He made a number of charges against Leche, one of which was malfeasance in office.<sup>3</sup> Noe, together with the disillusioned press, brought about the revelation of past scandals in 1938 and early 1939.

Sindler related that every paper within the state turned its reporting staff into a detective agency.<sup>4</sup> As a result of numerous allegations by Noe and the Louisiana dailies, Dr. James M. Smith, the Longite President of Louisiana State University, resigned on June 25, 1938. Shortly thereafter, it was discovered that he had embezzled over \$500,000 in university funds. Governor Leche resigned, the following day, citing ill health as the cause. It has been estimated that he was guilty of taking over \$100,000 in state funds. The furor brought the federal government into the picture. President Roosevelt appointed O. John Rogge, head of the Justice Department's criminal division, to head the investigation. As a result of his investigation, a number of Longites were indicted on "hot-oil" charges. Leche, one of these, was convicted, sentenced to ten years imprisonment, and over \$100,000 in back tax liens were filed against him. Where Rogge could secure indictments for no other crime, he secured them on the charge of using the mails

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<sup>3</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), December 7, 1938, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 131.

to defraud.<sup>5</sup>

Upon the resignation of Governor Leche, Earl K. Long, the lieutenant governor became governor. The road that he had to travel was far from easy. Taking office with the motto, "Better a little with righteousness, than great revenue without right,"<sup>6</sup> Long had to face the active intervention of hostile federal agents. The New Orleans Times-Picayune, from June 1939 until the end of the primaries in 1940, displayed prominently on its front page a box which contained the chronology of events in relation to the scandals. Each day, it printed a number of questions about the scandals which, for some reason, the governor was unwilling to answer.<sup>7</sup> Long, upon filing for the governor's nomination in 1939, promised to clean up the scandals.

The hope of the anti-Longs in this election was Sam Houston Jones, a Protestant from Beauregard parish, a successful southwest Louisiana lawyer, and past commander of the American Legion. He entered this primary with many advantages. He was not associated with the violent anti-Long faction, he came from a poor family, and he was a resident of southwest Louisiana which might help his candidacy among

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<sup>5</sup>For further details of the scandals cf. Sindler, op. cit., pp. 127-139; and Harnett Kane, Louisiana Hayride (New York: Morrow and Company, 1942), pp. 241-275.

<sup>6</sup>Kane, op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>7</sup>George E. Simmons, "Crusading Papers of Louisiana," Journalism Quarterly, XVI (December, 1939), 328-333.

the Cajuns of the south. The Longites, because of his record, had little opportunity to attack him and divert the campaign from the true issue of the scandals. Jones made no effort to attack the memory of Huey Long but based his attack on the existing scandals:

Now I am not running against a dead man. I am running against a gang of rascals as live as any gang that ever lived, and I am running to clean out every one of them.<sup>8</sup>

In his platform, he promised to install civil service, fiscal and administrative reforms, reduce the power of the governor, and abolish political deductions and dead-headism within governmental agencies. He vowed to continue the liberal program of Longism, for example: (a) Reduction of auto license fees; (b) An increase in old-age pensions to \$30 a month; (c) An increase in educational appropriations.

Another anti-Long was Vincent Moseley, an Opelousas attorney and an unreconstructed anti-Long. He would not acknowledge any of the benefits of Longism's economic liberalism. He was ignored by the papers and most of the candidates. He opposed both Long and Jones, attacking the latter with a Moseleyism of striking metaphor:

He [Jones] is the voice of Jacob, but the hand of Esau, presented to the electorate as a corporate lamb over which has been thrown the hide of a wolf, that he may run with the political pack. Beware of this Trojan Horse.<sup>9</sup>

A more serious contender was James Noe, a dissident

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<sup>8</sup>State-Times (Baton Rouge), December 10, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), December 1, 1939, p. 1.

Longite and wealthy state attorney. When Governor Allen died in 1936, he had assumed the governor's chair for a few weeks. He claimed rightfully that he had done much to uncover the corruption of the Leche regime. He could also state truthfully that he was in the tradition of Huey Long, but not tainted with any corruption. He endorsed a program of political reform and economic liberalism similar to Jones' program, but he attacked the latter as being inexperienced in politics. His chances were seriously hampered, when he was charged with participation in the scandals.<sup>10</sup> Since he was a Longite, he had little appeal to the anti-Long faction and could hope to attract only the disillusioned anti-Longs.

The final candidate, alligned against Earl, was James H. Morrison of Tangipohoa parish. He had attracted state-wide publicity in 1938 when he made an unsuccessful bid for the Sixth District Congressional office. During the campaign, he was shot. Morrison blamed the incident on Governor Leche, whom Morrison claimed was "out to get him." His major asset was his incomparable showmanship. Seldom committing himself to any specific program, he headed a ticket of unknowns. He toured the state with a monkey on a leash, whom he addressed as Earl Long, and would pointedly apologize to the simian, much to the amusement of his audience. He also toured New Orleans and most of the Florida parishes and south Louisiana with his "Convict Parade," featuring the major members of

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<sup>10</sup>Sindler, op. cit., pp. 142-144.

the Leche faction chained and in prison garb.<sup>11</sup> His main appeal was in his home area of the Florida parishes and south Louisiana.

The common object of all these attacks was Earl Kemp Long. He was picked by the Longites for his close relation to his "martyred" brother. Although he had broken with his brother, they had made a death-bed reconciliation. Admittedly less intelligent than his brother ("I gotta go slower than my brother"),<sup>12</sup> Long's major task was to disassociate himself from the scandals. His strategy was to plead with the voters not to throw out the whole barrel because of a few bad apples. He cried:

Smith [President of Louisiana State University] is only one man, don't blame everybody. Look at Jesus Christ. He picked twelve and one of 'em was a sonofagun.<sup>13</sup>

With amazing candor, he admitted hearing about some of the scandals but he tried to justify himself by saying:

The office of lieutenant governor is a part-time job paying two hundred a month. While I was lieutenant governor, I spent twenty per cent of my time in Baton Rouge. The rest of the time I spent on a pea-patch of a farm in Winnfield or practicing law in New Orleans.<sup>14</sup>

Long conducted a blistering campaign, heaping abuse upon his opponents. To him, Noe was a crook and an oil-chis-

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 145-147.

<sup>12</sup>Kane, op. cit., p. 283.

<sup>13</sup>Quoted in Kane, op. cit., p. 288.

<sup>14</sup>State-Times (Baton Rouge), December 30, 1939, p. 1.

eller. Of Jones he said, "He's High-Hat Sam, the High-Society Kid, the High-Kicking, High and Mighty Snide Sam. The guy that pumps perfume under his arm."<sup>15</sup> When not attacking others, he made campaign promises that clearly associated him with his brother Huey, for example: (a) Free school lunches to all children; (b) A minimum homestead exemption of \$2,000; (c) Extended road improvements. But, to his credit, it must be admitted that he did not offer a reduction in taxes.<sup>16</sup>

The first primary result (cf. Table 7) revealed that Long was barely able to carry New Orleans with the help of Mayor Maestri's machine. Jones had done almost as well as Dear, even though he had to compete for the votes with three other anti-Long candidates. Long trailed Jones not only in urban and planter parishes but in most of south Louisiana where Catholic Le Blanc had come to Jones' aid.<sup>17</sup> Much of Jones' appeal can be attributed to Le Blanc, who campaigned furiously for him in this region. Noe cut seriously into Long's north Louisiana vote and Morrison attracted much of Longism's support to himself in the Florida parishes.

Between the first and the second primary, Jones continued his attack on the scandals, claiming that they had cost the state \$25,000,000 a year. He received unexpected help

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<sup>15</sup>Kane, op. cit., p. 434.

<sup>16</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

TABLE 7

RETURNS OF THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1940  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Jones	Long	Morrison	Moseley	Noe
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC						
Acadia	11,740	38.1	46.6	2.0	.6	13.0
Ascension	4,932	27.6	47.8	5.7	.1	18.9
Assumption	5,745	16.2	36.5	40.1	.7	6.5
Avoyelles	10,945	21.9	46.2	2.0	.6	29.3
Cameron	2,432	35.3	56.8	.5	.2	7.0
Evangeline	9,791	24.7	36.5	2.4	.7	36.2
Iberia	4,948	26.1	31.4	28.1	1.0	13.4
Jefferson	13,253	16.9	39.3	10.4	.4	35.0
Jeff. Davis	6,899	48.0	34.5	2.3	.7	13.5
Lafayette	11,788	58.3	32.8	1.1	.4	7.4
Lafourche	6,343	25.2	44.1	26.5	.5	3.7
Orleans	141,659	24.7	50.0	4.7	.4	19.6
Plaquemines	2,880	18.2	50.9	.6	.4	25.9
St. Bernard	2,666	8.3	67.0	10.7	.2	13.8
St. Charles	3,005	25.4	23.8	40.4	.6	9.8
St. James	3,340	16.0	38.2	40.5	.6	4.7
St. John the Bap.	2,902	23.6	38.1	32.6	.8	4.9
St. Landry	12,734	38.6	42.6	3.7	3.9	12.2
St. Martin	5,821	47.6	40.6	2.8	.1	8.9
St. Mary	6,006	45.8	28.8	7.8	.6	16.0
Terrebonne	5,515	49.9	31.4	8.5	1.7	9.2
Vermillion	11,714	47.1	39.8	1.6	.6	10.9

