THE EDITORIAL REACTION OF TEXAS DAILY
NEWSPAPERS TO FRANKLIN DELANO
ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW DEAL,
1932 - 1938

THESIS

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By

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The objective of this study is to identify newspapers who supported or opposed portions of the New Deal from 1932 to 1938. Nine newspapers from various geographic areas were consulted.

Chapter II discusses the 1932 campaign, in which all newspapers supported Roosevelt. Chapter III discusses the First New Deal, in which widespread support was evidenced. Chapter IV discusses the Second New Deal, in which criticism appeared. Chapter V discusses the 1936 campaign, in which only one newspaper opposed Roosevelt. Chapter VI discusses three post-1936 issues.

The study determined that Texas newspapers became more critical during the 1930s. The central hypothesis, that urban newspapers were more critical of urban measures and rural newspapers of rural measures, was rejected.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE CAMPAIGN OF 1932</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Opinions Expressed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Election in Maine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Indecision of Alfred E. Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt's Western Tour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued Editorial Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Endorsements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE FIRST HUNDRED DAYS</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Banking Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Agricultural Adjustment Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Industrial Recovery Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Civilian Conservation Corps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The General Issue of Relief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE SECOND NEW DEAL</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Works Progress Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social Security Bill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wagner Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Invalidation of the NRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Conservation Coalition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1936</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism from the San Antonio Light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Criticism of Landon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Support for Roosevelt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Straw Polls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Endorsements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. THE NEW DEAL: 1937-1938 ....... 126
   The Court Reform Proposal
   The Recession of 1937
   The Fair Labor Standards Act
   Summary and Conclusions

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS ....... 152

APPENDIX .................................... 158

BIBLIOGRAPHY .............................. 160
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Texas daily newspapers during the early 1930s were no different from most of the other businesses in the state in that they all were affected in some way by the ravages of the Depression. By 1932, advertising lineage had dropped off sharply; circulation rates had decreased; the number of pages in a regular edition had fallen; and payrolls constantly had been chopped to ever lower levels. Some newspapers failed to survive the Depression. By one account, the mortality rate of city newspapers throughout the nation during the decade was 48 per cent. Small town newspapers, which numbered approximately 12,600 in 1930, totaled only 10,800 in 1941 (1, p. 245).

Despite their problems, Texas daily newspapers were optimistic when Franklin Delano Roosevelt recited the thirty-eight-word presidential oath of office on March 4, 1933. Newspapers throughout the state, with few exceptions, began to echo the growing public belief that "a new day is dawning, hope is reviving, and confidence is on the way" (2, p. 2).

The nation listened intently that day as Roosevelt asserted his "firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself--nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance" (3, p. 38). By March 1933, the United States appeared to be in a calamitous
retreat. In three years, five thousand banks had collapsed; nine million savings accounts had been lost; national income had been cut in half; people had starved while crops rotted in fields; cattle had to be killed because ranchers could not feed them or market them; and currency had been in short supply even though ten billion dollars sat idly in bank vaults (4, pp. 18, 22-23). The morale of the American people appeared to be at an all-time low.

Roosevelt's program for the nation--the New Deal--called for a leadership of "frankness and vigor" (3, p. 38). Almost immediately, the new President became a symbol of hope. Although the Depression and its problems were to remain through most of the decade, the morale of the people seemed to improve. William Leuchtenburg wrote that less than two weeks after Roosevelt took office, "the country seemed a changed place. Where once there had been apathy and despondency, there was now an immense sense of movement" (4).

Three of Texas' largest newspapers observed this change. The Dallas Morning News, which in 1933 was the state's second largest newspaper in circulation, noted on Inauguration Day that there was something "gallant and boyish in the new pilot as he takes the helm" (2). The Houston Chronicle, the state's third largest daily, pointed to Roosevelt's "clear vision of the harsh realities of the day" (5, p. 4). The Austin Statesman saw the nation's leader as a "noble inspiration" (6, p. 4). Daily newspapers from other areas of the state echoed these feelings on their editorial pages.
This apparent editorial honeymoon did not last long. By the early part of the summer of 1933, when Congress was placing its seal of approval on a wide spectrum of New Deal measures, several daily newspapers began to grow increasingly restless and critical as more and more emergency measures were written into law. Leading this criticism of the President's proposals were the large, powerful, urban-oriented daily newspapers, which were not as gravely affected by the Depression as their rural counterparts (1). Most outspoken among these newspapers in Texas was the Dallas Morning News, soon to become nationally known for its conservative editorial policies. Although the Dallas newspaper supported some of the later New Deal programs, it had, as early as January 1, 1933, expressed a great deal of uncertainty about whether Roosevelt would turn out to be a "real leader" (7, p. 2).

Other urban newspapers, including the state's largest in 1933, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, soon began to follow the lead of the conservative Dallas Morning News. By the middle of the decade, as Roosevelt was shifting his attention to labor and industrial problems, this criticism from urban Texas newspapers was in full swing.

Even as this editorial criticism from the state's daily newspapers was becoming more vociferous during the mid-1930s, only one, however, chose to support Alfred Landon in the 1936 presidential election. That newspaper was the San Antonio Light, whose owner, William Randolph Hearst, had disavowed Roosevelt as early as 1934. Despite this opposition from the
San Antonio newspaper, Texans and their daily newspapers came out overwhelmingly in favor of Roosevelt in 1936.

It was not unusual for Texans to support Democratic presidential candidates; moreover, it was indeed a rare occasion for a Republican presidential candidate to carry the state. Herbert Hoover, who narrowly defeated Alfred E. Smith in Texas in 1928, was the first successful Republican presidential contender in the state since 1848, the first year Texans voted for President. Prior to the 1928 race, the closest a Republican ever came to carrying Texas was in 1872, when newspaper publisher Horace Greeley defeated Ulysses S. Grant by nearly 20,000 votes (8, p. 544). Political scientist V.O. Key explained that Texas remained a one-party state because much of its population by 1860 consisted of Negro slaves, most of whom lived in East Texas. By the time the Depression struck the state, Key wrote, Texans were ready and willing to support the policies of Franklin Roosevelt:

When the great depression struck, business and plain people alike found themselves in so desperate a plight that the effort to survive was not posed sensitively in terms of state policy toward business. The emergency actions of the New Deal absorbed the full attention and attracted the general support of the state and its politics (9, pp. 254, 263).

Why, then, did Texas newspapers, even though they had grown increasingly ambivalent toward portions of the New Deal by 1935, elect to continue supporting Roosevelt in 1936? To answer this question, it is necessary to make another general observation about Texas and its inhabitants early in the decade. Roosevelt himself, in his inaugural address, alluded to what
many historians have diagnosed as the desperate state of the American people:

Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live .... Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This nations asks for action, and action now (3, p. 91).

When the stock market crashed in October 1929 and set off a chain of events that virtually wiped out the monetary structure of the nation, Hoover was President. Since Texans tended to vote for Democrats for that office and for most other public offices, and since many newspapers proudly proclaimed their loyalty to the Democratic Party on their nameplates, it was not unusual that Texas voters preferred Roosevelt to Hoover by a margin of 760,348 to 97,959. In Roosevelt's 1936 race against Landon, his margin of victory slipped somewhat in Texas: 734,485 to 103,374. In 1940, Roosevelt gathered 840,151 votes to Wendell Willkie's 199,152; and, in 1944, Roosevelt defeated Thomas Dewey by 821,605 to 191,425 (8).

Statement of the Problem

The objective of this study is to identify those Texas daily newspapers who supported or opposed portions of the New Deal between the years 1932 and 1938. The study primarily was designed to determine what, if any, relationships existed between and among various New Deal programs and the editorial reactions of daily newspapers in Texas. Additionally, the following questions were raised: What effect did certain New Deal programs have on the editorials of Texas daily newspapers?
Why did newspapers support or oppose portions of the New Deal? What reasons were cited in the editorials for supporting or opposing Roosevelt's proposals? How did this support or opposition affect editorial endorsements in the 1936 Presidential election?

Purpose of the Study

It is the purpose of this study to trace the editorial positions taken by Texas daily newspapers toward selected New Deal programs and to determine whether the newspapers generally supported or opposed portions of the New Deal. A particular focus is those daily newspapers that might have elected to alter or amend editorial positions toward Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Hypotheses

Initially, all newspapers included in the study were enthusiastic about Roosevelt and the New Deal, as were large numbers of the country's daily newspapers; furthermore, none of the newspapers consulted chose to oppose Roosevelt in the 1932 election. As the various relief, recovery, and reform measures were introduced by the new President, however, Texas daily newspapers tended to become increasingly doubtful about the merits of portions of the New Deal.

The central hypothesis is that this increasing ambivalence and editorial criticism was reflected on the editorial pages of Texas daily newspapers when New Deal programs had a direct effect on a newspaper's readers or editorial policies. It should be pointed out that this criticism did not apply to all
New Deal measures. Each newspaper had its own specific complaint with the Roosevelt administration over certain aspects of the New Deal. Seldom did all newspapers cited agree on all points in a particular New Deal program. The hypothesis includes the generalization that despite the growing criticism by Texas newspapers toward the New Deal, none of the newspapers chose to support Landon in the 1936 presidential election.

A secondary hypothesis is that Texas daily newspapers tended to be most skeptical of measures that had a direct impact on their areas or communities. For example, daily newspapers in primarily agrarian areas of the state were more concerned with and tended to be most critical of agrarian programs such as the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Likewise, newspapers in primarily industrial or urban areas were more concerned with and tended to be most critical of such industrial measures as the National Industrial Recovery Act.

Justification

The significance of this thesis project rests on the fact that Texas daily newspapers traditionally have played a large role in the formation of public opinion throughout the state. During the Roosevelt administrations, however, an unusual trend was sweeping the country. Daily newspapers—especially the large, powerful, urban-oriented publications—were forever rising in opposition to parts of the New Deal. This vocal editorial opposition, strangely, had little effect on the way people reacted to the President and his programs. Although the large daily newspapers served as the chief mouthpiece for critics of Roosevelt and the
New Deal, voters continued enthusiastically to support them at the polls. One account said the nation's newspapers just as enthusiastically opposed both Roosevelt and his programs:

By the time of his second election approximately two out of every three fought his candidacy. The opposition journals, however, generally printed the president's speeches and, save for the bitterest diehards, reported Washington news with fairer objectivity than that of the anti-Jefferson press of 1800 or the anti-Lincoln press in 1860. Hence, as one friend of the New Deal observed, it was evident that 'the people voted with the news columns and against the editorials' (1, p. 89).

The opposition of the larger daily newspapers has been explained by several authorities as being due to those newspapers' tendency to identify with other forms of big business. The shifting editorial opinion against Roosevelt and the New Deal is seen in these figures: In 1932, Roosevelt received support from 40 per cent of the nation's newspapers; in 1936, his support had fallen to 36 per cent; in 1940, to less than 23 per cent; and in 1944, to less than 18 per cent (1, p. 313).

In 1937, Roosevelt acknowledged this apparent failure of editorials to swing public opinion against him: "This array of editorial opposition . . . apparently has been unable to exercise adequate influence upon public opinion in the United States" (10, p. 39).

It should be noted at this point that the 1930s were a time when more people than ever before were reading newspapers, and the newspapers responded by doubling the space allotted to such popular items as pictures and comics. Public affairs columnists such as Walter Lippman, Frank Kent, Raymond Clapper, Heywood Broun, and Westbrook Pegler enjoyed widespread popularity.
Some estimates showed that nineteen of twenty adults were newspaper readers (1, p. 244). Appropriately, a new type of journalist began covering Washington political news in the 1930s. Historian Finis Farr referred to these journalists as "younger, leaner, and more enterprising" (11, p. 230). The journalists of previous years, Farr wrote, tended to be older, more sophisticated, and more dependent on press releases.

This project primarily seeks to determine whether Texas newspapers followed the national trend of the 1930s—a trend in which newspaper editorials seemed to have less effect on the voting habits of particular areas. Specifically, this study sought to determine whether the editorial support or opposition of Texas daily newspapers influenced the way Texans voted in the 1936 presidential election. One focus is the trends among the newspapers themselves, whether newspapers in one area of the state tended to support or oppose parts of the New Deal, while newspapers in another area of the state might have taken different editorial positions.

Methodology

Because numerous daily newspapers published in Texas during the 1930s are no longer available in libraries or newspaper collections, the study concentrated on a representative group of daily newspapers. This group was selected to represent the geographic areas of the state. Choices were made from the lists contained in the 1932 to 1938 editions of N.W. Ayer and Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals; the sole criterion for selection was circulation. The daily newspapers with the largest
circulation figures for the years 1932 to 1938 from major geographic areas were chosen. Wherever possible, overlapping circulation markets were avoided; but, if two newspapers had nearly identical circulations, or if two newspapers changed circulation leadership positions from 1932 to 1938, then overlapping markets were considered. The following newspapers were selected as a base for the study: Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Austin Statesman, Houston Chronicle, San Antonio Light, Beaumont Enterprise, Amarillo News, Abilene Morning News, and Corpus Christi Caller-Times. Each of these newspapers was selected to represent a different geographic area of the state, and overlapping circulation markets, it is believed, have been held to a minimum.

Not all of the New Deal measures were studied, either. Only those measures that tended to be of particular interest to Texas voters were included. For purposes designed to aid investigation, the New Deal was divided into five separate areas. The first area comprises the campaign and election of 1932; newspapers were studied to determine what editorial endorsements were made. The second area centers on the First New Deal of 1933; the programs studied were Roosevelt's banking acts, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act, and the general issue of relief. The third area deals with the Second New Deal of 1935; programs covered are the Wagner Act, the social security act, the Works Progress Administration, and the Supreme Court's invalidation of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The fourth area is the cam-
campaign and election of 1936; newspapers were studied to determine editorial endorsements. The fifth area comprises four specific issues and programs that surfaced after the election of 1936; the issues are the proposal to reorganize the Supreme Court, the recession of 1937, deficit spending, and the Fair Labor Standards Act. Because of the growing concern with international problems in the late 1930s, and because a conservative coalition in Congress had formed by that time to stall subsequent New Deal measures, programs or policies formulated after 1938 are not covered.

Each newspaper was examined to determine its editorial policies relative to the above issues and how they affected Texans. The editorial pages were analyzed to determine what specific attitudes the newspapers had concerning various New Deal programs and issues. Page one of each newspaper was studied to determine what programs were receiving the most news "play" and whether the editorials and their stances coincided with front page news coverage.

As for the actual study of the newspapers, only the editorial pages and page one were used. The editorial page was examined to determine the newspaper's policies toward the New Deal; the front page, to determine whether the amount of news space devoted to a New Deal issue corresponded with the editorial content.

This procedure of analyzing front pages and editorial pages was repeated for each of the newspapers and for each of the five areas of the New Deal. Thus, it was possible to determine
whether a newspaper altered its position toward Roosevelt and the New Deal. After it was determined when a newspaper did change its positions, the editorials were consulted once again to ascertain why the change in position was made. Only reasons listed in the editorials were used to draw conclusions. No specific measurements or measuring devices were applied to the editorials; instead, the overall tone and content of all editorials on a certain New Deal program were used to draw conclusions about a newspaper's attitude toward that program.

Several secondary sources were consulted to draw references to debates and events in Congress, particularly if a certain debate was relevant to a debate described in an editorial. Books by Frank Freidel, William Leuchtenburg, Basil Rauch, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., James Patterson, and other New Deal historians were consulted; books by V.O. Key, Jr., and other political scientists were studied to determine political backgrounds that existed in Texas in the 1930s; and, the Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt were consulted to determine Roosevelt's own thoughts on his ideas and programs, and Roosevelt's reaction to debates in Congress.

Review of Literature

No specific study to date has been made on Texas newspapers and their editorial reactions to Roosevelt and the New Deal; however, a few studies have been completed in similar areas, and these studies were examined to ascertain and ease problems with methodology, analyses, and overall organization. These studies are as follows: "The Texas Press and Internationalism,

Organization of the Study

Chapter II explores the editorial reactions during the campaign and election of 1932, when many of the early impressions about Roosevelt were formed. Chapter III covers the first four months of Roosevelt's first term and the editorial reactions Texas newspapers had concerning early New Deal legislation; initial impressions toward the New Deal were closely covered. Chapter IV emphasizes five important months in 1935 when the New Deal began to concern itself with labor and urban-oriented problems. Chapter V analyzes the editorial reaction to the campaign and election of 1936; some mention is made in this chapter of how the newspapers reacted editorially to the straw polls of Literary Digest and George Gallup, when the former picked Landon to defeat Roosevelt. Chapter VI comprises the issues and problems that surfaced in 1937 and 1938. Chapter VII summarizes the findings and presents overall conclusions.
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5. Houston Chronicle, March 5, 1933.

6. Austin Statesman, March 10, 1933.


CHAPTER II

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1932

As the political party in power during and immediately following the national economic collapse of 1929, the Republicans faced an extremely difficult task during the presidential campaign of 1932. Their standard-bearer, President Herbert Hoover, had advocated a cautious, tentative approach to the myriad problems brought on by the Depression, and his attitude had fostered a growing impatience on the part of many Americans. Indeed, historian William Leuchtenburg theorized that the only way the Republican Party could have remained in power would have been if the Democrats had permitted rifts within their party to destroy them (1, p. 3). It appeared that the Democrats were willing to do just that. Not until a coalition of delegates, led by Speaker of the House John Nance Garner, broke from an anti-Roosevelt bloc at the 1932 Democratic Convention was Roosevelt able to secure the nomination on the fourth ballot. Dissension and internal bickering among party regulars threatened to turn his nomination into a hollow victory (1, pp. 9-10).

One of the primary complaints expressed by Democratic regulars about Hoover was not that he had done very little toward solving the problems of the Depression, but that he had done too much; however, this complaint apparently was not well received in the South. Historian Frank Freidel wrote that the Southern economy had been crippled during the 1920s, and for
this reason it did not have as far to fall in 1929. The notion that the South did not suffer as greatly after 1929 as did other areas of the country, Freidel wrote, was not true (2, p. 37). Cotton, a staple crop of the South, had brought slightly more than one billion dollars to farmers in 1929, a poor year; the crop of 1932 was considered "a complete calamity," bringing farmers less than four hundred million dollars (2). Many of the Southern states that had supported Hoover in 1928 were ready to return to the Democratic fold in 1932.

In Texas, daily newspapers did not begin devoting much page one news space to the presidential campaign until the last weeks in August, and even then, few editorials appeared that early. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, on August 20, criticized Eastern Democrats and Eastern newspapers that sought to label Garner, Roosevelt's running mate, as a radical. The newspaper said Garner was a conservative, and that the "East will find itself with this knowledge of him before the campaign is long under way, and ... will be thanking the stars that gave the national ticket his humanizing influence" (3, p. 4). Other newspapers saw Garner, a Texan, as an asset to the ticket and were willing to devote considerable news space to him and Roosevelt.

By far, the largest amount of page one news space, however, was devoted to crime stories. The more sensational the story, the more space newspapers set aside for it. The Austin Statesman, over a two-week span during the presidential campaign of 1932, had such bold-faced headlines as "Confederate Veteran Beaten
By Youths," "Woman Held In Hammer Killing," and "Fantastic Raid On Treasury Thwarted." Over the same period, the San Antonio Light had such headlines as "Sweatbox Hose Beating Told," Wife Shot As Mate Battles Thief," and "Girl Sets Self Afire, Atones For Killing." Throughout the early 1930s, and for most of the decade, Texas daily newspapers tended to use crowded, eight-column formats, with as many as twenty stories a day on page one. Until about a month before the general election, presidential campaign news was to be overshadowed by crime news on page one.

Conservative Opinions Expressed

One newspaper that became the first to express doubt about the Roosevelt-Garner ticket was the Dallas Morning News, which already was establishing a reputation for its conservative editorial policies. Published in a rapidly growing urban area, the Morning News editorialized on September 3 that the Democratic Party was campaigning on an issue that was becoming nonexistent: "It was part of the Democratic expectation that the present depression would be a great card against Hoover, but if the depression is lifting, as seems probable, and prosperity is slowly returning, the force of that weapon is blunted, at least"(4, p. 2). The newspaper observed ten days later, "This is a Republican country when it comes to a presidential election"(5, p. 2). The same editorial said there was a better chance of the Democratic Party's winning a majority of seats in the Senate than its winning the race for the White House.
Smaller daily newspapers, especially those in rural areas of the state, took a different view of the national campaign. The Abilene Morning News proclaimed that the Roosevelt-Garner ticket could be "swept into office by a landslide" (6, p. 8). That comment was inspired by a national poll, released only a few days earlier, that predicted Roosevelt and Garner would win by a two-to-one majority in the electoral college. The Abilene Morning News cautioned its readers, however, about putting too much faith in straw polls: "Straw polls are not dependable, and neither is expert opinion" (6). The rural newspaper further urged its readers to give money to the Democratic Party. In an editorial, the Morning News said; "Most of the big-moneyed men of the country are Republicans, and may always be depended upon to give liberally"; specifically, readers were asked to donate money to the national Democratic Party (7, p. 6). As far as the Republican campaign was concerned, the Abilene Morning News said it was casting a "bad odor" across Texas (8, p. 8).

The Election in Maine

Probably the first indication of what would transpire in November was the state election in Maine the second week in September. Political soothsayers and politicians of both major national parties looked to this election for statewide offices as a barometer of general attitudes and opinions toward the parties. Maine, traditionally a strong Republican state, was expected to be the first test of Republican strength following
three years of hard times. On September 13, the Dallas Morning News reported the event under the page one banner headlines: "Democrats Cut Far Into Maine's G.O.P. Majority/Rock-Ribbed Republican Territory Drifts Very Strongly Other Way" (5). After the Democratic successes in Maine, Texas newspapers began to display more editorial enthusiasm toward the national campaign.

On September 14, the Abilene Morning News noticed an impending "revolt" against the Republican Party, saying Hoover's only hope for re-election was "a complete reversal of existing economic conditions--possible, but not probable." The editorial had the headline "Outlook Poor For Hoover" (9, p. 4). The Dallas Morning News said in an editorial that the Maine results indicated hard times for Hoover, and explained that Maine goes Democratic about as often as Texas goes Republican (10, p. 2). In Fort Worth, the Star-Telegram scoffed at the legend "As Maine goes, so goes the nation." An editorial prophesied that the Maine results foreshadowed a landslide Roosevelt victory in November (11, p. 12).