TABLE 7 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Jones	Long	Morrison	Moseley	Noe
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC						
Calcasieu	13,071	41.9	37.1	2.6	.6	17.8
Iberville	6,358	20.4	24.6	21.9	.7	10.4
St. Tammany	12,696	15.0	30.0	40.9	1.0	13.1
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT						
Allen	5,021	27.1	47.0	5.1	.8	18.5
Livingston	6,182	11.0	32.4	40.8	.8	15.0
Natchitoches	8,188	31.2	49.6	1.6	1.2	16.3
Pointe Coupee	3,894	16.2	33.3	40.3	.8	9.2
Rapides	16,710	34.6	37.2	1.8	1.4	25.1
Tangipohoa	12,696	15.0	30.0	40.9	1.0	13.1
W. Baton Rouge	1,947	20.6	38.4	25.5	1.3	14.2
2/3 or more PROTESTANT						
Beauregard	5,160	31.7	46.6	.8	.3	20.6
Bienville	5,342	31.7	46.6	.8	.3	20.6
Bossier	4,701	25.9	32.6	3.8	6.0	31.7
Caddo	23,425	44.1	23.0	4.4	7.0	21.4
Caldwell	3,472	19.5	36.8	4.4	.1	38.2
Catahoula	3,513	17.3	42.8	3.7	.2	36.0
Claiborne	2,239	29.2	37.4	4.9	.9	27.6
Concordia	5,509	33.0	40.1	4.5	3.6	19.8

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TABLE 7 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Jones	Long	Morrison	Moseley	Noe
De Soto	4,218	40.8	35.6	.7	3.4	18.5
E. Baton Rouge	20,504	30.5	28.4	14.3	2.4	24.7
E. Carrol	1,885	35.8	41.1	2.1	3.2	17.9
E. Feliciana	2,996	60.4	23.6	4.2	.4	10.4
Franklin	6,593	17.2	47.3	6.4	.2	27.9
Grant	4,669	24.5	44.5	1.9	.9	28.2
Jackson	4,470	13.3	36.0	3.0	2.0	45.3
La Salle	4,306	20.8	44.5	5.5	.4	27.8
Lincoln	5,222	21.4	24.4	3.9	.7	26.3
Madison	1,633	36.6	42.0	5.1	.2	15.1
Morehouse	4,017	27.8	31.8	3.6	2.7	34.2
Ouachita	14,314	14.3	26.7	2.3	2.2	54.6
Red River	3,625	15.5	52.6	1.8	2.0	28.1
Richland	4,844	18.4	47.0	7.9	1.2	25.4
Sabine	6,481	25.4	57.8	1.5	.9	14.2
St. Helena	2,312	17.3	38.9	20.0	.9	22.9
Tensas	1,507	44.5	40.1	2.7	1.7	11.1
Union	5,918	17.4	45.1	6.4	.5	29.6
Vernon	7,120	26.3	54.5	1.7	.5	17.0
Washington	9,857	17.8	35.1	28.5	2.5	16.0
Webster	5,754	29.4	25.4	1.5	3.1	40.6
W. Carrol	4,273	15.9	41.0	2.0	1.1	40.0
W. Feliciana	1,162	31.4	43.0	9.0	.1	15.3
Winn	5,346	22.3	51.9	2.6	.2	22.3

\*Report of the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Governor, 1941, (Baton Rouge: Office of the Secretary of State, 1941), p. 349.

from the national administration when Rogge charged Maestri with "hot-oil" transactions.<sup>18</sup> Long continued his villification of Jones, attempting to arouse rural antipathy, with such statements as:

Don't you vote for that high-hat sweet-smelling little thing from Lake Charles. You vote for a good old country boy from over here in Winn parish that thinks and smells like you on Saturday.<sup>19</sup>

In desperation, he called a special session of the legislature that enacted many of his promises. As the Times-Picayune pointed out, the only drawback was that no state funds existed for the old-age pensions and free-lunch provisions enacted by the legislature.<sup>20</sup>

The election returns from the second primary show that most of Noe's support, and that given to Morrison, went to Jones. Long's performance was not much better than in the first primary. Some religious features are perceptible here. South Louisiana defected from Long. While Jones' home was located in near proximity to Catholic Louisiana and might serve as an explanation for the defection, the more probable explanation is the influence of French Catholic leaders on behalf of Jones. In addition, many of the Catholic clerics

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<sup>18</sup>State-Times (Baton Rouge), February 15, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), February 11, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>Editorial of the Times-Picayune (New Orleans), February 1, 1940, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 145.

openly decried the scandals.<sup>22</sup> As a result, south Louisiana must have been morally aroused over the scandals for it was in this area that Longism suffered its greatest loss.

#### The Election of 1944

Although there was a heavy representation of Longites in the legislature during Jones' administration, nevertheless, he was able to carry out his reform by splitting the Longites. In his first two years, he maintained a successful alliance with Mayor Maestri of New Orleans. However, many of his governmental reform bills were killed in court battles.<sup>23</sup> His administration continued the major welfare benefits of Longism but put through a considerable increase in taxation for both industries and on consumer goods. His administration could be characterized as a continuation of a watered-down brand of economic liberalism, the freeing of the legislature from direct gubernatorial interference, and the elimination of corruption from the executive branch. Jones, however, did not become a popular governor; his tax program was bitterly resented throughout the state. So strong was resentment toward him that the reform forces did not allow him to endorse their candidate for governor in 1944.

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<sup>22</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), March 4, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>Robert H. Weaver, Administrative Reforms in Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Bureau of Governmental Research, 1951), pp. 4-37.

The reform element tapped Jimmie H. Davis as their candidate. Davis, a Protestant from Shreveport, member of the Public Service Commission, former teacher, former court clerk and city commissioner, was well known through the state. He was popularly known as "Singing Jimmie" Davis; he had written the ballad, "You Are My Sunshine." He was somewhat of an exception to traditional Louisiana politicians; for fiery speeches, he substituted cowboy bands and songfests.<sup>24</sup> Conducting an amazingly political campaign, he made few campaign pledges and generally avoided committing himself on any issue. The anti-Long forces supported him because they felt that none of the other candidates had any chance. Three other anti-Longs were entered in the race, namely, Sam Caldwell, Mayor of Shreveport; Lee Ianier, editor of the Amite Digest; and Vincent Moseley, who had entered the 1940 race.

The rural faction of the Longites organized the Louisiana Democratic Organization in September, 1943. This organization gave its "nomination" to Earl K. Long. Long's chances for the Democratic nomination were doomed, however, when Mayor Maestri announced his support for Lewis L. Morgan, a resident of St. Tammany parish and former Sixth District Congressman. Long withdrew from the race and settled for the lieutenant governor's spot on Morgan's ticket.<sup>25</sup> The

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<sup>24</sup>Cf. Journal (Shreveport), November 10, 1939, p. 3, for a description of Davis' campaign tactics.

<sup>25</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 148.

promises of the Morgan-Long ticket were liberal, indeed. They pledged: (a) An old-age pension of \$50 monthly to everyone over sixty years of age; (b) Gas-tax exemptions for farmers and fishermen; (c) The repeal of the state property tax; (d) The widening and fencing of all state highways; (3) Increase in the salaries of all teachers and school bus drivers; (f) The establishment of trade schools in every parish.<sup>26</sup>

Three other Longites were entered in the race. Jimmie Morrison of Tangipohoa entered, pledging the same platform as Morgan and also promising to end the New Orleans and state sales tax.<sup>27</sup> The indomitable Dudley Le Blanc made his appearance again, this time promising all the benefits that Morgan offered, plus: (a) Veteran bonuses; (b) A free college education to all; (c) Subsidies to farmers; (d) State assumption of all public education costs; (e) A \$40 old-age pension. Ernest Clement, a state senator from Allen parish and a violent foe of Jones in that chamber, also was in the race. He was committed to a program identical to Morgan with the exception that whereas Morgan endorsed civil service in principle, Clements blasted it as a ruse.<sup>28</sup>

Table 8 reports the results of the first primary. Factional trends are hard to ascertain here, because of the ar-

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 157-521.

TABLE 8

RETURNS OF THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1944  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Caldwell	Clement	Davis	Le Blanc	Morgan	Morrison	Others
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Acadia	10,301	.9	1.8	17.5	56.6	19.7	7.6	2.1
Ascension	5,097	1.8	.5	32.2	1.9	9.0	54.0	4.1
Assumption	3,080	1.2	.1	42.0	.1	6.2	48.6	.5
Avoyelles	9,319	1.3	1.9	30.8	45.8	28.7	20.5	1.0
Cameron	1,911	.9	15.5	26.0	18.7	32.5	5.2	1.7
Evangeline	8,642	.5	7.5	17.1	18.3	20.0	6.3	.4
Iberia	7,045	1.5	1.4	30.7	27.8	19.6	17.3	1.5
Jefferson	16,806	3.3	1.4	54.8	.9	13.8	25.8	1.1
Jeff. Davis	5,989	1.3	18.1	35.5	4.4	13.8	25.8	1.1
Lafayette	11,120	1.2	3.2	29.4	47.3	14.8	3.0	.9
Lafourche	8,665	1.8	.3	38.9	1.7	9.5	47.1	.7
Orleans	104,476	4.2	1.0	35.3	.5	50.7	7.5	.8
Plaquemines	2,618	7.8	1.0	26.6	7.1	55.8	11.2	.1
St. Bernard	2,964	2.0	.6	47.6	.4	21.4	27.7	.3
St. Charles	3,081	1.7	1.1	42.4	.4	10.4	42.2	1.3
St. James	3,148	1.7	.1	33.3	1.3	6.5	56.0	1.0
St. John the Bap.	2,661	.5	.4	45.9	.9	11.9	39.6	.8
St. Landry	13,435	1.1	2.8	28.3	.8	32.7	5.5	4.9
St. Martin	5,378	.3	.3	26.9	38.5	38.5	4.6	.6
St. Mary	5,040	2.1	.5	50.8	.3	7.8	37.6	1.8
Terrebonne	5,869	3.9	1.2	36.6	2.4	11.3	42.3	2.3
Vermillion	12,233	.7	.6	21.2	54.6	13.8	4.4	.8