The Indecision of Alfred E. Smith

Another early campaign issue receiving considerable news coverage from Texas newspapers was the wavering attitude of Alfred E. Smith, Democratic candidate for President in 1928. Throughout the first month of the 1932 campaign, Smith declined to issue a declaration of support for the Roosevelt-Garner ticket; then, in early October, the "Happy Warrior" pledged his support to his party's ticket. There
was an exultant reaction from Texas newspapers. The Beaumont Enterprise, which served much of the oil lands in East and Southeast Texas, predicted editorially that Smith's support would virtually guarantee that Roosevelt would carry the Eastern states: "Mr. Roosevelt needs the East to win the presidential election and no one is in a better position to deliver the East... than the man who received 15,000,000 votes in the presidential election of 1928" (12, p. 4). The Houston Chronicle said on October 6 that the Smith-Roosevelt reconciliation would "give the Democratic Party more harmony and unity than it has known in many years" (13, p. 18).

Similar comments appeared in editorials in other parts of the state. The Hearst-controlled San Antonio Light, which traditionally ran editorials signed by William Randolph Hearst himself, pointed to a "great movement" composed of both Democrats and Republicans that was "bearing Franklin D. Roosevelt to the presidency." This shift away from Hoover was called "the people's reply to the sounding but empty pretenses of the Hoover defense" (14, p. 8). While the swing toward Roosevelt in Texas newspapers was becoming more apparent by the first week of October, Hoover launched his strongest defense of his presidency in a speech at Des Moines, Iowa, on October 4. Newspapers throughout Texas quickly reacted; and, from the reactions, it soon was evident that the press in Texas had shifted decidedly toward Roosevelt.

Since Iowa was Hoover's home state, much attention was given to the type of reception he received there on his first
trip of the campaign. Once again, though, his reception stood as an augury of what would come at the polls in November. Headlines on page one of the Dallas Morning News capsulized the event: "Hoover Both Booed And Cheered On His First Campaign Trip/ Loyal Republicans Applaud Lustily While Striking Farmers Cry 'We're Voting For Roosevelt''(15, p. 1). The Houston Chronicle editorialized on October 6 that Hoover had demonstrated a "very human appeal," but that the "actual facts of Republican shortcomings and failures in the national and international field are not likely to be so easily forgotten"(13). The Fort Worth Star-Telegram said the President had put up the best defense of his record, but that his defense generally was confined to the statement, "It could have been worse"; the Fort Worth newspaper called this tactic "a poor defense at best"(16, p. 18). An editorial in the Dallas Morning News said Hoover's Des Moines speech would not hurt Roosevelt's chances, and that Hoover "can not at one and the same time deny all accountability and claim all praise." The editorial said Hoover tried to do both,"(b)ut Iowa hooted"(17, p. 2).

Other newspapers around the state began downgrading Hoover's attempt to defend his administration. The Abilene Morning News, in a frank editorial, observed that the Republican power base in the Middle West "is quite definitely broken, and . . . unless a miracle is wrought between now and election day the Hoover ticket will go down in one of the worst defeats in history"(18, p. 6). The Fort Worth Star-Telegram chided the President's repeated statements that all
the country needed was a new song, or a new poem, or a good joke: "Some Democrats may add a fourth 'new' thing as needed-- a new administration" (19, p. 8).

More blatant anti-Hoover editorials appeared in three other newspapers. The Houston Chronicle pointed to an exodus of Republicans to the Democratic Party, and the Amarillo News published reprints of similar editorials from anti-Hoover newspapers across the country. Perhaps the most blatant anti-Hoover editorial, however, ran in the Austin Statesman, and it centered on the Republican claim that Hoover was "the greatest leader of the republic and of the world":

Of course, there is only one American democracy and the peerless Roosevelt is its standard-bearer. Hoover is the pride of the stand-pat republicans in America and the stand-pat republicans have controlled this government and dominated its legislation since the passing of Woodrow Wilson. All the wreckage of American pocketbooks, American ideals, American homes, American industry, American agriculture, and American labor tells the story of that rule more eloquently and more pathetically than the tongues of a million orators or writers could portray it (20, p. 4).

Headlines in newspapers across the state in September and October carried a decidedly pro-Democratic bias. Repeatedly stories about Roosevelt's campaign received considerable space on page one, while Hoover's late-starting push for re-election generally was relegated to one- and two-column headlines at the bottom of page one. Most of the campaign coverage, moreover, came in the form of news dispatches from one or more of the major wire services--Associated Press, United Press, and International News Service. Only the Dallas Morning News printed infrequent staff articles on the campaign;
other newspapers relied exclusively on wire service reports.

Roosevelt's Western Tour

As Roosevelt mounted his campaign to win votes in the Western states in September, newspapers began to devote more news space on page one to the presidential race. Typical headlines were, "Roosevelt's Farm Program Meets With Cheers In Kansas," "Roosevelt's Views Heard/Huge Crowd At Capital of Utah," and "Tumultuous Welcome Accorded Roosevelt at Los Angeles/ Cheering Throngs Line Path Of Triumphant Passage Down Coast." Editorials, too, began to shift toward an even more pro-Roosevelt position. The Dallas Morning News, which early in the campaign had expressed doubts about Roosevelt, was in mid-September pointing to an impending Democratic victory: "His [Roosevelt's] is a gallant impulse and a becoming courage; the country undoubtedly will respond to it as it deserves" (21, p. 2). The newspaper further observed of the Republican campaign: "It must be dreadful indeed to sit in the White House and learn that the frantic succession of conferences have not solved or soothed the public ire . . . . There is mighty little comfort for Hoover in the way things are going" (22, p. 2).

The Abilene Morning News, in reference to Roosevelt's Western tour and his many campaign speeches, called the Democratic nominee the best phrase-maker since Woodrow Wilson: "Mr. Roosevelt's speech is full of pat phrases reminiscent of a brighter day in political oratory" (23, p. 6). In the same editorial, the newspaper, whose readers included many farmers
and ranchers, said Roosevelt had an empathy with farmers:

Mr. Hoover is concerned with figures, statistics, mechanisms, graphs and baselines. The engineer in him is paramount always. Roosevelt, on the other hand, thinks of the "forgotten man," of farm wagons and the grim threat of foreclosure, of people. Essentially, he has the bucolic outlook, an almost rustic temperament. He can speak the language of the farm (23).

Eight days after the Abilene Morning News' editorial appeared, the same newspaper candidly told its readers that Hoover "is incapable of understanding the problems that harass the agricultural belt, as his past actions have shown" (24, p. 6).

Another newspaper published primarily in a farming and ranching area, the Amarillo News, said in an editorial that the Republicans are worried: "No campaign in many years has seen quite such a season of grim Republican cogitation . . . . The call has gone out; the Republicans are worried. They see the handwriting on the wall" (25, p. 2).

Other newspapers were forecasting continued hard times for Hoover and his party. One newspaper ran a small one-column headline at the bottom of page one in mid-September: "Hoover To Speak Only Three Times."

Roosevelt's Western swing, which included brief appearances in several Southern states, was described with enthusiasm on the front pages of Texas newspapers. The headlines often were large, bold, and often referred to the large crowds that cheered many of Roosevelt's stops. The Corpus Christi Caller said the crowds appeared united in a single effort to unseat Hoover: "This singleness of purpose will not be easily turned aside; they will stick to Roosevelt as an antidote for
Hoover" (26, p. 4). The Caller repeated this feeling in an editorial on October 20, when it said the tour of seventeen states by the Democratic candidate "was a masterful stroke of political strategy" and that Roosevelt himself "grows in stature as the campaign progresses" (27, p. 4).

Roosevelt, a transplanted Southerner who kept a home in Warm Springs, Georgia, drew more support from Texas newspapers as the campaign progressed. One editorial in the Houston Chronicle expressed the hope that Roosevelt would be elected. Specifically, the Chronicle editorial said Roosevelt was among "home folks" during his campaign stops in the South, and that the South warmly welcomed "the candidate, who shares party honors with the Southern Garner, hopeful and confident that the man now to receive its greeting will be the next president" (28, p. 16). Headlines on page one of the Beaumont Enterprise said much the same thing about people in the western states: "Prosperity Is Dependent On Farmers Says Roosevelt/ Nominee Tells Of Observations 'Out West' At Rally Of Home Folk" (29). On the same day the Enterprise carried that headline, the Austin Statesman ran a page one headline and story on projections that Roosevelt's western and southern trips garnered him 150 electoral votes, making him the likely winner in November (30, p. 1). The Dallas Morning News, perhaps judging from the prevailing mood among Texans in support of the Democratic ticket, stated on October 12, less than one month before the election, "Texas at least is safe for Roosevelt" (31, p. 2).
Continued Editorial Support

Even as Al Smith was shelving his differences of opinion and tactics with Roosevelt and was campaigning for his party's ticket, Calvin Coolidge was lending his voice to Hoover's campaign. In mid-October, Coolidge praised his successor's efforts to combat the Depression, while Roosevelt and Smith appeared on the same platform in New York City. The Corpus Christi Caller said in an editorial on October 15: "The fact that Smith and Roosevelt have met in friendly fashion and have apparently settled their differences is an augury for good to the democratic national ticket" (32, p. 4). The Dallas Morning News predicted that Coolidge undoubtedly would be able to help Hoover by persuading hesitant voters to support the Republican candidate, and an editorial said Coolidge's name was "still one to conjure with" (33, p. 2). In the Panhandle, the Amarillo News took a different view. An editorial said that Coolidge's support would harm Hoover's chances more than it would help them: "The silent man from Vermont, known for his caution and his conservatism, for once in his life talked too much Tuesday night--that is he talked too much for the good of the Republican Party" (34, p. 4).

There were more comments about the Coolidge-Hoover alliance, but the growing feeling as seen in editorials was that the Republicans were going to be defeated in November. On October 16, the Abilene Morning News remarked that Hoover in 1928 had been considered a "miracle man," but that that impression had faded: "He is no longer a miracle man, but
only a tired politician trying to get back in" (35, p. 8).
The *Dallas Morning News* called Hoover his own worst enemy because of "foolish promissory statements" (36, p. 2); and the *Beaumont Enterprise* predicted, "Most southern states are 'in the bag' for the Democratic Party" (37, p. 4). Yet the strongest statement in an editorial against Hoover came from Hearst's *San Antonio Light*:

-One of the reasons why the Hoover administration is going to be driven from power and utterly repudiated by the American people next November, is because it has deceived them from the day it entered power regarding the conduct of their business in general (38, p. 6).

Three days after that editorial appeared, on October 18, the *Light* sarcastically denounced the Republican campaign: "The Republicans having promised, and failed, now threaten. Frighten the voter into Republicanism! A brilliant commentary on the dismal failure of the whole economic thesis of the Republican Party" (39, p. 2).

As the campaign entered its final three weeks, the two candidates projected entirely different images. Roosevelt continued to appear as the flamboyant, confident adversary who was always smiling, telling humorous anecdotes to enthusiastic audiences. Hoover, on the other hand, appeared glum, unsmiling, and defeated. Historian William Leuchtenburg wrote that Roosevelt "reflected the joy of a campaigner winging to victory," while Hoover "projected defeat" and "approached problems with a relentless pessimism" (1, p. 13). Another historian, Frank Freidel, wrote that support for Roosevelt was widespread in the South because the Democratic
candidate "was the champion of the impoverished" (2, p. 37).