TABLE 8 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Caldwell	Clement	Davis	Le Blanc	Morgan	Morrison	Others
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Calcasieu	11,895	4.0	29.6	32.0	8.4	15.8	9.3	10.1
Iberville	3,585	2.5	1.8	34.6	1.1	21.0	36.7	2.0
St. Tammany	5,926	4.2	.3	18.4	.8	57.4	18.2	.6
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT								
Allen	4,059	1.5	68.4	21.2	5.2	1.5	3.5	.6
Livingston	5,483	1.0	19.5	25.5	1.3	13.1	57.6	1.3
Natchitoches	5,769	18.1	1.2	33.6	2.3	42.4	15.9	2.0
Pointe Coupee	3,148	2.1	1.0	36.6	2.3	15.5	40.4	2.2
Rapides	14,887	.7	9.7	40.2	4.4	28.4	8.0	2.1
Tangipohoa	9,875	2.5	.5	28.0	1.4	11.0	52.0	4.7
W. Baton Rouge	1,333	2.8	.7	40.5	.4	1.2	35.9	5.9
2/3 or more PROTESTANT								
Beauregard	4,857	7.2	50.6	25.2	1.7	7.7	6.9	.7
Bienville	4,255	10.9	1.5	41.0	.6	30.3	14.3	1.4
Bossier	4,960	17.2	1.6	39.4	.6	23.6	12.6	5.4
Caddo	18,803	32.8	1.8	42.2	.3	12.7	6.2	3.9
Caldwell	2,975	11.4	6.8	33.6	3.6	23.5	19.6	1.8
Catahoula	3,003	9.3	3.7	30.3	1.9	34.7	18.5	1.4
Claiborne	3,728	20.6	.6	49.6	.7	38.6	7.8	3.6
Concordia	2,010	13.5	2.4	37.1	2.0	28.1	16.3	.6

TABLE 8 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Caldwell	Clement	Davis	Le Blanc	Morgan	Morrison	Others
De Soto	3,594	14.2	1.3	47.1	1.2	26.3	7.2	2.7
E. Baton Rouge	22,795	6.2	1.0	50.8	1.0	14.3	10.9	6.8
E. Carrol	1,882	21.3	2.0	38.0	1.2	21.2	17.6	2.0
E. Feliciana	1,783	6.4	.5	49.2	.4	14.1	24.9	5.0
Franklin	5,763	8.8	8.6	27.1	2.6	29.1	22.4	1.4
Grant	4,317	6.7	2.6	33.8	4.2	37.4	13.8	1.5
Jackson	2,893	6.8	4.2	55.5	.2	19.3	13.0	1.2
La Salle	4,545	10.1	10.2	28.6	2.6	24.0	12.3	1.9
Lincoln	4,058	25.3	1.1	36.7	.6	23.8	10.5	2.0
Madison	1,695	32.1	.9	34.4	1.2	15.0	14.6	1.7
Morehouse	3,965	30.6	2.1	33.9	1.7	14.8	13.4	7.5
Ouachita	11,244	19.1	1.3	39.8	1.4	16.6	16.1	3.6
Red River	2,865	8.8	3.5	25.9	.9	40.2	18.4	2.2
Richland	3,890	17.0	1.8	26.3	1.4	24.7	27.1	1.7
Sabine	4,707	14.7	1.8	25.5	1.1	43.6	12.7	.6
St. Helena	2,036	1.9	2.6	36.6	1.1	27.1	19.1	2.7
Tensas	957	19.6	1.0	39.0	.9	21.9	15.3	3.2
Union	4,835	14.0	2.9	30.8	2.5	25.9	23.0	1.0
Vernon	6,101	13.1	19.3	20.8	1.8	26.8	16.9	.6
Washington	8,691	2.2	4.9	34.7	.8	31.2	21.8	1.4
Webster	6,163	19.1	1.4	39.3	.7	26.4	10.6	2.6
W. Carrol	4,080	11.6	1.2	37.6	2.0	23.2	22.5	1.9
W. Feliciana	1,009	4.3	1.0	56.4	.4	19.9	15.7	7.2
Winn	4,707	14.7	1.8	25.5	1.1	43.6	12.7	.6

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1944, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1945), p. 176.

ray of candidates claiming to represent both Longism and anti-Longism. Davis emerged with the heaviest lead, having polled 25 per cent or better in fifty-seven of the sixty-four parishes. Le Blanc, Clement, and Morrison all attracted localized followings respectively in south Louisiana, west-central Louisiana, and the Florida parishes. Le Blanc, although his performance was poorer than in 1932, attracted a respectable vote in the Catholic parishes. It is noteworthy that he failed to receive more than 5 per cent of the vote in any parish outside of the Roman Catholic areas. The size of his following in south Louisiana takes on significance, especially when one considers the incredibility of his campaign promises. Evidently, many were attracted to him purely on the ethno-religious grounds, for it is doubtful that many believed his promises were made with sincerity.

In the second primary (cf. Table 9), Le Blanc switched his support to Davis and the rest of the candidates remained loyal to their own faction or did not commit themselves. Evidently, Le Blanc's following was not transferable since in the three parishes in which he gained the largest percentage of votes (Vermillion, Acadia, and Lafayette), Davis' largest majority was a mere 53 per cent. It is probable, therefore, that many voted for Le Blanc for religious reasons and then, when he was eliminated, most of these voters voted their factional sentiments.

TABLE 9

RETURNS OF THE SECOND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1944  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Davis	Morgan
<b>2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>			
Acadia	16,599	35.1	64.9
Ascension	6,625	35.6	69.4
Assumption	3,402	26.1	73.9
Avoyelles	11,461	26.5	73.5
Cameron	2,321	33.6	66.4
Evangeline	10,530	25.1	74.9
Iberia	10,460	32.6	67.4
Jefferson	23,201	29.5	70.5
Jeff. Davis	7,959	43.7	56.3
Lafayette	14,660	43.0	57.0
Lafourche	12,911	32.9	67.1
Orleans	150,463	37.3	62.7
Plaquemines	3,378	8.6	91.4
St. Bernard	3,907	7.4	92.6
St. Charles	3,587	35.3	64.5
St. James	3,631	28.8	71.2
St. John the Bap.	3,645	23.7	76.3
St. Landry	12,417	51.3	48.7
St. Martin	6,716	39.1	60.9
St. Mary	12,268	21.7	68.3
Terrebonne	8,439	22.4	77.6
Vermillion	14,073	34.1	65.9
<b>1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>			
Calcasieu	20,865	36.8	63.2
Iberville	5,095	36.6	63.4
St. Tammany	7,840	34.8	65.2
<b>1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT</b>			
Allen	6,301	31.2	68.8
Livingston	6,957	26.0	74.0
Natchitoches	9,004	29.4	70.6
Pointe Coupee	3,374	38.6	61.4
Rapides	20,573	25.5	74.5
Tangipohoa	13,956	31.6	68.4
W. Baton Rouge	1,999	40.8	59.2

TABLE 9 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Davis	Morgan
2/3 or more PROTESTANT			
Beauregard	6,136	31.9	68.1
Bienville	4,703	29.0	71.0
Bossier	6,111	26.6	73.4
Caddo	27,150	45.8	54.2
Caldwell	3,678	24.6	75.4
Catahoula	3,721	20.2	79.8
Claiborne	4,688	37.0	63.0
Concordia	2,722	26.0	74.0
De Soto	5,020	36.5	63.5
E. Baton Rouge	29,676	60.3	39.7
E. Carrol	1,481	57.7	42.3
E. Feliciana	2,248	48.6	51.4
Franklin	7,352	48.6	51.4
Grant	7,352	23.4	76.6
Jackson	4,991	21.6	78.4
La Salle	5,315	30.7	69.8
Lincoln	6,090	33.8	66.2
Madison	2,648	33.9	66.1
Morehouse	5,482	33.8	66.2
Ouachita	17,928	30.3	69.7
Red River	3,327	23.0	77.0
Richland	6,151	23.0	77.0
Sabine	6,981	21.1	78.9
St. Helena	2,398	32.0	67.9
Tensas	1,517	37.8	62.2
Union	5,601	23.6	76.4
Vernon	7,679	18.1	81.9
Washington	11,485	30.0	70.0
Webster	8,002	25.4	74.6
W. Carrol	4,831	20.9	79.1
W. Feliciana	949	62.4	37.6
Winn	5,822	22.8	77.2

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1944, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1945), pp. 243-244.

## CHAPTER VIII

### LONGISM IS RETURNED (1948-1956)

#### The Election of 1948

The Davis regime was a period of decreasing bi-factionalism. Little opposition was encountered by Davis and his program went through the legislature with comparable ease. The economic liberalism of the Long period continued mainly due to the increase of state income during the war and post-war years. State mental hospitals were granted increased appropriations. Teachers' salaries were raised twice in the four-year period. A \$40 pension was enacted and, in 1947, the state appropriation for education was upped to \$40 per educable pupil, almost double the 1944 appropriation. Davis encountered his main conflict with the legislature over fiscal matters. Determined to show a surplus at the close of each year, Davis had to battle with the legislature whichever wanted to increase welfare and education allowances.