Headlines on page one of Texas newspapers during the last two weeks in October reflected enthusiasm for the impending Democratic victory. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram had such headlines as "Roosevelt Is Accorded Ovation in Indiana," "Prosperity Promised To Country By Roosevelt," and "Roosevelt Is Cheered In North Carolina." The Beaumont Enterprise ran such headlines as "Roosevelt Riddles G.O.P. Depression Alibi/ Foreign Origin Of I11s Denied/ Destructive Policies Of Federal Administration Blamed" and "Roosevelt Hope Of Country--Smith/ Republican 'Best Minds' Incompetent Is Assertion/ Buffalo Crowd Vociferous In Approval As 'Al' Boosts 'Frank' For President." The Austin Statesman published an extremely misleading headline--"Applauding Crowds Greet F.D.; Roosevelt Fantastic, Hoover Says"--over a story in which Hoover actually had called Roosevelt's unemployment relief plans "fantastic" and "unworkable" (40, p. 1).

Editorials, too, leaned toward Roosevelt during the last week in October. The Houston Chronicle on October 29 said the Democratic candidate had "not made the mistakes the G.O.P. high command hoped he would," continuing, "Hoover follows the counsel of desperation when he undertakes to alter the political tides which are running against him" (41, p. 4). The Abilene Morning News proclaimed that Roosevelt had entered "the home stretch with a lead that nothing barring an unexpected upset could overcome" (42, p. 4). In a similar vein, an editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise stated that "all signs and portents
presage democratic victory"(43, p. 4). On October 30, the Enterprise selected a new Republican topic to lambast--Hoover's cabinet: "Most of the members of the Hoover cabinet are men of mediocre ability"(44, p. 4). On the same day, the Corpus Christi Caller urged its readers to give money to the Democratic campaign: "The campaign money isn't needed in Texas. It is, however, very much needed in other states where democracy is putting up the fight of its life"(45, p. 4).

Hearst used his San Antonio Light in late October to point to "the on-coming Democratic victory"(46, p. 2).

Editorial Endorsements

Although the presidential election would not be conducted until November 8, two newspapers formally endorsed Roosevelt on October 30. Hearst's San Antonio Light, in a page one editorial headlined "Can Mr. Roosevelt Fulfill His Promises?", declared its support of the Democratic ticket; ironically, Hearst and the Light were soon to become bitter opponents of the Roosevelt administration. Another irony was that Hearst, at that time, supported Roosevelt because Roosevelt advocated using federal funds to create employment and to increase purchasing power, a tactic that Hearst roundly denounced three years later. On October 30, 1932, however, Hearst listed these reasons for endorsing Roosevelt:

What is needed to end the depression is a man who knows that prosperity must be built from below, and who will help the "crowd" as Mr. Hoover calls them, to build the prosperity from which all will benefit, a man who knows that until there is MILK there can be no CREAM, until there is purchasing power in the many there can be no profit for the few--a man who knows that prosperity must be built, by the wisdom and upon
the welfare of the plain people. Such a man is Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his policies need only be a simple and direct reversal of the doubtless well-intentioned but certainly misguided policies of Herbert Hoover. -- William Randolph Hearst (47, p. 1).

The other newspaper that formally endorsed the candidacy of Roosevelt on October 30 was the Austin Statesman, but its endorsement took the form of a denunciation of Hoover. After listing all the woes the newspaper said had been fashioned by the Republican Party—national debt, the high cost of living, rampant gambling, eleven million persons unemployed, ailing foreign commerce, and others—the Statesman urged its readers to return a "verdict" of guilty against the Republicans on November 8:

This is the most important election held in the republic since the close of the war between the states. Ever since that time with the exception of ten years republican administrations have ruled the republic. Republican administrations have ruled it since the passing of Wilson. There should be a change from top to bottom in the national government (48, p. 6).

Only one other newspaper formally endorsed Roosevelt on its editorial page, the Houston Chronicle, whose publisher was South Texas banker Jesse Jones, whom Roosevelt later named to head the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. It should be noted, however, that editorial endorsements for political candidates were not as widespread or as generally accepted during the 1930s as they were to become later; still, none of the newspapers consulted chose to support Hoover, and all of the newspapers published editorials supportive of Roosevelt. The Houston Chronicle, nevertheless, listed the following reasons for its endorsement of Roosevelt:
The Chronicle is supporting the Democratic national ticket, partly because of the character and ability and views of the nominee, but more because of the continuing policies and unchanging traditions of the Democratic Party to adhere more closely to the fundamental principles of American democracy than the Republican Party either proposes to do or in fact does (49, p. 14).

The endorsement said the "election of Roosevelt and Garner will revivify and advance" the traditions of American democracy and "will do just the opposite of what President Hoover charges."

Other daily newspapers published editorials immediately before the election urging their readers to vote, but not necessarily for the Democratic ticket. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reminded its readers on election day, "You are your own man. You can mark out any name you see fit; vote part of one ticket and part of another; mark the ballot in any way so long as you vote for only one person for each office" (50, p. 10). The same editorial, however, remarked, "Everybody agrees that Roosevelt and Garner will carry Texas. There has been no effort made on behalf of the Republican presidential ticket in this state." A similar editorial in the Star-Telegram on November 1 said this absence of effort on behalf of the Republicans was just the opposite of their tactics in Texas in 1928. The Amarillo News editorialized on November 6 that Hoover "has completely lost his head in his frenzied fight to perpetuate himself in office" (51, p. 6). Two days later, the Amarillo newspaper reprinted an editorial from the Camden, New Jersey, Courier-Post, traditionally a Republican newspaper, calling for the defeat of Hoover. No
editorial comment, other than an editor's note identifying the source of the New Jersey editorial, appeared in the Amarillo News. Several newspapers declined to make formal endorsements. The Abilene Morning News said in an editorial on November 5 that Hoover had resorted to preaching a "gospel of fear, injected into the campaign in a desperate effort to whip wandering Republicans into line" (52, p. 4). On election day, the banner headline on page one of the Morning News was "Odds Are 5 To 1 On Roosevelt." Another editorial that apparently was slanted against Hoover appeared in the November 6 edition of the Corpus Christi Caller. This one said that Hoover's "defeatist line" was "such an outworn and dangerous line of attack that it proves how desperate is his situation. It is a confession that defeat is staring the republicans in the face" (53, p. 4). The Beaumont Enterprise called Roosevelt's certain victory the highlight of a "year of political miracles," brought about by a diverse coalition of forces (54, p. 4). The newspaper said most of the credit for the creation of the Roosevelt coalition should not go to Roosevelt, but to the chairman of the Democratic Party, James A. Farley. The Enterprise declined to endorse formally either Roosevelt or Hoover, but its editorials during the campaign had been decidedly anti-Hoover.

One of the most conservative daily newspapers in the state, the Dallas Morning News, declined to endorse either candidate. The Dallas newspaper, which had expressed skepticism early in the campaign about Roosevelt and, later, about Hoover,
said in an editorial on November 3, "Unless the entirely unexpected happens, the newspapers will announce a Democratic victory" (55, p. 2). Two days later, the newspaper editorialized that Roosevelt "seems destined to be the next President of the United States." That editorial stated, "It is still difficult to estimate ballot returns which will permit Herbert Hoover to squeeze through to re-election" (56, p. 2).

A banner headline on page one of the November 6 edition said, "Roosevelt To Get 365 Electoral Votes, Hoover 126, 40 In Doubt, Experts Say."

There was no wavering on the part of the Houston Chronicle, which formally endorsed Roosevelt on November 2, and three more times before the November 8 election the Chronicle urged its readers to vote for the Democratic ticket. On November 3, an editorial said, "The masses of the population are getting ready to swat somebody. The Democrats feel confident that they know just who that 'somebody' is—the head of the present administration" (57, p. 14). On November 4, the Chronicle again endorsed Roosevelt: "Texas did much to destroy the national Democratic Party four years ago. There may or may not have been strong reasons for that, but no such reason exists today, and any contribution this year to a second defeat of the party would be harmful in the extreme" (58, p. 14). A third editorial, this one on November 7, urged Texans to support Garner: "He has more experience in government than any man now in the public eye" (59, p. 4). That editorial said the country needed "a strong and determined
leader toward more liberal things in America."

Banner headlines on page one of Texas newspapers told the story of Roosevelt's dramatic defeat of Hoover. "Roosevelt Victory Unprecedented," was the headline in the November 9 edition of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Roosevelt received nearly twenty-three million votes to less than sixteen million for Hoover; the Democrat held a 472-59 advantage in the Electoral College, the largest margin ever. Roosevelt won every state south and west of Pennsylvania, more counties than any other President, and 282 counties that had never gone Democratic. Hoover held only six of the forty states he had won in 1928. The only Republican defeat worse than this had occurred in 1912, when the party was split by the third party bid of Theodore Roosevelt (1, p. 17).

An editorial in the Abilene Morning News said the election of Roosevelt "should mean an improvement in conditions generally. It will create a better feeling throughout the country, a feeling of hope for a new and better deal for all" (60, p. 6). The Fort Worth Star-Telegram called for an immediate beginning by the new administration to combat the problems of the Depression: "The nation has set before them a great task, a difficult but necessary task, but it has given them the tools to do it with, and added a confident slap on the back for encouragement" (61, p. 12). Newspapers across the state appeared ready to begin the new deal they had helped to elect.

Summary and Conclusions

Although only three of the newspapers consulted chose to
endorse formally the candidacy of Roosevelt, all of the
ewspapers published editorials that were favorable to the
Democratic campaign. No newspaper printed editorials that
couraged the re-election of Hoover. Many reasons were
cited in the editorials for the support that was given
Roosevelt. Several newspapers detected a confident manner
in the way Roosevelt conducted his campaign, while Hoover
appeared to project defeat. Other newspapers believed that
Roosevelt's desire to use federal funds to combat unemploy-
ment was deserving of support; Hoover's tendency to conduct
lengthy conferences that seemed to delay action only added
to his indecisive portrayal in editorials across the state.
Several newspapers, including most of the small rural pub-
lications, repeatedly urged their readers to donate money to
the Democratic national campaign; the reasons cited in editorials
for this plea of support were numerous, but a common reason
seemed to be that wealthy businessmen were giving large sums
of money to the Republican national campaign. Roosevelt's
desire to aid farmers was another campaign pledge that seemed
to inspire favorable newspaper editorials in Texas. In sum,
there were numerous reasons listed in editorials for the support
of Roosevelt's campaign; but there were no reasons cited in
editorials for the re-election of Hoover.