The peace of the years of the Davis administration was shattered by the roaring campaign of 1948. Earl Long was the first to enter the race.<sup>1</sup> Long's major tactic was to portray the Davis administration as inactive and propose a

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), pp. 173-197, for a review of the Davis administration.

program of greater economic activism. Among his campaign promises, the following were included: (a) The widening of all state highways; (b) Completion of the farm-to-market system of roads, as well as all school, bus, and mail routes; (c) Fencing of all right of ways on hard-surfaced roads where livestock was permitted to roam; (d) Increase of old-age pensions to \$50 per month; (e) Raising of the homestead exemption to \$5,000; (f) Increase in teachers' and bus drivers' salaries; (g) The building of trade schools were to be built in every parish.<sup>2</sup> Earl received the active support of Huey's widow, nephew Russel, Leander Perez, boss of Plaquemines parish, Robert Maestri, and Dudley Le Blanc.

Jimmie Morrison again made the race. He received the support of the Choctaws of New Orleans but, to some, his candidacy was so odious that they deserted the ranks rather than support him, for example, Maestri. Morrison's program was close to that of Long's, although less exuberant.

Judge Robert F. Kennon, of Webster parish, entered the race as representative of the reform group. He pledged to put an end to industrial tax exemption, to abolish the state property tax, and to maintain civil service.

Sam Jones entered as the major reform candidate. He failed, however, to conduct a realistic campaign. He based his campaign on good versus evil, and naturally alligned himself with the good. He spent much of his time recalling

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 200.

his 1940-1944 term and the good government reforms he had enacted.<sup>3</sup> As to present issues and programs, Jones was evasive. His position is hard to understand because, in 1940, when the scandals weighed to his advantage, he was ready to map out a program of continued economic liberalism. Jones did not lack support; in his camp were found the newly elected reform mayor of New Orleans, deLesseps Morrison, Senator Overton, and most of the New Orleans press.

The first primary spelled disaster to the hopes of the reformers. Earl carried most of the cut-over region of northern Louisiana and scattered southern parishes. Morrison ran well in the Floridas, while Kennon edged out Jones in Caddo and Calcasieu and performed better than Jones in most of the rural parishes. In desperation, Jones unveiled a completely new program before the second primary in which he promised increased pensions, labor benefits, and farm-to-market roads. The tactic was futile. In the run-off, Long carried all of the state's parishes with the exception of urban East Baton Rouge and planter West Feliciana. He rolled up majorities in all but thirty-three of the state's 640 wards. There are few religious influences to be found in this election. Long carried Catholic Louisiana easily (cf. Table 10) although, compared with past performances, he was weaker in south Louisiana than in the rest of the state.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

TABLE 10

RETURNS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1948  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	First Primary					Second Primary		
	Total	Jones	Kennon	Long	Morrison	Total	Jones	Long
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Acadia	14,814	19.9	19.4	51.0	9.7	15,539	35.1	69.9
Ascension	5,907	20.6	7.5	23.8	48.1	6,265	35.6	69.4
Assumption	3,377	21.1	6.9	49.2	22.8	3,402	26.1	73.9
Avoyelles	11,477	17.1	9.7	65.9	2.6	11,461	26.5	73.9
Cameron	2,470	20.8	26.9	41.1	11.3	2,321	33.6	66.4
Evangeline	11,500	12.3	16.8	55.9	15.0	10,530	25.1	74.9
Iberia	10,257	17.5	28.0	43.0	14.4	10,460	32.6	67.4
Jefferson	22,747	31.0	14.7	51.2	15.6	23,201	29.5	70.5
Jeff. Davis	7,504	21.8	32.0	37.9	8.2	7,959	43.7	56.3
Lafayette	13,702	29.6	24.6	36.2	9.5	14,669	42.0	57.0
Lafourche	12,396	21.9	10.3	44.8	23.1	12,911	43.0	57.0
Orleans	147,098	34.6	9.8	32.7	22.6	150,464	37.3	62.7
Plaquemines	6,074	7.5	2.3	83.9	6.3	3,378	8.6	91.4
St. Bernard	3,907	22.2	8.0	57.0	12.8	3,596	7.4	92.6
St. Charles	4,160	22.8	23.1	29.6	24.5	3,587	35.5	64.5
St. James	3,749	26.1	11.4	40.7	21.8	3,631	28.8	71.2
St. John the Bap.	3,381	27.3	8.6	29.0	35.1	3,645	23.7	76.3
St. Landry	16,861	23.5	22.8	38.5	7.0	17,261	34.4	65.5
St. Martin	6,605	34.4	6.5	46.5	12.6	6,716	39.1	60.9
St. Mary	7,878	22.5	35.9	37.3	4.3	12,268	21.7	68.3
Terrebonne	8,690	11.2	32.8	51.3	4.7	8,485	22.4	77.6
Vermillion	14,185	24.2	15.1	51.8	8.9	14,073	34.1	65.9

TABLE 10 (Continued)

Parish	First Primary					Second Primary		
	Total	Jones	Kennon	Long	Morrison	Total	Jones	Long
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Calcasieu	20,964	22.0	33.9	40.0	4.0	29,685	36.8	63.2
Iberville	5,321	25.5	11.6	18.5	44.4	5,095	36.6	63.4
St. Tammany	8,006	22.8	12.8	26.6	37.1	7,840	38.8	65.2
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT								
Allen	5,832	22.5	12.5	58.4	6.7	6,301	31.2	68.8
Livingston	7,332	12.1	8.5	17.6	61.6	6,957	26.0	74.0
Natchitoches	8,631	15.6	21.3	59.0	4.4	9,004	38.6	61.4
Pointe Coupee	7,494	23.4	13.5	15.3	4.5	3,734	38.6	61.4
Rapides	20,573	25.5	22.7	49.2	2.7	21,493	57.4	42.3
Tangipohoa	13,442	16.4	9.4	21.8	52.5	13,956	31.6	68.4
W. Baton Rouge	2,194	25.4	14.9	10.4	46.3	1,999	40.4	59.6
2/3 or more PROTESTANT								
Beauregard	6,066	20.1	25.9	49.2	3.6	6,111	26.6	73.4
Bienville	4,219	10.7	25.9	53.9	9.3	4,703	29.0	71.0
Bossier	6,171	10.6	35.6	51.4	42.4	6,135	31.9	68.1
Caddo	24,361	17.9	43.9	35.2	3.0	27,150	45.8	54.2
Caldwell	3,483	9.1	25.9	62.6	2.4	3,678	24.1	75.4
Catahoula	3,575	11.9	15.7	65.8	6.5	3,721	20.9	79.8
Claiborne	4,688	14.3	39.5	43.9	2.3	4,858	37.0	63.0
Concordia	2,555	13.2	20.2	60.9	5.6	2,722	26.0	74.0

TABLE 10 (Continued)

Parish	First Primary					Second Primary		
	Total	Jones	Kennon	Long	Morrison	Total	Jones	Long
De Soto	4,687	13.8	39.0	45.3	1.8	5,022	36.4	63.6
E. Baton Rouge	28,681	30.4	25.9	12.8	30.9	29,676	60.3	39.7
E. Carrol	1,773	12.5	31.7	51.8	4.0	1,863	28.6	71.4
E. Feliciana	2,248	30.4	25.9	19.6	23.6	2,214	48.6	51.4
Franklin	6,802	11.8	17.6	66.2	4.4	7,352	23.4	76.6
Grant	5,295	15.5	23.9	56.5	5.6	5,348	30.0	70.0
Jackson	4,699	10.2	20.3	65.4	3.3	4,999	21.6	78.4
La Salle	5,129	20.2	61.4	3.4	20.2	5,319	30.2	69.8
Lincoln	5,287	16.0	28.6	52.3	2.3	5,090	33.8	66.2
Madison	2,384	14.5	42.3	40.0	3.4	2,658	33.8	66.2
Morehouse	4,926	15.9	31.1	49.6	3.4	5,496	33.9	66.1
Ouachita	17,468	12.9	37.2	47.3	7.8	17,298	30.3	69.7
Red River	3,383	11.0	21.0	63.5	4.5	3,327	23.0	77.0
Richland	10,938	5.7	11.1	31.5	2.4	6,151	23.0	77.0
Sabine	6,931	9.9	19.4	68.5	2.2	6,961	21.2	78.9
St. Helena	2,398	12.5	18.7	35.4	7.4	2,466	32.1	67.9
Tensas	1,775	14.0	34.7	49.7	1.5	1,517	37.8	62.2
Union	5,562	9.1	27.6	58.6	4.7	5,601	23.6	76.4
Vernon	7,835	10.8	18.8	67.6	3.3	7,679	18.1	81.9
Washington	11,599	15.1	24.0	33.0	22.9	11,485	30.0	70.0
Webster	7,986	6.5	38.3	52.6	3.6	8,002	25.4	74.6
W. Carrol	4,674	10.0	19.7	66.0	4.6	4,831	20.9	79.1
W. Feliciana	988	41.0	21.7	34.2	22.9	949	62.4	37.6
Winn	5,692	12.8	15.8	69.1	2.2	5,822	22.8	77.2

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1948, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1949), p. 88.

The Election of 1952

Long continued the welfare and economic liberalism of his faction: (a) State hospitals appropriations were increased; (b) Old-age pensions were raised to \$50 a month within eighty days after his inauguration; (c) Education appropriations were upped. The net result of this increased spending was the over-all increase of taxes by 50 per cent.<sup>4</sup> Long brought an end to civil service in the state and renewed the Kingfish's policy of loading state agencies with personal appointees. Earl reached the peak of his power in late 1948 when he was able to secure the Democratic nomination for United States Senator for his nephew Russel Long, son of the late Kingfish. Russel was re-elected in 1950 by a large majority and has proven to be a power in state politics by his own right.

An appraisal of Earl Long would conclude that he was no second Kingfish. The summary of Cabel Phillips is probably accurate:

Earl is trying mighty hard to wear Huey's shoes, but he sort of rattles around in them. He hasn't Huey's brains, and he hasn't Huey's finesse. Where Huey was clever, this guy is only loud. Where Huey outsmarted his opposition, Earl just slams into the line.<sup>5</sup>

Although the full force of Long's increased spending

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 208-225.

<sup>5</sup>Cabell Phillips, "The Lengthening Shadow of Huey Long," New York Times Magazine, November 7, 1948, p. 14.

in the diverse areas of welfare, new highways, public schools, hospitals, and school lunches was felt throughout the state by 1948, nevertheless, he had become exceedingly unpopular within the state. His unabashed enthusiasm for the spoils system and his bold use of power politics to coerce the legislature had not endeared him to many of Louisiana's citizens.

Long picked Carlos Spaht of Baton Rouge, a district judge and head of the University alumni group, to head his ticket. That Spaht, a Protestant, was not associated with Longism, shows how aware Earl was of the opposition to him in the state. However, his vigorous campaign for Spaht did much to hinder his chances.

Other Longites in the campaign were lieutenant governor Dodd, who had failed to receive Long's blessing and entered under his own right. Lucille May Grace, registrar of the State Land Office for twenty years and the first woman to run for governor, also entered the race as a dissident Longite. She stressed her opposition to President Truman and her espousal of Louisiana's claim to tideland oil. Dudley Le Blanc also entered. He campaigned for greater industrialization. Le Blanc's chances were seriously hurt when he was charged with false advertising in connection with his patent medicine company, Hadacol.

Three anti-Long candidates entered the campaign. The strongest of these seemed to be Hale Boggs, a Roman Catholic and congressman from New Orleans. Although being a Catholic

and resident of New Orleans, thereby possessing two of the worst drawbacks, he was not lacking in support; Sam Jones, deLesseps Morrison, and Senator Russel Long all backed Boggs.

James H. McLemore, an Alexandria cattle man, was the most conservative candidate. His main support was the New Orleans Times-Picayune. Judge Robert Kennon again entered the race. He espoused a mild form of anti-Trumanism and spelled out his proposals for tax reduction and good government in greater degree than the other candidates.

The central issue revolved about the problem of taxes. Spaht was honest enough to admit that, if the present benefits were to be retained, there could be no tax deductions. Dodd, Grace, and Kennon promised a 2-cent reduction in gas tax; McLemore promised to end the property tax; Grace called for an end to taxes on beer and cigarettes. All candidates favored civil service embedded in the constitution, salary increases for state personnel, an independent legislature, the appointment of a trained penologist to revamp the administration of Angola State Penitentiary, and state rights in the tideland's oil matter.

The campaign oratory hurt several candidates. Long and Dodd carried on a running feud which caused many to speculate as to how much each could tell on the other if they dared.<sup>6</sup> McLemore's past dealings with the Long administration caused many to feel that he was tied up with the gover-

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<sup>6</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 235.

nor. But the most serious damage was inflicted on Catholic Boggs. Leander Perez, a fellow Catholic and undisputed boss of Plaquemines parish, charged that Boggs was member of the Communist Party while a student at Tulane University. If these allegations were true, Boggs would have been disqualified by the rules of the State Democratic Central Committee. The courts and the Central Committee ruled against Perez's charge but on a technicality so that, in reality, Boggs' name was not cleared. A lingering suspicion about his past affiliations remained. Boggs was further damaged by the fact that Long bossed the meeting of the State Committee that cleared him. As a result, Boggs was charged with being a "second" candidate of Earl Long's.

Because of the confusing array of candidates, factional and religious lines are hard to ascertain. Catholic Boggs showed about the same strength throughout the state. He probably lost heavily in Catholic Louisiana because of the uncleared charges of communist affiliation against him. At the same time, Boggs probably attracted those voters who felt a loyalty toward President Truman, his avowed friend and supporter, and those who felt they could forgive him the suspicion of past communist membership. Boggs carried only St. James parish and his large vote in Orleans is probably due to his residence there and the help afforded him by deLesseps Morrison. His largest votes were achieved in the Catholic parishes, however, this is a fair indication of religious influence. Religious factors are even more discern-

ible in the case of Le Blanc. It is significant that Le Blanc polled less than 11 per cent of the total votes in all Protestant parishes, except Caldwell and Catahoula. That his performance in Catholic Louisiana was poorer than in the past is explainable by the presence of another Catholic in the race, the Hadacol scandal which aroused doubts as to his honesty, and his repeated defeats so that few probably took his candidacy seriously. Nevertheless, the "most" Cajun areas of south Louisiana delivered Le Blanc a large share of their votes. Hence, it is reasonable to assume religious factors influenced the voters in 1952 (cf. Table 11).

In the run-offs between Kennon and Spaht (cf. Table 12), Kennon received a comfortable majority. Of the vote cast, 42.2 per cent was cast in urban Louisiana and Spaht was able to win only 36.0 per cent of the urban vote. In the rural areas, Spaht only captured 40.3 per cent of the vote. Earl Long, by his administration, had alienated both the urban and rural voters. However, traditional class cleavage is still noticeable. Relatively, the strength of Longism was still concentrated in the rural cut-over regions of the north and in some of the southern parishes.<sup>7</sup>

#### The Election of 1956

Little has been written of the election of 1956, undoubtedly, because it is so recent. The only material a-

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

TABLE 11

RETURNS OF THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1952  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Boggs	Dodd	Kennon	Le Blanc	McLemore	Spaht	Others
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Acadia	17,569	7.7	4.1	13.7	39.9	12.0	28.5	.6
Ascension	7,837	26.3	16.6	19.1	3.2	6.7	28.8	1.4
Assumption	4,793	14.7	7.6	22.5	8.6	10.9	38.7	1.9
Avoyelles	11,881	19.9	6.6	9.7	2.3	14.0	29.3	.8
Cameron	2,783	13.7	13.4	8.7	30.4	11.3	20.1	2.4
Evangeline	12,742	7.6	26.6	12.3	24.7	7.0	21.3	1.3
Iberia	11,476	16.9	4.4	16.1	29.6	17.2	15.6	1.3
Jefferson	36,755	31.3	13.0	30.4	4.4	9.2	10.0	1.7
Jeff. Davis	9,229	8.6	18.9	18.6	25.6	13.9	13.3	1.0
Lafayette	27,661	9.3	3.3	5.9	21.4	13.6	11.4	6.7
Lafourche	14,033	13.3	20.1	36.1	2.6	4.8	22.2	.9
Orleans	167,889	32.2	7.2	20.1	1.8	10.4	25.5	1.8
Plaquemines	3,344	4.5	1.2	7.9	1.6	86.5	2.2	.5
St. Bernard	3,813	5.7	3.6	5.7	1.2	19.1	63.4	.2
St. Charles	5,702	24.2	7.7	18.9	2.2	11.9	42.3	.7
St. James	4,280	51.0	11.2	10.0	1.8	1.9	22.7	1.7
St. John the Bap.	5,792	20.4	5.5	10.7	2.0	2.6	55.1	3.7
St. Landry	18,746	13.8	13.6	9.8	20.0	17.8	24.6	.4
St. Martin	6,911	16.4	2.4	11.1	23.2	9.7	36.7	.3
St. Mary	9,734	14.7	20.9	25.1	8.5	9.3	7.7	.9
Terrebonne	9,258	17.0	25.4	33.3	3.1	9.5	10.4	1.3
Vermillion	15,843	4.0	3.9	4.8	49.9	6.3	30.4	.6

TABLE 11 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Boggs	Dodd	Kennon	Le Blanc	McLemore	Spaht	Others
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC								
Calcasieu	28,736	15.7	16.4	11.9	14.5	23.9	13.4	4.1
Iberville	6,509	18.6	13.3	22.5	1.8	6.0	29.0	3.2
St. Tammany	9,525	15.5	7.0	34.8	4.7	10.4	25.5	2.1
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT								
Allen	8,163	4.0	55.8	3.5	8.8	6.0	20.6	1.2
Livingston	7,775	11.6	13.8	44.0	3.4	2.5	23.7	1.1
Natchitoches	10,378	11.0	20.0	10.6	6.6	19.9	31.7	1.0
Pointe Coupee	15,473	19.8	11.7	35.9	4.2	5.6	21.4	1.4
Rapides	35,436	5.4	13.6	9.1	3.4	24.0	13.8	.7
Tangipohoa	16,334	18.7	11.0	34.0	4.0	5.3	20.2	1.4
W. Baton Rouge	2,430	23.5	9.0	35.5	1.6	6.9	22.8	.2
2/3 or more PROTESTANT								
Beauregard	6,636	12.1	15.4	9.0	10.7	17.5	34.3	1.7
Bienville	4,980	12.5	8.4	20.6	3.9	22.7	31.5	.7
Bossier	7,348	14.9	6.5	36.1	3.8	24.2	13.8	.7
Caddo	30,575	17.7	6.1	27.5	1.6	35.8	9.0	2.3
Caldwell	3,540	6.0	15.0	19.2	14.0	9.2	35.6	1.1
Catahoula	3,570	9.4	10.7	8.6	26.5	8.9	22.5	1.5
Claiborne	5,603	12.0	8.7	29.4	1.7	26.8	15.0	.2
Concordia	3,117	11.8	11.4	21.8	11.4	19.2	23.2	1.3