27. Corpus Christi Caller, October 20, 1932.
30. Austin Statesman, October 9, 1932.
32. Corpus Christi Caller, October 15, 1932.
38. San Antonio Light, October 15, 1932.
39. San Antonio Light, October 18, 1932.
40. Austin Statesman, October 23, 1932.
41. Houston Chronicle, October 29, 1932.
42. Abilene Morning News, October 28, 1932.
44. Beaumont Enterprise, October 30, 1932.
45. Corpus Christi Caller, October 30, 1932.
46. San Antonio Light, October 24, 1932.
47. San Antonio Light, October 30, 1932.
49. Houston Chronicle, November 2, 1932.
50. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, November 8, 1932.
52. Abilene Morning News, November 5, 1932.
53. Corpus Christi Caller, November 6, 1932.
57. Houston Chronicle, November 3, 1932.
61. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, November 10, 1932.
CHAPTER III

THE FIRST HUNDRED DAYS

The general election of November 8, 1932, resulted in a shift of power in Washington from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party. Not only was Franklin Roosevelt swept into the White House with 472 electoral votes to only 59 for Herbert Hoover, but the Democratic Party seized control of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Democrats after the election could claim a 311-116 majority in the House and a 60-35 majority in the Senate. This was the largest number of congressional seats the Democratic Party had ever won, and the largest number for one party since 1910.

So overwhelming was the Democratic majority that several of the newly elected Democratic representatives had to sit on the Republican side of the House; 131 of the 311 Democrats in the House were freshmen representatives elected from traditionally Republican districts (1, pp. 5-6). Historian William Leuchtenburg wrote that this overwhelming triumph for the Democratic Party "represented no mandate for radicalism" on the part of the new administration, however. Communists, Leuchtenburg wrote, polled only 120,000 votes nationally in 1932; Socialists received less support than they realized in either 1912 or 1920; and such progressives as Senator Smith
Brookhart of Iowa and Governor Philip LaFollette of Wisconsin had been defeated (2, p. 27).

Although several Texas daily newspapers and other newspapers throughout the country called on Hoover to resign his office shortly after the November election to allow Roosevelt to begin his programs immediately, there was to be no official transfer of power until the constitutionally assigned inauguration date, March 4 the following year. Instead of stepping aside, Hoover used his time by attempting to trap Roosevelt into repudiating the Democratic program for recovery and endorsing Hoover's own program. Leuchtenburg wrote of Hoover's efforts: "In fact, Hoover asked nothing less than that the man who had defeated him at the polls repudiate his own program and accept Hoover's view of the depression" (2, pp. 31-32). Roosevelt virtually ignored Hoover's entreaties and set about to conduct conferences with Congressional leaders.

The four months between the November election and the March inauguration turned out to be the most harrowing months of the Depression. The nation's economic and financial institutions continued to flounder, banks continued to collapse, and millions of unemployed people continued a hopeless search for jobs. Indeed, there were those who felt that the "long era of economic growth in the western world had come to an end" (2, p. 29). Others believed the nation's bankers and businessmen had manipulated the economy to create a system in which the wealthy thrived and the poor languished; still others felt the only solution was to scrap the existing system
of government and to install a dictatorship. There was much speculation and contemplation, but the Depression continued to extract its toll.

At the same time, Roosevelt held meetings with leaders in Congress, many of whom were taken aback by the President-elect's almost whimsical response to the problems posed by the Depression. Even some of Roosevelt's most ardent and enthusiastic admirers worried about his "apparent lack of policy and blithe gaiety in the face of the worst depression the nation had ever experienced" (1, p. 2). Frank Freidel wrote that Roosevelt, after several meetings with Southern members of Congress, apparently had decided to concede much power to them" (3, p. 39) ; the President-elect even appeared to agree with a rather conservative Southern program of "limited farm relief, legalization of beer with mild alcoholic content, some public works spending, and a balanced budget" (3). As many Democratic leaders believed Hoover had done too much in the way of using federal funds to solve the Depression and its ills, there was much popular demand prior to Roosevelt's inauguration for governmental economy (2, p. 36).

Prior to the inauguration, daily newspapers in Texas appeared anxious about what would come under a Roosevelt administration; however, most newspapers indicated they were willing to support just about any action the new President would take. On March 1, the Dallas Morning News expressed the hope that "whatever legislation is needed will be passed within sixty days and that usual floodgates of oratory will
be held in restraint in view of the nation-wide demand for action" (4, p. 2). A headline on page one of the Morning News the following day said, "Washington Waits Eagerly To Greet Roosevelt Advent." The Austin Statesman said in an editorial that the "one certain job is that the job has got to be done, and it has got to be done right. If Congress can't do it--and do it speedily--it can do nothing less than give the president a free hand at it" (5, p. 4). On Inauguration day the Fort Worth Star-Telegram had a banner headline on page one that said, "Roosevelt May Ask War Time Power" (6, p. 1).

Newspapers across the state anxiously waited for the inauguration and the official transfer of power from Hoover to Roosevelt.

Roosevelt began his inaugural address by promising to speak "the whole truth, frankly and boldly." From that point, he set out precisely what he believed was wrong with the nation's financial system:

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated (7, pp. 11-12).

The newly inaugurated President wrote several years later that he primarily wanted to use his first address to alleviate the widespread fear of the present and the future. "For many months the people had looked to Government to help, but
Government had looked away. I promised a program of action," Roosevelt wrote in retrospect in 1937 (7, p. 16). He said his first goal was to put people back to work; his second goal was to formulate and set into motion various pieces of reform legislation to correct what he felt were inherent malfunctions in the nation's economic system.

The Banking Act

The new President started immediately. In an emergency proclamation the day after he was inaugurated, he summoned Congress into an emergency session to begin at noon on March 9, 1933. Realizing that all banking transactions throughout the nation had ceased, Roosevelt instructed Secretary of the Treasury William Woodin on the night of March 4 to draft an emergency bill dealing with the banking crisis; he told Woodin to have the legislation drawn up in five days. In order to give his Treasury Secretary time to prepare the bill, Roosevelt issued a second emergency edict on March 5, halting all transactions in gold and proclaiming a national banking holiday (2, p. 42). According to the provisions of this proclamation, all banks were to remain closed until March 9, the day the emergency session of Congress was to begin.

Newspapers throughout Texas praised Roosevelt for the overall tone of his inaugural address and for his first two emergency proclamations. The Beaumont Enterprise said in an editorial that Roosevelt's confidence was reassuring: "May it last! May the forces he has already set in motion bring about that speedy restoration of public confidence so necessary to the national well-being." (8, p. 4) The Dallas Morning
News, observing that "bank holidays have no terror in these dark days," predicted that the "whole people will rally around the President in his demand for the resumption of normal conditions" (9, p. 10). Banner headlines on page one of several other Texas daily newspapers were: "Roosevelt Takes Oath And Forthwith Commences Action To Meet Emergency," "Lavish Praise For Roosevelt From Leaders/ Courage And Directness Win Plaudits Even From Republicans," "Roosevelt Speeds Efforts To Clear Up Banking Situation," and "Roosevelt Accepts Banking Challenge/ President Loses No Time Assuming Powers Of Office."

The banking crisis had reached its depths by Inauguration Day. In February 1933, all banks in Detroit collapsed, setting off a chain reaction in other parts of the country. On February 14, Governor William Comstock declared an eight-day banking holiday, tying up the funds of 900,000 depositors and freezing 1.5 billion dollars in deposits. On February 24, following a run on Baltimore banks by depositors, Governor Ritchie of Maryland declared a three-day holiday. William Leuchtenburg wrote that many people by the end of February 1933 seemed more willing to trust their life savings to shoe boxes than to the leading banks in the country (2, pp. 38-39). There was concern on the part of Roosevelt and his advisers that the entire national monetary structure would collapse before March 4 (2, p. 39).

On March 9, Congress convened the emergency session in an atmosphere not unlike that during the crises immediately prior to the entrance of the United States into World War I.
Shortly before one o'clock, Roosevelt's banking message was read, even as some freshmen congressmen were hurrying to find their seats. There was only one copy of the bill Roosevelt had instructed Secretary Woodin to draft, and this copy was given to the Speaker of the House. Final corrections, penciled onto the only copy, were not completed until about thirty minutes before the session convened. Without ever seeing the bill or its provisions, and having only heard the provisions read aloud, House members enthusiastically passed the bill amidst shouts of excitement. Debate had lasted only thirty-eight minutes. Later that day, the Senate, overriding objections from a small group of conservatives and progressives, passed the bill without amendment, 73-7.

Roosevelt signed the measure into law that evening (2, pp. 43-44).

The bill actually was more conservative than most realized at the time. It gave federal assistance to private banks so that they could reopen, validated the President's banking holiday proclamation of March 5 (which had rested on the authority of the 1917 Trading With the Enemies Act), gave Roosevelt complete control over gold movements and price fluctuations, assigned penalties for the hoarding of gold, set out provisions for solvent banks to reopen, and called for the reorganization of all insolvent banks. Additionally, the act extended the banking holiday until bank inspectors could ascertain which banks were to reopen and which would be reorganized (2, p. 43).

Reaction in Texas to the passage of the first piece of
New Deal legislation was immediate and favorable. In an editorial on March 10, the Abilene Morning News predicted that the banking act "will operate to restore public confidence in these indispensable institutions . . . . Already there are signs of returning confidence. The recovery may be so sudden as to amaze even the optimistic ones" (10, p. 4). On the same day the Houston Chronicle published an editorial strongly agreeing with the banking bill and praised Roosevelt "for fearlessly taking the lead." The Houston newspaper said the quick passage by Congress was "evidence of the firm grip President Roosevelt has upon his own party" (11, p. 4). The Beaumont Enterprise agreed with the Chronicle: "The financial skies are brighter. The banking system itself has passed through the crisis much better than it was expected to, and a great calamity has been avoided" (12, p. 4). Nowhere among Texas newspapers was there criticism of the initial piece of New Deal legislation.

The Dallas Morning News, the only major newspaper in Texas to express doubts about Roosevelt's leadership ability by 1933, supported the banking act. "The President's message to Congress, and the prompt reaction of the two Houses to his recommendations, will do much to ease the situation of the banks," the newspaper explained in an editorial (9, p. 2). The same publication reported that the American people supported Roosevelt in his assumption of broad powers, and that Congress should not stand in his way. On March 11, the Morning News again supported the banking measure but said extensive inves-
tigations should be undertaken to determine which banks were in safe condition (13, p. 2).

Other Texas newspapers repeated the observations of the Dallas Morning News. The Austin Statesman noted in an editorial that "recovery should be much smoother" because of the banking legislation (14, p. 4); on March 16, the Statesman ran two editorials that agreed with the measure. Similarly, the San Antonio Light, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, the Amarillo News, and the Corpus Christi Caller published editorials during the middle of March in agreement with the banking legislation. "President Roosevelt's gallant leadership and his will to win are creating the impression that the banking crisis marks the low point in the prolonged depression," exclaimed an editorial in the Light (15, p. 2). The Star-Telegram, applauding the penalties against hoarding of gold, said the banking suspension "may be what the country needed" (16, p. 4); another editorial in the Fort Worth newspaper pointed to an increase in public confidence in banks because of the banking act. In the Texas Panhandle, the Amarillo News told its readers that the country was emerging from the banking crisis "in grand shape," and that people "are looking to the future--not complaining of the past" (17, p. 8). Corpus Christi Caller readers on March 16 could review an editorial contending that the wartime powers assumed by Roosevelt through the banking act were "entirely justified .... Today's emergency is as critical as any war could be" (18, p. 4).

On March 12, Roosevelt began a practice he was to continue
throughout his service in Washington, when he went on nation-
wide radio that night to explain the banking crisis and the
steps the administration and Congress had taken to end it.
In this first Fireside Chat, the President explained how
banks conducted business, why the crisis arose, and what
was being done. Writing four years later about his first
Fireside Chat, Roosevelt said:

By this time there had been such restoration of
confidence that as soon as the banks were reopened a
large volume of currency was re-deposited . . . . The
return flow of money came principally from hoarded
funds rather than from active circulation as was evi-
denced by the fact that most of the paper currency
turned in after March was in the larger denominations
of fifty dollars and over, which are not frequently
used in day-to-day transactions (7, p. 65).

Roosevelt assured depositors that their money would be safe
in the banks, and the depositors believed him. Because the
new President had said the banks were safe, they obviously
were, most depositors believed (2, p. 44).

The Agricultural Adjustment Act

On March 16, Roosevelt shifted his attention from the
banking crisis to the farm problem. In a special message to
Congress, the President asked for specific legislation to
increase the purchasing power of the nation's farmers and to
provide loans to farmers who were facing foreclosures (7, p. 74).
The message acknowledged that a "new and untrod path" was
needed, and Roosevelt referred to these paths as "new means
to rescue agriculture."

Roosevelt saw the agricultural crisis as "not merely a
part of the depression," because farmers had been facing eco-
nomic problems since the early 1920s. With the added problems
imposed by the financial collapse of 1929, farmers faced a precarious situation. Roosevelt said there were five reasons that farmers were so maligned by 1933. The first was that total farm income had fallen; the cash net farm income per capita had dropped from $162 a year in 1929 to just $48 a year in 1933; and whereas agriculture in 1925 made up 11.5 per cent of all national income, it accounted for only 5.8 per cent in 1933. The second reason was that the prices of farm commodities had fallen considerably; there was an average decline of 55 per cent in farm prices from 1929 to 1933; cotton was down 67 per cent, grain was down 63 per cent, and beef cattle were down 60 per cent. That prices for farm equipment and other necessities had not dropped as drastically as the prices of farm commodities was the third reason Roosevelt cited; these items fell only an average of 30 per cent from 1929 to 1933. The fourth reason for the farmer's plight was that fixed charges--taxes, interest, mortgage payments--remained at a high level. The fifth reason was a glutted market due to enormous surpluses of agricultural products. Roosevelt wrote that these problems were "forcing millions of industrial workers out of employment" because thirty-one million people, the nation's farmers and their families, were unable to purchase many industrial products (7, pp. 74-76).

To combat the agricultural dilemma, Roosevelt asked Congress for broad emergency powers to subsidize farm staples, to grant price supports to farmers, to cause an inflationary
condition to exist, and to bring to a halt the high rate of farm mortgage foreclosures (2, pp. 51-52). It was an omnibus farm bill, and it sparked considerable debate in Washington. Although the House quickly passed the bill, the Senate debated the measure through most of March and April. Not until May 12, the day before a nationwide strike of the Farmers Holiday Association was to begin, was the Agricultural Adjustment Act signed into law (2, pp. 49-51). Throughout March and April, Texas daily newspapers debated the merits of the farm bill on their editorial pages.

All but two of the major newspapers voiced some support for the farm bill. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, calling the AAA a reasonable program, said in an editorial on March 23 that Congress should pass the bill: "Some such program of agricultural relief was prominent in the presidential campaign, and it will do a great deal of good" (19, p. 10). The Houston Chronicle believed the plan was sensible and "none too drastic for the needs of the times" (20, p. 18). The San Antonio Light wholeheartedly supported the measure: "President Roosevelt again keeps faith with the people by submitting to the Congress for immediate consideration an emergency measure for the relief of the American farmer" (21, p. 2). The AAA, said an editorial in the Light on March 29, could result in increased employment and "greater business stability" (22, p. 2).

These three newspapers responded to the farm bill and other New Deal measures in a predictable manner. Urban newspapers tended to be more critical of urban-oriented measures
and rural newspapers tended to be more critical of rural-oriented measures. A third urban newspaper, however, did not react to the farm bill in this way. The Dallas Morning News instead launched the most vehement attack of any Texas newspaper toward any New Deal program.

Even before Roosevelt had submitted his farm message to Congress on March 16, the Dallas Morning News called on the federal government to refrain from interfering with agriculture. In an editorial on March 12, entitled "Let The Farmer Alone," the newspaper declared that agriculture "will right itself with any improvement in general business . . . No pet farm relief schemes can hope to accomplish what general restoration of confidence will" (23, p. 2). The editorial stated that any congressional legislation could not take effect until too late to do Texas cotton farmers any good. Yet the specific complaint voiced by the Morning News dealt not with a debate over legislation, but with the Roosevelt plan to stimulate farm prices by reducing crop acreage, and thus crop harvests, by paying the farmer not to farm certain areas of his land: "It would be a pity if further bungling efforts at bolstering agricultural prices artificially . . . were permitted to impede the start which the President has made toward national rehabilitation," the newspaper explained in an editorial on March 16 (24, p. 10).

The most scathing attacks on the farm bill by the Dallas newspaper were to come later in March, but the newspaper did not set out to attack Roosevelt personally for the farm bill.
Rather, the newspaper sought to criticize Roosevelt's Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace. Repeatedly the Morning News referred to the farm bill as Wallace's farm program. On March 19, an editorial linked Hoover's downfall to a similar farm program: "Farm relief killed Herbert Hoover politically. It is not likely to do Franklin Roosevelt much good" (25, p. 8). One day later, the newspaper labelled the measure "a hodge-podge of previously proposed schemes and panaceas under one name or another" (26, p. 2). On March 25, an editorial in the Morning News stated that "domestic measures cannot restore those foreign customers, the lack of whom is the chief lack of American farming. It is for that reason that the Wallace plan meets with so little enthusiasm on the part of those who have submitted it to careful analysis" (27, p. 2).

Although the Dallas Morning News published editorials against the farm plan nearly every day during the debate in Congress, one editorial that can be considered the newspaper's ultimate complaint appeared on March 31. The Wallace farm plan, the editorial said, was "renovizing the Hoover Farm Board by the simple process of throwing it in the ash can and then fishing it out again to put a new name on it" (28, p. 4). Throughout the debate over the farm bill, the Morning News never predicted that the bill would be defeated; rather, the newspaper remarked several times that Roosevelt's widespread support in Congress would ensure passage of the bill.
The only other major Texas daily newspaper to oppose the farm bill was the Abilene Morning News, a rural newspaper; however, this newspaper was not as vocal in its opposition as the larger Dallas Morning News. Again, one of the main complaints was the use of acreage reduction to stimulate a rise in prices, a plan that the Abilene newspaper called an "old silly suggestion":

The only thing that is going to help the farmer is a good market for his products. The world could use every lock of cotton that will be produced this year, and all the carryover, if it had the money with which to buy. The world needs cotton. Even in this country there are millions of poorly-clad people. Restoring their buying power by giving them jobs, thereby making them actual and not merely potential buyers of cotton goods, will move more cotton from the fields and the warehouses and through the mills than all the half-baked crop-control laws that can be enacted (29, p. 6).

On May 3, the Abilene Morning News called for Congress to adjourn before the farm relief bill had passed. The editorial said, "When Congress and legislatures are in session nearly everybody is uneasy. When they quit and go home, everybody breathes a sigh of relief" (30, p. 4).

Other rural and urban newspapers throughout the state supported the farm relief bill and the creation of the AAA. The Beaumont Enterprise, published in oil-rich East Texas, explained that the nation's farmers must consent to a reduction in crop acreage "in order that the overproduction ... may be ended, future production controlled and prices stabilized at a higher level" (31, p. 4). Referring to conservatives who opposed the farm proposals, the Enterprise said
that Roosevelt had enough support across the nation and in Congress to put his plan into effect "regardless of the objections of the ultra-conservative republicans" (32, p. 4). The Austin Statesman referred to the bill as the "most far reaching economic program attempted in America" (33, p. 4); the Corpus Christi Caller said it was one of the new paths that the administration boldly was trying (34, p. 4); the Amarillo News observed that the country had just passed "the final hour before the dawn of a new day" (35, p. 4); and the San Antonio Light remarked that Roosevelt "has raised up a leadership that is commanding the whole-hearted and overwhelming support of the new Congress" (36, p. 6).

Across the state, newspapers were pointing out in editorials that Roosevelt's first weeks on the job and his first official acts had done much to restore confidence and revive hope for recovery. Historian Frank Freidel wrote that this confidence was not misplaced, and that the farm program did result in some degree of recovery for farmers. Specifically, the cotton program, Freidel wrote, helped return farmers' incomes to the 1929 levels; the price of cotton went from five cents a pound to the twelve-cent level attained in 1929; by 1936, cotton was selling for about fifteen cents a pound (3, pp. 64-65).

Generally, the farm program of 1933 benefitted the larger growers, even though Roosevelt sympathized emphatically with the small farmers and sharecroppers (3, p. 64). It was one of Roosevelt's oldest dreams to help sharecroppers
obtain small farms of their own. William Leuchtenburg wrote that during Roosevelt's first term, gross farm income rose 50 per cent, crop prices climbed, rural debts were reduced drastically, and government aid to farmers benefitted merchants who sold farm equipment and necessities; however, much of the benefit to farmers can be traced to the prolonged drought of 1933-1934. "In sum," Leuchtenburg wrote, "it appears that the AAA was a qualified success" (2, pp. 77-78).

With the passage of the Roosevelt farm program, and with the initial opposition to that program by the Dallas Morning News and the Abilene Morning News, the initiative had been taken in Texas for increasing editorial criticism. Still, most newspapers were to remain sympathetic to most of the subsequent New Deal measures.

The National Industrial Recovery Act

In a message to Congress on May 17, during the latter part of the first hundred days, Roosevelt shifted emphasis from agriculture and called on Congress to set up "machinery necessary for a great cooperative movement throughout all industry in order to obtain wide re-employment, to shorten the working week, to pay a decent wage for the shorter week and to prevent unfair competition and disastrous overproduction" (7, p. 202). This message led to the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act, a measure that created the National Recovery Administration, or NRA. Roosevelt said, "There was not a major industry in the United States in April of 1933 that was not suffering" from a variety of ailments:
overproduction, underconsumption, "destructive competition, or unfair practices or lack of any comprehensive planning" (7, p. 204). In 1929, national income was eighty billion dollars; by 1932, that figure had fallen to thirty-eight billion dollars. Employment across the nation had fallen 40 per cent in three years, and payrolls were down 60 per cent. Only through a business-government partnership, Roosevelt believed, could these problems be solved.

Throughout April 1933, Roosevelt had directed several different groups of legislators, presidential advisers, and businessmen in drafting a recovery bill. Not satisfied with their work, the President on May 10 appointed a drafting committee and told them "to lock themselves in a room and not come out until they had a bill" (2, p. 57). One week later, Roosevelt asked Congress to approve his National Industrial Recovery Act, (NIRA), which exempted businesses from antitrust laws, instructed them to draw up industry code agreements, gave government planners the authority to license businesses, provided labor with the right to bargain collectively for maximum hours and minimum wages, and set aside more than three billion dollars for public works projects. Another provision resulted in the creation of the Public Works Administration (2, pp. 57-58).