TABLE 11 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Boggs	Dodd	Kennon	Le Blanc	McLemore	Spaht	Others
De Soto	4,645	12.6	13.9	15.2	2.5	34.4	20.4	.7
E. Baton Rouge	40,644	16.0	12.4	38.9	.6	10.6	19.4	1.5
E. Carrol	2,371	5.7	11.8	11.8	7.7	33.6	23.6	1.1
E. Feliciana	2,392	6.6	7.3	54.5	1.0	10.5	19.4	.8
Franklin	7,176	13.0	11.9	22.7	3.8	20.6	26.6	1.5
Grant	4,047	6.7	14.3	24.6	5.9	12.4	35.5	.7
Jackson	5,885	16.2	10.7	27.3	2.7	9.0	32.2	1.7
La Salle	5,648	7.4	22.0	15.4	4.4	21.2	26.6	2.6
Lincoln	6,063	22.0	9.6	20.5	1.8	25.0	48.4	1.0
Madison	2,667	8.8	22.9	16.7	4.6	33.5	11.4	1.0
Morehouse	6,601	13.9	13.7	17.7	4.5	29.2	19.4	1.5
Ouachita	20,964	10.0	13.0	31.3	6.5	17.9	20.0	1.3
Red River	3,284	15.7	10.1	6.9	3.1	26.2	37.2	.8
Richland	5,727	15.8	7.3	22.8	7.2	20.2	25.6	1.2
Sabine	7,157	13.0	25.6	12.3	6.0	12.7	29.2	.0
St. Helena	2,647	7.6	22.5	36.2	2.3	4.4	18.0	1.2
Tensas	1,941	9.1	9.6	17.2	2.6	40.6	20.0	1.0
Union	6,612	14.6	17.8	28.0	8.4	10.0	25.6	1.9
Vernon	8,179	10.3	34.7	8.6	9.2	10.7	25.1	1.3
Washington	12,930	15.7	16.5	23.8	3.6	20.1	19.2	1.5
Webster	9,747	13.0	8.8	47.2	1.7	9.6	17.2	2.3
W. Carrol	5,081	12.8	9.1	16.2	6.5	29.1	24.7	1.4
W. Feliciana	1,106	5.5	14.1	30.0	9.4	29.0	20.0	.8
Winn	6,252	7.1	8.7	23.8	4.8	14.9	39.2	1.3

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1952, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1953), p. 95.

TABLE 12

RETURNS OF THE SECOND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1952  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total Vote	Kennon	Spaht
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC			
Acadia	16,910	55.8	44.2
Ascension	7,558	47.1	52.9
Assumption	4,762	53.6	46.4
Avoyelles	11,881	52.3	47.7
Cameron	2,489	66.7	33.3
Evangeline	11,244	58.7	41.3
Iberia	12,635	70.3	29.7
Jefferson	35,593	72.5	22.5
Jeff. Davis	9,655	62.7	37.3
Lafayette	18,478	67.4	22.6
Lafourche	14,882	64.5	35.5
Orleans	166,295	62.8	36.2
Plaquemines	3,513	94.4	5.6
St. Bernard	4,008	30.0	70.0
St. Charles	5,509	54.1	45.9
St. James	4,278	50.1	49.9
St. John the Bap.	4,791	36.3	63.7
St. Landry	19,734	66.7	32.3
St. Martin	7,068	55.2	44.8
St. Mary	8,622	73.5	26.5
Terrebonne	9,718	76.3	23.7
Vermillion	15,105	55.6	44.4
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC			
Calcasieu	35,282	59.0	41.0
Iberville	6,313	49.0	51.0
St. Tammany	9,440	62.2	38.8
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT			
Allen	7,630	54.0	46.0
Livingston	8,002	58.3	42.7
Natchitoches	10,468	46.5	53.5
Pointe Coupee	4,349	57.0	43.0
Rapides	15,628	52.1	47.9
Tangipohoa	15,829	62.1	37.9
W. Baton Rouge	2,432	58.6	41.4

TABLE 12 (Continued)

Parish	Total Vote	Kennon	Spaht
2/3 or more PROTESTANT			
Beauregard	6,824	51.0	49.0
Bienville	4,804	49.1	50.9
Bossier	7,197	66.1	33.9
Caddo	36,094	74.8	25.2
Caldwell	3,647	51.4	48.6
Catahoula	3,555	54.0	46.0
Claiborne	5,608	66.2	33.8
Concordia	3,270	58.3	41.7
De Soto	4,778	60.3	39.7
E. Baton Rouge	43,714	64.0	36.0
E. Carrol	2,556	62.3	37.7
E. Feliciana	2,379	70.5	29.5
Franklin	7,578	57.7	42.3
Grant	6,175	48.6	51.4
Jackson	6,056	41.0	59.0
La Salle	5,725	54.0	46.0
Lincoln	6,478	63.0	37.0
Madison	2,573	71.3	28.7
Morehouse	7,238	61.7	38.2
Ouachita	20,405	64.8	35.2
Red River	3,431	35.8	64.2
Richland	6,354	56.7	43.3
Sabine	7,415	46.2	53.8
St. Helena	2,510	58.9	41.1
Tensas	1,684	69.5	30.5
Union	6,551	52.8	47.2
Vernon	15,105	55.6	44.4
Washington	12,602	55.6	44.4
Webster	10,813	57.7	42.3
W. Carrol	5,510	55.0	45.0
W. Feliciana	980	71.2	28.8
Winn	6,327	46.2	53.8

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1952, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1953), p. 162.

vailable is that found in the Louisiana press.

The Kennon administration had become quite unpopular in Louisiana by the fall of 1955. The administration had continued the welfare and economic program of Long but had not expanded them. The gas tax had been cut by two cents, later to be raised again by the same amount.<sup>8</sup> Kennon's administration was able to enact a civil-service program but taxes had not been reduced, which had been one of Kennon's major campaign promises.

His unpopularity stemmed from several causes. He had deserted the Democratic Party in November, 1952, to support General Eisenhower for president. Although the state cast its electoral votes for Eisenhower in 1956, nevertheless, many objected to Kennon's desertion of the party. Old-age pensions were another source of discontent. The author talked to many aged persons in Louisiana, during the 1956 campaign, who claimed that their pensions had been cut because of lack of state funds. Finally, many felt that Kennon had failed to keep his promise to reduce taxes.

The first to enter the race was former Governor Earl Long. His campaign was in the traditional vein, for example: (a) Pensions would be increased; (b) Roads would be im-

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 243. The author observed that this was a major contention against Kennon's administration. When he lowered the gas tax, the oil companies raised the price of gas by two cents, so that there was no savings to the people. When the two-cent tax was reimposed, it meant an actual rise in the cost of gasoline. Many suspected collusion between Kennon and the oil companies.

proved; (c) Trades schools would be built; (d) Teachers' and bus drivers' salaries would be increased; (e) Hospitals expanded; (f) Taxes would be held at the present rate or reduced if possible. Long was universally opposed by the press of Louisiana but he used this to advantage, stating that it was evidence that no one owned him. Ignoring television and radio, he stumped the state so that every voter had the opportunity at least to see him.

Francis Gervemberg, a Roman Catholic and former head of the Louisiana state police, campaigned on the gambling issue. He had gained nation-wide prominence in his battle against gambling which is a traditional Louisiana problem. For a time, it looked as though he would be a major contender but his chances faded when it was revealed that he owned part-interest in a casino that had been raided by his own police force.<sup>9</sup>

McLemore, of Rapides parish, again entered the race. He was directly responsible for the introduction of racism in the campaign. His major plank was state rights and opposition to the Supreme Court's ruling on segregation. "Keep our schools segregated," was his watchword. He attacked both Long and Morrison for being pro-Negro.<sup>10</sup>

deLesseps Morrison, another Roman Catholic and mayor of

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<sup>9</sup>Times-Picayune (New Orleans), January 17, 1956, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. This edition of the Times-Picayune carries a summary of the platforms of all candidates.

New Orleans, entered the race and quickly became the major contender with Long. Morrison had become well known through the state and received full support from the New Orleans press. Morrison promised to conduct an honest and economically liberal administration and made much of attracting new industry to Louisiana. Morrison faced several difficulties; he was a Roman Catholic, this failed to endear him to northern Protestants; he was from New Orleans, which would arouse rural antipathy to his candidacy; and he was the subject of wide-spread accusations on the segregation issue.

As noted, McLemore had attacked Morrison for his method of handling segregation. In addition, Morrison faced a whispering campaign directed against him. Perhaps, one incident might serve to illustrate this point. When the author purchased his automobile plates in early January, 1956, he observed that the clerk of the State Revenue Department, who was issuing the plates, attempted to discuss the coming election with each person that came to his window. To each person, Morrison was loudly denounced as a "nigger lover" who was opening many civil-service positions in New Orleans to Negroes. To the author, the clerk remarked darkly, "Why you know, he's even got niggers on the police force." This whispering campaign, plus McLemore's open attacks against Morrison's position of segregation, probably did him great harm. Morrison Catholicism also caused doubts about his "wholehearted allegiance" to the white race. During the campaign, the Archbishop of New Orleans, Francis Rummel, is-

sued a diocesan letter denouncing segregation as un-Christian and calling upon all Catholics to fight for its eradication.<sup>11</sup> In the same letter, he threatened to integrate the New Orleans' parochial schools as soon as possible. Since many Protestants have always suspected that Roman Catholic clerics exert undue influence over Catholic politicians, the letter of the archbishop seemed to confirm the suspicions of many concerning Morrison's "pro-Negro" position of segregation.

Frederick T. Preaus was the last man in the race. A Protestant from north Louisiana, he had the active support of Governor Kennon. His major campaign plank was to continue the program of Kennon.