In Texas, the editorial reaction of daily newspapers to the NIRA followed a familiar pattern. Urban newspapers, whose readers would be affected in greater degree by NIRA, reacted more critically to the bill; however, all the major
newspapers supported the bill. Rural newspapers did not publish as many editorials on the proposal as did the larger, urban-oriented publications. Further, the reaction to the bill was not as widespread among Texas newspapers as was the reaction to the farm relief bill, perhaps because Texas primarily is an agrarian state.

One of the first newspapers to comment editorially on the industrial recovery bill was the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, the state's largest newspaper in circulation in 1933. On April 20, the newspaper endorsed a plan to protect women and children in industry and to guarantee minimum wages and maximum hours; but it expressed doubts about the industrial recovery plan introduced by Roosevelt. "Enactment of the national recovery bill . . . would round out a grant of powers to the executive of far greater scope than ever before vested in a peace-time President," the editorial in the Star-Telegram said, pointing out that the bill would give Roosevelt almost unrestricted power (37, p. 10). By June 14, two days before Congress was to adjourn and Roosevelt was to sign the NIRA into law, the Fort Worth newspaper warned that the bill was "an experiment in business control . . . which defies all experience and political precedent"; but, stating that the President had the support of a majority of Americans for the bill, the newspaper ended the editorial by saying the nation "welcomes the experiment . . . . It is a break from precedent, a gigantic undertaking, but a proof of American virility and courage" (38, p. 10).
The Dallas Morning News, still criticizing the farm relief bill, took a different position on the NIRA. In an editorial on May 20, three days after the measure was introduced in Congress, the Dallas newspaper listed the goals of the bill--to stabilize production, to provide employment opportunities, and to safeguard against monopoly--and then supported the measure:

To most of American capital and labor, the experiment outlined will be welcome. Rugged individualism has failed us and communism is an abhorrent alternative. There can be little question that both sides to the employment contract are willing now to try out a proposal which seems to offer the traditional hope for the mass of the American people of life and the pursuit of happiness, even though its liberty may be more sharply curtailed in the process than the signers of the Declaration of Independence or the farmers of the Constitution foresaw (39, p. 2).

Almost as an afterthought, the Morning News on May 25 published an editorial saying that the NIRA, while placing the affairs of business under governmental control, would add to the federal bureaucracy and, ultimately, "to a heavy increase in taxation" (40, p. 6). The editorial, still not opposing the bill, said, "No one is wise enough to foretell the outcome of this bill." On May 28, the Morning News endorsed Roosevelt's proposal to eliminate, albeit temporarily, the federal antitrust laws. "The antitrust laws creak in their ancient armor," the editorial stated (41, p. 10).

Another urban newspaper that repeated the Morning News' opinion about the elimination of antitrust laws was the San Antonio Light, but this newspaper did not publish as many editorials on the NIRA as did other urban newspapers. The
Light indicated in an editorial that the drafting of a bill to aid industry was good news. The editorial continued: "The emergence of the country from the economic depression should not be retarded by man-made obstacles, such as the inflexible antitrust laws" (I42, p. 6). Another urban newspaper, the Houston Chronicle, did not publish many editorials on the NIRA. As the bill was being formulated by the Roosevelt administration, the Chronicle referred to it as the "most far-reaching and involved single piece of legislation" in recent memory; the editorial expressed no criticism of the broad powers that would be given to Roosevelt (I43, p. 4). The Chronicle, which earlier had endorsed such individual proposals as maximum hours and minimum wages, remarked in an editorial on June 12, four days before the special session of Congress was to adjourn, "The evils of the last four years, and the vast dangers they have conjured up, already are passing" (I44, p. 4).

The state's rural newspapers did not react as critically to portions of the NIRA as did their urban counterparts. Although page one news coverage of the bill continued in proportion with other New Deal measures during the hundred days, the editorial commentary of the NIRA in rural newspapers dropped off considerably. In the Beaumont Enterprise, headlines on page one contained such characterizations as "momentous proposal" and "job-giving program" in reference to the industrial recovery bill. An editorial on May 21 in the Enterprise, commenting on the proposed control of the
oil industry by the administration through the powers of the bill, said, "Russia itself could hardly go any farther in taking charge of private business"; nevertheless, the editorial further said that the oil industry was guilty of overproduction and, thus, deserved to be controlled:

Texas must bear a large part of the blame for the wasteful and uneconomic overproduction of oil, and one Texas oil field, the east Texas field, is more responsible than any other field in the country for the chaos in the oil industry which has led producers themselves to the federal government to establish a dictatorship over oil . . . . This is federal regulation with a vengeance. But the oil industry has brought upon itself the threat of a federal oil and gas dictatorship (45, p. 4).

On June 11, the Beaumont newspaper said that the objectives of the NIRA "are worthy of public support," and that all citizens should give "the same loyal support to the government's efforts to revive business that would be given if the nation's army and navy were defending it from a foreign foe" (46, p. 4).

Other rural newspapers supported the NIRA. The Corpus Christi Caller declared in an editorial on May 31 that the government should "be ready to persuade or force industry to do things. Its control must be positive rather than negative" (47, p. 4). The Abilene Morning News said of the bill: "This country is getting ready to abandon, for a time at least, the old fetish that competition is the life of trade. The country's antitrust laws, long in need of overhauling, are in for doctoring" (48, p. 8). The Amarillo News praised Roosevelt for his leadership in handling the NIRA:
"It now seems assured that President Roosevelt will have his own way entirely with the special session of Congress, right up to the last whack of the gavel. Mr. Roosevelt thus has passed through the first test of his leadership" (49, p. 4).

When Roosevelt signed the NIRA on June 16, he remarked that the bill probably would be "the most important and far-reaching legislation ever enacted by the American Congress." The bill, he said, was a supreme effort to reverse the trends that led the country into the Depression, and to put millions of people back to work (7, p. 251). What he could not foresee, and what he did not predict, was that the NIRA would become almost unenforceable due to provisions designed to regulate even the smallest of businesses. Indeed, in May 1935, the United States Supreme Court would invalidate a large portion of the act.

William Leuchtenburg, though, said the industrial recovery bill has been criticized too severely by journalists and historians. He believes that the machinery of the NRA led to jobs for two million people, stopped the deflationary spiral plaguing the country, improved business ethics and civilized competition, set a national pattern for wages and hours control, and abolished child labor and other abuses of labor. The main complaint addressed against the NRA was that of small businessmen angered because they were not permitted to continue the exploitation of labor (2, p. 69). Still, there were problems, as the agency sought to license and provide code authorities for such diverse and obscure businesses as the dog food industry, the curled hair manu-
facturing industry, the horse hair dressing industry, and the shoulder pad manufacturing industry (2, pp. 68-69).

The Civilian Conservation Corps

As early as March 14, Roosevelt had asked four of his cabinet members to explore the feasibility of setting up a Civilian Conservation Corps. It was Roosevelt's belief that "city men" would benefit from furloughs in the country, and that such conservation jobs would benefit the country (2, pp. 52-53). On March 21, Roosevelt sent his unemployment relief message to Congress; the message included requests for a Civilian Conservation Corps, (CCC), and for increased federal aid to the states. Additionally, the message called for allotments of federal funds for public works projects. It took just eight days for Congress to approve the CCC, and in three weeks nearly one billion dollars in federal money was approved and earmarked for state relief efforts.

The Dallas Morning News, in an editorial on March 26, supported the CCC and its goal of putting 250,000 young men to work at an army-scale wage of thirty dollars a month. The Morning News remarked that the labor army idea was "not a labor union question. It is one of feeding men who need food" (50, p. 10). Several weeks later, when the machinery of the CCC had been created, the newspaper observed in an editorial: "As an employment measure it will perhaps prove disappointing to some. But in the general scheme of shock assault upon the situation it has already found its place" (51, p. 4). Two other urban newspapers, the San Antonio Light
and the Houston Chronicle, published editorials in support of the conservation program, while the Fort Worth Star-Telegram did not address the CCC directly. The Light believed Roosevelt showed "the courage and the wisdom to attack the problem of joblessness" (52, p. 8), and the Chronicle said the CCC would "relieve the pressured exerted on the municipalities by the large number of unemployed" (53, p. 34).

Three of the smaller, rural newspapers published editorials in support of the CCC, but the other newspapers did not directly support or oppose the plan. The Austin Statesman applauded the measure, saying it was "a tremendous opportunity . . . ready to be tapped" (54, p. 4); the same editorial urged Congress to move quickly in putting idle lands in the national parks and forests to beneficial use. The Abilene Morning News, saying in an editorial that "a tremendous opportunity lies ready to be seized," appeared to have borrowed the phrasing and the sentiments of the Austin Statesman (55, p. 4). The third rural newspaper directly to endorse the CCC was the Corpus Christi Caller. In an editorial on May 5, the newspaper stated that the measure touched on "a very important field where national planning is necessary. It is to be hoped that government will go forward with the work in a far-reaching manner" (56, p. 4). No editorials concerning the CCC were found in the Beaumont Enterprise and the Amarillo News.
The General Issue of Relief

Newspapers across the state had some general observations concerning Roosevelt's policies for relief. The San Antonio Light, in an editorial on March 28, said Roosevelt's requests for additional funds for relief showed "the humane theme which dominates his entire reconstruction program" (57, p. 2). The Light editorial stated further that Roosevelt, "in meeting the problem of wasted manpower, inherits the results of neglect, belated action, and timidity on the part of his predecessor."

The Amarillo News explained to its readers why the new President was assuming such wide powers to direct the nation's relief efforts. The New Deal, it said, "is not a dictatorship. What happens is that Congress is giving Roosevelt and his cabinet members certain wide powers over certain fields in a national emergency--banking, federal economy and reorganization, agriculture and unemployment relief" (58, p. 3). The News said Roosevelt and Congress were acting in the best interests of the nation in combatting the Depression. A similar editorial appeared in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram:

President Roosevelt . . . is engaged in a race against time in his efforts to rescue the Nation from the stupor of depression. He is the doctor and business is the patient. The cure consists of injections of powerful stimulants. It is not exactly a case of kill or cure, but it will be the better for the patient the fewer shots in the arm are needed to get him on his feet again . . . . In the circumstances, the invalid clearly will find it to his advantage to make a heroic effort to recover speedily (59, p. 4).

Despite its complaints about the AAA, the Dallas Morning News, in editorials on April 11 and May 4, believed the initiatives taken by Roosevelt would be for the good of the
country. In an editorial on April 11, the Morning News said the President had assumed the nation's and the world's burdens: "American politics has furnished few examples of such courage and such honesty" (60, p. 2). The May 4 editorial, entitled "Still More Power," stated that Roosevelt's requests for unparalleled powers were courageously made: "If courage alone can solve our troubles they will be solved" (61, p. 2).