The result of the first primary resulted in the nomination of Earl Long (cf. Table 13). His comeback is amazing since he was able to obtain the nomination in the first primary, where he faced four opponents. Certain religious influences can be easily observed. Morrison polled more than 20 per cent of the vote in fourteen of the Catholic parishes; he could do only as well in four Protestant parishes, one of these, Caddo, is heavily urban and was probably attracted to Morrison because of his achievements in New Orleans. Of significance is the fact that Morrison polled some of his largest votes in Acadia, Lafayette, and Vermillion, the parishes

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<sup>11</sup>"Catholic Rebuke to White Supremacy," America, XCIV (December 31, 1956), 309.

TABLE 13

RETURNS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY OF 1956  
WITH CANDIDATES PERCENTAGES\*

Parish	Total	Grevemberg	Long	McLemore	Morrison	Preaus
2/3 or more ROMAN CATHOLIC						
Acadia	17,205	10.4	58.8	2.3	24.4	4.1
Ascension	7,745	12.1	66.9	3.8	14.9	3.5
Assumption	5,431	6.4	64.1	3.2	22.3	3.5
Avoyelles	12,220	9.0	60.5	3.5	21.1	5.9
Cameron	2,325	8.4	51.8	4.9	17.1	17.8
Evangeline	12,211	9.6	70.0	1.6	15.3	2.8
Iberia	14,793	9.3	53.2	3.8	27.1	6.2
Jefferson	45,961	9.2	42.5	10.4	30.8	8.8
Jeff. Davis	9,101	10.0	49.6	4.3	28.8	7.5
Lafayette	17,573	10.2	43.8	13.0	34.7	4.7
Lafourche	17,394	8.5	42.3	3.7	27.8	2.2
Orleans	187,454	4.7	37.0	7.5	38.1	5.8
Plaquemines	3,920	5.1	18.9	3.1	11.7	61.1
St. Bernard	9,295	7.7	57.3	9.5	20.7	4.8
St. Charles	6,259	9.8	59.5	5.5	23.1	2.2
St. James	5,365	6.6	72.0	2.8	17.3	1.3
St. John the Bap.	5,565	6.3	69.4	2.7	46.7	1.2
St. Landry	25,218	11.7	65.4	2.4	17.3	3.2
St. Martin	7,572	6.1	58.3	5.1	40.7	5.5
St. Mary	9,416	7.6	51.3	4.1	32.8	4.4
Terrebonne	11,326	9.1	51.6	4.0	30.4	4.8
Vermillion	15,129	7.1	54.0	2.3	32.5	4.0

TABLE 13 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Grevemberg	Long	McLemore	Morrison	Preaus
1/2 to 2/3 ROMAN CATHOLIC						
Calcasieu	29,888	15.7	54.5	5.0	13.6	11.3
Iberville	7,501	10.7	64.4	5.1	16.4	3.4
St. Tammany	10,828	6.6	60.6	9.9	17.4	5.4
1/2 to 2/3 PROTESTANT						
Allen	17,205	10.4	58.8	2.2	24.4	4.0
Livingston	8,672	8.9	61.1	15.2	4.0	10.6
Natchitoches	9,656	8.0	63.0	3.9	15.7	9.4
Pointe Coupee	5,019	6.1	60.0	3.7	26.2	3.9
Rapides	22,540	9.8	51.7	4.0	18.1	16.8
Tangipohoa	16,571	8.6	58.1	14.3	11.2	7.7
W. Baton Rouge	3,584	14.3	59.2	5.6	12.7	8.1
2/3 or more PROTESTANT						
Beauregard	6,999	8.3	67.6	5.7	7.8	10.7
Bienville	5,121	2.5	65.6	3.0	9.2	20.2
Bossier	7,696	6.8	54.2	3.6	8.6	26.4
Caddo	35,076	5.7	38.8	3.8	20.4	30.8
Caldwell	3,303	3.0	66.8	4.1	10.1	16.7
Catahoula	3,377	6.2	68.2	4.8	9.2	12.1
Claiborne	5,103	5.7	42.6	4.3	8.5	37.0
Concordia	3,504	6.4	60.9	4.6	10.6	17.5

TABLE 13 (Continued)

Parish	Total	Grevemberg	Long	McLemore	Morrison	Preaus
De Soto	5,540	3.5	56.4	4.6	7.2	26.8
E. Baton Rouge	48,003	13.1	39.1	8.0	19.0	24.3
E. Carrol	2,377	10.7	60.2	4.9	12.0	12.1
E. Feliciana	3,605	5.9	66.0	9.5	5.5	12.9
Franklin	6,721	3.6	57.6	4.7	9.2	24.9
Grant	5,475	4.3	65.1	2.2	15.7	12.7
Jackson	5,370	3.0	66.5	2.2	10.9	14.0
La Salle	5,762	7.6	64.7	12.8	10.6	14.1
Lincoln	6,449	2.2	46.0	2.4	20.9	28.4
Madison	2,528	4.5	55.8	3.8	13.3	22.5
Morehouse	7,418	2.8	48.0	7.2	8.4	33.5
Ouachita	23,290	4.4	48.7	3.3	14.6	29.0
Red River	4,366	3.3	77.4	3.8	7.3	7.3
Richland	6,358	5.1	56.3	4.0	11.3	22.7
Sabine	7,155	3.7	75.1	1.9	9.7	10.0
St. Helena	3,461	3.9	71.8	12.0	3.8	8.6
Tensas	1,388	5.8	43.1	4.5	14.7	31.9
Union	6,633	1.0	51.6	1.7	6.1	39.6
Vernon	7,632	5.6	72.9	22.0	10.0	9.2
Washington	13,557	7.9	64.7	10.5	10.1	6.8
Webster	10,456	4.2	62.0	2.5	66.3	24.6
W. Carrol	4,551	3.4	62.3	4.4	12.0	17.9
W. Feliciana	1,171	10.6	43.2	14.5	19.6	16.6
Winn	6,439	3.8	71.1	2.1	10.8	10.9

\*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1956, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of State, 1957), p. 94.

in which Le Blanc's vote had been consistently large. Long, late in the campaign, accused Le Blanc of stumping French Louisiana in Morrison's behalf and accusing Long of anti-Catholicism.<sup>12</sup> The vote would indicate that Le Blanc had met with some degree of success. Religious factors must have played a part in Grevemberg's vote also. Although Grevemberg failed to make a strong showing in any parish, he polled his highest vote in Catholic Louisiana, and his lowest in Protestant Louisiana. In Protestant Louisiana, Grevemberg's average per cent of the total vote was 5.4 and in Catholic Louisiana it was 8.7. To the author, the only explanation for this is Grevemberg's Catholicism. Catholic Louisiana has always been extremely tolerant of gambling, while the Protestant areas have always fought for its eradication.<sup>13</sup> On the basis of his platform, the greatest appeal should have been to the Protestant areas. Since he achieved his best showing in those areas tolerant to gambling, the Catholic parishes, it must be concluded that here a religious factor influenced the voting behavior.

McLemore polled more than 7 per cent of the vote in only one parish in south Louisiana but he equalled that performance in nine parishes outside of Catholic Louisiana. On the basis of this evidence, it could be concluded that racism has not the appeal in the Catholic areas that it has in

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<sup>12</sup>States (New Orleans), December 13, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>Sindler, op. cit., p. 37.

the Protestant parishes.

It should be noted, however, that Long was able to compete successfully in the Roman Catholic parishes. Of the twenty-two areas that are over two-thirds Roman Catholic, Long was able to achieve a majority in sixteen and a plurality in the rest with the exception of Orleans, which is the home of Morrison.

Class cleavages are again visible here. Long rolled up his largest majorities in the subsistence farming areas and cut-over regions of Louisiana, while his percentage of the votes was smallest in the planter and urban areas.

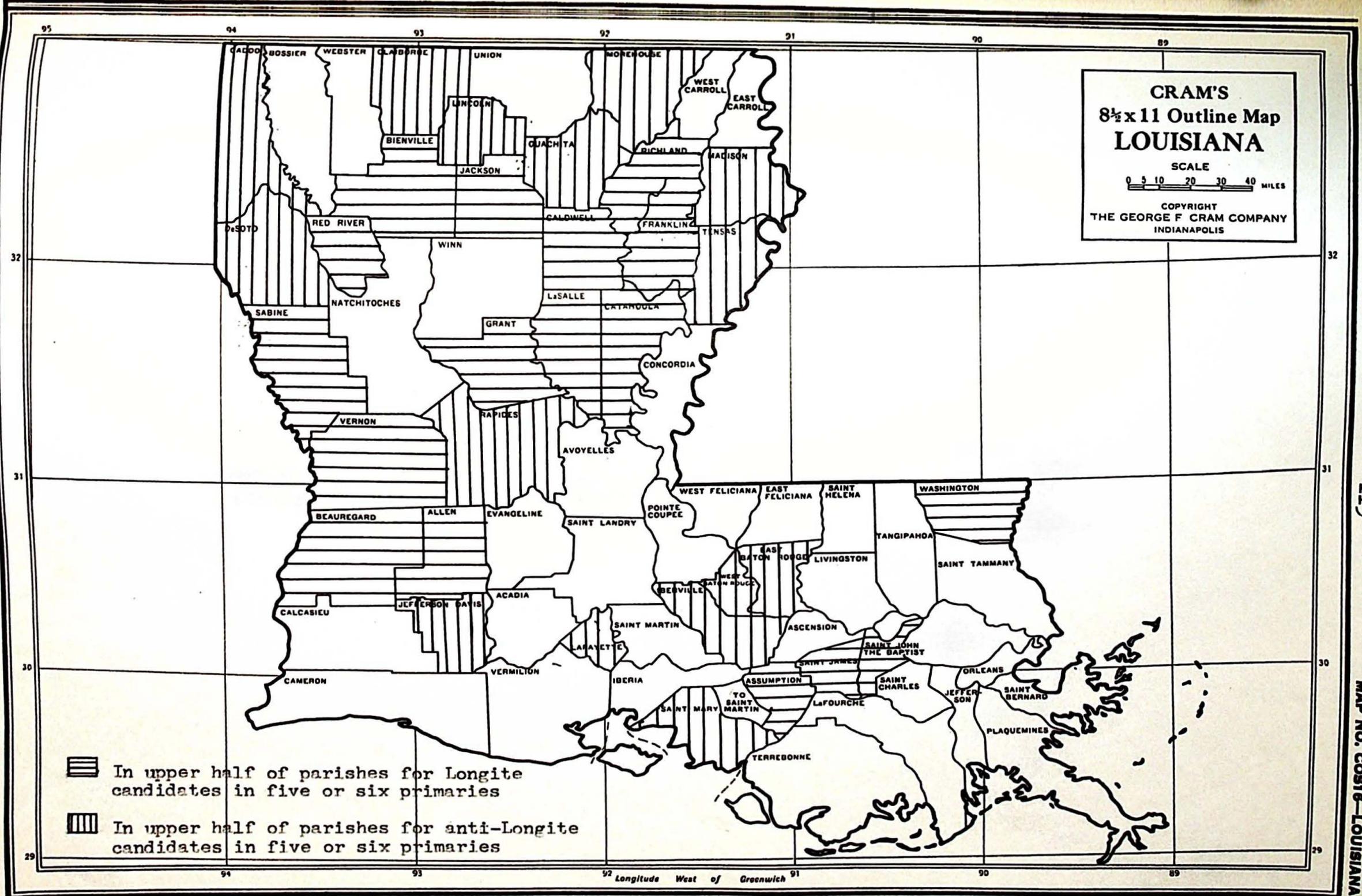
## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION

Most authorities on Louisiana political history believe the dominant theme in Louisiana politics, in the last thirty years, has been a class struggle, for example, the planter parishes allied with the urban centers have been pitted against the subsistence farming, cut-over, and non-urban areas.<sup>1</sup> Figure 5 seems to bear this statement out. The areas of consistent centers of anti-Long strength have been the planter parishes and those parishes containing a considerable urban population. The absence of New Orleans is explainable by the rule in that city of the Choctaw machine until 1946. The Choctaws often shifted sides in their attempt to obtain the most desirable agreements with the contending candidates for the city of New Orleans. On the other hand, the seat of Longism's strength has been those parishes that are dominated by small farmers working poor soils and which have few urban centers. On the basis of the election returns since 1928, it would be safe to conclude economic bi-factionalism has been the primary factor in state politics.

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<sup>1</sup>V. O. Key, Southern Politics (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1949); Perry Howard, "The Political Ecology of Louisiana," unpublished Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La., 1952; and Allen P. Sindler, Huey Long's Louisiana (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), all hold this view.



CRAM'S  
 8½ x 11 Outline Map  
 LOUISIANA  
 SCALE  
 0 5 10 20 30 40 MILES  
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 In upper half of parishes for Longite candidates in five or six primaries  
 In upper half of parishes for anti-Longite candidates in five or six primaries

115  
 MAP NO. COS16-LOUISIANA

FIGURE 5  
 CENTERS OF LONG AND ANTI-LONG STRENGTH RANKED ACCORDING TO PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTES, 1936-1956\*  
 \*Compilation of Primary Election Returns of the Democratic Party, State of Louisiana, 1936, 1940, 1944, 1948, 1952, 1956.

To understand the hard core of factionalism that has emerged in the last thirty years, one must remember the features of state government before Long. Key maintains that, before Long, the state was ruled by an upper-class oligarchy.<sup>2</sup> The New Orleans machine bulked large in state politics, and was an old-fashioned city machine in every sense of the word, controlling the vote for the benefit of the business and financial interests of the city. Add to the mercantile, financial, and shipping interest peculiar to New Orleans, the power yielded by the sugar growers in the south and the rich cotton growers of the Red River and the Mississippi. The lumber industry, more powerful here than in any other Southern state, exploited the wooded areas of the state in a way that was apparent even to the illiterate. The oil industry had a special interest in state politics, since the state owned much of the lands on which oil was found. Add to all these, the peculiar interest of the railroads, gas and electrical utilities, and you have the elements that made up the ruling oligarchy of Louisiana. More than any other Southern state, this alliance pressed down upon the state in an unbroken period of unrestrained exploitation from the close of reconstruction to the rise of Longism.

Their control of the state for their own purposes can be illustrated in the field of education. Naturally, this combination wished to keep taxes low and this desire was

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<sup>2</sup>Key, op. cit., p. 158.

projected into the field of education. Schools in Louisiana, before Long, were poor and few in number, teachers' salaries were low, and students had to purchase their own textbooks. As a result, as late as 1940, 14.8 per cent of all native, rural white males had not completed a single year of schooling. About one out of seven rural whites had never been in school a day in their life. This figure is double that of the next ranking state, Virginia, almost triple that of Texas, and five times that of Mississippi.<sup>3</sup> Another 25 per cent of Louisiana's rural white males had not had more than a year of schooling. The status of education, in pre-Long Louisiana, is cited only as a probable indicator of the effectiveness of holding down public services and hence taxation.

The reaction to the oligarchial rule of Louisiana was the violence of dictatorial Longism in its earlier years and a consistent economic bi-factionalism. While this bi-factionalism had dominated state politics, one cannot say that religious factors have been absent. Before Long, the ruling oligarchy was able to govern the state by the tactics of divide and conquer. Thus, the wealthy classes were able to play off the Cajun, French, Catholic south against the Protestant, Anglo-Saxon, Rednecks of northern Louisiana. Social, cultural and religious differences, and prejudices made their rule of Louisiana simpler than elsewhere in the South.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

The emergence of Longism is not without its religious causes. As has been noted above, in Long's first attempt to win the governor's nomination, he fared poorly in Catholic Louisiana. One of his main goals, from 1924 to 1930, was to win this element in the state. Thus, he campaigned actively for Catholic nominees for United States Senator in 1924 and 1928. Of prime importance, in his attempt to win Roman Catholic support, was his free textbook law of 1928 which provided free textbooks to public school pupils, as well as to those in Catholic schools. This was but the beginning of a host of Longite laws which have extended state benefits to parochial schools. The author, who served in Louisiana in 1956, was in charge of a small Lutheran parochial school. Among the state benefits received by the school were the following: (a) Free textbooks; (b) Maps; (c) Writing materials; (d) Use of the public school bus system; (e) The free services of the public school nurse; (f) Services of teachers trained to aid students with specialized problems, for example, reading, speech, arithmetic, etc. In addition, the author was told by the parish superintendent of schools that, when the congregation was able to construct a cafeteria, the school would be included in the state free-lunch program and the cafeteria would be staffed with state paid employees. Such benefits have drastically reduced the cost of maintaining a private school in Louisiana. These provisions have probably done much to win Catholic support for Longism. Attempts to fan opposition to Longism, by claiming it is in-

fested with religious prejudices, have usually fallen on deaf ears. Longism has gone far in religious prejudices that would hinder a successful union between the Cajuns of the south and the Rednecks of the north.

A comparison of election returns, for the last thirty years, reveal that while there has been an abatement of religious factors, still these have not been completely removed from the voting behavior. Catholic gubernatorial candidates have consistently through the years attracted their major support in Catholic Louisiana and made their poorest showing in those areas that are most heavily Protestant. It is safe to say, therefore, that while religious prejudices have been greatly reduced, many voters still vote for candidates who are of the same faith as they are.

The old rule of thumb still holds true in Louisiana, "A Catholic can't be governor." Even deLesseps Morrison, who had gained national recognition for his progressive administration in New Orleans, performed poorly in the 1956 election. The author feels, however, that the only true test of the strength of religious prejudices will come if, and when, Longism runs a Catholic for governor. Since Longism's major strength is in the Protestant parishes habited by Protestant small farmers, where religious prejudice is probably heaviest, only such a candidacy would offer conclusive evidence of the power of religious prejudices.

It should be pointed out that Catholicism is not "the kiss of death" for those aspiring to office in Louisiana.

The anti-Catholic rule seems to extend only to the office of governor. Many elected state officials are Roman Catholics. The late Senator Ransdell held his seat in the United States Senate for twenty years and the present senior Senator from Louisiana, Allen Ellender, who is a Roman Catholic, has won four elections to that office by tremendous majorities.

The major contender to economic bi-factionalism in Louisiana, the author feels, may well be the emergence of the race problem. Although there are 118,183 registered Negro voters in Louisiana as compared to 753,333 white voters, making Louisiana the state with the largest Negro electorate in the South, the increase in Negro registration seems to have increased racism and not diminished it. The year 1956 was the first time, in the period of this study, that a candidate ran for the gubernatorial office making segregation his major plank. McLemore's showing, while not very large, reveals that he made a relatively strong appeal in the areas of Longism's strength. The author believes that white supremacy may be the one platform which may defeat Longism. White supremacy, if it emerges as a dominant issue in Louisiana politics, will not be without its religious connotations in the light of the recent pronouncements by the Archbishop of New Orleans.

On the basis of this study, the author would conclude that religious factors are still present in Louisiana elections. Longism, by its program, however, has been rather successful in reducing the importance of religious influ-

ences since the 1920's. The degree to which religious factors can influence elections is rather difficult to ascertain, since there has been no election dominated by a religious issue since 1928. However, the willingness of Catholic Louisiana to support the Long machine, and the rather poor showing of Catholic candidates, with the exception of Le Blanc in 1932, would indicate that religious factors have abated drastically in the past thirty years and have been replaced by an economic bi-factionalism as the dominant feature in Louisiana politics.

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