Summary and Conclusions

Texas newspapers during the first hundred days supported, for the most part, the early New Deal measures. Reaction to the first piece of New Deal legislation, the banking act, was entirely favorable. Only the Dallas Morning News and the Abilene Morning News, an urban and a rural newspaper, opposed the AAA. Although all newspapers supported the NRA, urban newspapers were critical of portions of the industrial recovery program; rural newspapers supported the NRA but published fewer editorials on that topic than their urban counterparts. On the CCC, all but three newspapers supported the measure; the Beaumont Enterprise, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and Amarillo News did not address the CCC directly in editorials. On the general issue of relief, only four newspapers directly commented on the administration's efforts; these newspapers, all of whom favored the steps being taken, were the San Antonio Light, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Dallas Morning News, and Amarillo News. The New Deal, for the most part, received only scattered opposition from Texas daily newspapers in 1933; by far the largest group of newspapers strongly supported each of the
emergency measures enacted during the first hundred days.
Evidently Texas newspapers, as well as an overwhelming majority of the country's citizens, were ready for action and were willing to support nearly anything the new administration sent to Congress. Both urban and rural newspapers in Texas expressed this desire for action on their editorial pages.


6. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, March 4, 1933.
8. Beaumont Enterprise, March 5, 1933.
10. Abilene Morning News, March 10, 1933.
11. Houston Chronicle, March 10, 1933.
15. San Antonio Light, March 9, 1933.
16. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, March 11, 1933.
18. Corpus Christi Caller, March 16, 1933.
20. Houston Chronicle, March 17, 1933.
22. San Antonio Light, March 29, 1933.
33. Austin Statesman, April 15, 1933.
34. Corpus Christi Caller, April 10, 1933.
36. San Antonio Light, March 17, 1933.
37. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, May 23, 1933.
38. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, June 14, 1933.
42. San Antonio Light, May 5, 1933.
43. Houston Chronicle, May 1, 1933.
44. Houston Chronicle, June 12, 1933.
47. Corpus Christi Caller, May 31, 1933.
50. Dallas Morning News, March 26, 1933.
51. Dallas Morning News, April 27, 1933.
52. San Antonio Light, March 25, 1933.
53. Houston Chronicle, March 31, 1933.
54. Austin Statesman, March 25, 1933.
55. Abilene Morning News, April 6, 1933.
56. Corpus Christi Caller, May 5, 1933.
57. San Antonio Light, March 20, 1933.
58. Amarillo News, April 7, 1933.
59. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, April 29, 1933.
60. Dallas Morning News, April 11, 1933.
CHAPTER IV
THE SECOND NEW DEAL

Although the political party in power generally loses a substantial number of Congressional seats in a nonpresidential election year, 1934 proved an exception for the Democratic Party. Vice President Garner predicted before the election that the Republican Party, despite Roosevelt's widespread popularity across the country, would gain thirty-seven seats in the House of Representatives; but because the party out of power traditionally had gained more representatives in off-year elections, Garner acknowledged that even a thirty-seven-seat increase by the Republicans would be considered a victory for the Democratic Party.

Even Garner could not have foreseen what the 1934 elections would bring. Republicans, expected to pick up as many as forty seats in the House, instead lost thirteen seats. In all, the nation's voters had elected a new House of only 103 Republicans, 322 Democrats, and ten Progressives or Farmer-Laborites. It was the lowest percentage of Republicans in that party's history. In the Senate, the results of the election were more devastating to the Republican Party. Riding the crest of Roosevelt's popularity, the Democratic Party increased its membership in the upper house to sixty-nine Senators. This Democratic majority was greater than two thirds of the seats in that assemblage,
the largest majority in American history (1, p. 116).

This overwhelming triumph by the Democratic Party at the polls, which numerous observers felt was a strong endorsement of the New Deal by the American people, nevertheless eventually caused problems for Roosevelt. While the election left the Republicans with less than one third of the Congress, only seven governorships, and no program of substance, it nevertheless threatened to push Roosevelt "in a direction far more radical than any he had originally contemplated" (1, p. 117). Even though the Republicans lacked a strong national leader, threats and demogoguery from such radical leaders as Huey P. Long, Father Charles E. Coughlin, and Dr. Francis Townsend were attracting sizable followings. Roosevelt's dilemma was that he hesitated to adopt fully the radical programs; instead, he tended to side with business leaders in certain disputes (1, p. 146). Conservative newspapers, in turn, had started to speak out against some of the progressive measures being introduced in the Congress. The congressional session of 1935 promised to bring some of the most heated debates of the decade.

The Works Progress Administration

In his annual message to Congress on January 4, 1935, Roosevelt seemed to side with the progressives. After telling members of Congress that his programs signified "a new order of things," Roosevelt issued a warning to conservatives who might be tempted to stand in the way of the New Deal: "Let
him, who, for speculative profit or partisan purpose, without just warrant would seek to disturb or dispel this assurance of continued restoration according to the New Deal, take heed before he assumes responsibility for any act which slows our onward steps" (2, p. 15). The President then assured Congress and the nation that further changes were being considered:

Throughout the world, change is the order of the day. In every Nation economic problems, long in the making, have brought crises of many kinds for which the masters of old practice and theory were unprepared. In most Nations social justice, no longer a distant ideal, has become a definite goal, and ancient Governments are beginning to heed the call (2, p. 15).

The change to which Roosevelt referred would be sought "through tested liberal traditions, through processes which retain all of the deep essentials of that republican form of government first given to a troubled world by the United States" (2, p. 15). The next day, newspapers throughout the country ran stories of the President's call for "a new economic order."

By April 1935, the New Deal had shifted directions. One of the first programs Roosevelt called for was a huge emergency public employment bill, at a cost of nearly five billion dollars, to put three and one half million unemployed people back to work. The work relief bill, as the program became known, included the designation of eight hundred million dollars to the Agriculture Department, the continuation of the CCC, and the creation of the Works Progress Administration, the WPA (1, p. 130). The entire package was approved by Congress in the form of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935,
and Roosevelt signed it into law on April 8; however, the actual machinery of the work relief administration was not created until later.

Specifically, Congress again had given Roosevelt wide powers to spend the five billion dollars as he desired; the money itself, up to that time, constituted the "greatest single appropriation in the history of the United States or any other Nation" (1, pp. 124-125). Although the huge relief effort was designed to provide jobs for all those able to work, the WPA was not allowed, legislatively, to compete with private businesses. Executive Order Number 7034, which created the WPA, said the new agency should "move from the relief rolls to work on such projects or in private employment the maximum number of persons in the shortest time possible" (2, pp. 164-165).

Harry Hopkins, administrator of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, was named to head the WPA.

In Texas, most major daily newspapers endorsed the work relief effort and the WPA. Only the San Antonio Light, whose publisher, William Randolph Hearst, had broken with Roosevelt by 1935, was against the administration's relief effort. In an editorial five days before Roosevelt signed the work relief bill on April 8, the Light said Americans "are discovering that the new dealers, the playboys in the realm of economic policy are--in terms of cost to the country--deficit makers" (3, p. 2). On April 13, the Light urged the Roosevelt administration "to taper off deficit-making emergency expenditures," that a reduction in federal expenditures was the only way for the
nation "to regain financial health"; the newspaper argued, "Business will take care of the rest of the job of re-employment." Nearly a month later, after Roosevelt had authorized the creation of the machinery to administer the work relief program, the San Antonio Light still spoke out editorially against the WPA, when it acknowledged that it preferred work projects over the dole. An editorial on May 25 said: "Until economic balance has been restored, it is suicidal for the government to make needless experiments and to initiate hostile policies, which curb business initiative and enterprise."(5, p. 6).

The San Antonio Light was the only one of the four urban newspapers to oppose the work relief plan and the WPA, both of which were designed principally to aid the cities. The other three urban newspapers--the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Houston Chronicle, and Dallas Morning News--supported the program wholeheartedly on their editorial pages. Together with the San Antonio newspaper, these newspapers were the only daily commercial newspapers in the state with circulations greater than 70,000. Of the three, the Houston Chronicle seemed to voice a common reason for support of the WPA. Two days before the work relief bill was signed by Roosevelt, the Chronicle said that the measure "should bring renewed hope to every unemployed person, should lift the intolerable burden which recently has been resting on our local relief officials, and should prove a mighty stimulus to business enterprise in general"(6, p. 4)." This was a common theme
for the Chronicle, which, time and again, editorially endorsed federal measures that decreased the pressures on local governments. Indeed, on April 4, the Chronicle published an editorial, saying that the main problem with the work relief bill was not that it was too expensive, but that the mammoth sums would be difficult to disburse (7, p. 6).

The other two urban newspapers, the Dallas Morning News and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, supported the work relief program. Both newspapers published many page one stories detailing the progress of the work relief bill through Congress; on April 6, the Morning News ran a three-column headline on page one saying that the bill had passed: "Huge Relief Bill Passes Both Houses Following Long and Bitter Battle/ Largest Appropriation in Peace Time Ready for President"(8, p. 1).

In an editorial on April 7, the Dallas Morning News criticized Congress for taking so long in passing the Roosevelt-sponsored bill: "The work relief measure was sent to Congress at the start of the session as an emergency plan. Delay in its passage saves no money, for the people it affects are for the most part on relief now. The substitution of work for dole is the whole reason for the project"(9, p. 2). One reason cited by the Dallas newspaper for its support of the work relief program was the continuation of the CCC, which a later editorial called "the new deal's most popular effort and the activity most free of criticism in and out of Congress . . . due to the fact that a remarkably good job has been done with it"(10, p. 4). In subsequent editorials during the spring
and summer, the Morning News applauded the work relief effort, specifically the National Youth Administration, as "a great aid in Mr. Roosevelt's program toward social welfare" (11, p. 2). Roosevelt's appointment of Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes, and Frank Walker as administrators of the multifaceted relief effort also received praise from the Dallas newspaper.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram found similar reasons for supporting the work relief program but added a new reason: The provision for the government's first census of unemployment during the Depression. Such a census, an editorial on April 22 stated, "is calculated to supply the first really accurate information as to the extent of unemployment. We have been working toward unemployment relief with all energies, but we have never known exactly how big is the job we have before us" (12, p. 6). When Roosevelt named Hopkins, Ickes, and Walker to head the program, the Star-Telegram published an editorial saying that fairminded citizens would approve of the selection; the same editorial referred to the government's relief plan as "the biggest job the Administration has undertaken... a setup which is immune to the ordinary appeals of politics" (13, p. 14).

Rural newspapers in Texas generally stood steadfastly behind Roosevelt and the work relief measure, although they did not publish as many editorials on that topic as did the larger urban newspapers. One rural newspaper, the Austin Statesman, commented about the work relief effort in an editorial on April 6: "The prime purpose, of course, is to put
men to work, and almost any program that accomplishes this end will be a good one"(14, p. 4). The same Statesman editorial predicted that the program "would be an investment in the nation's physical plant which would pay for itself many times over in the coming years." Later, the Austin newspaper referred to the relief effort as "the opportunity of a lifetime"(15, p. 4). Meanwhile, the Corpus Christi Caller described the program similarly, as "the opportunity of a lifetime," and added that it was "one of the best investments we ever made"(16, p. 4). In an editorial on April 19, the Caller said some problems could eventuate under the work relief program, but that "the chief trouble may not be with the relief program so much as with the social system which leaves workers at the mercy of wage scales too low for decent living"(17, p. 4).

Another rural newspaper, the Amarillo News, published several editorials during the spring and early summer of 1935 in support of the work relief effort. Three days before Roosevelt signed the bill into law, the News declared in an editorial that the "reform part of the New Deal program is about over," and that the relief bill signified the administration's desire to bring about business recovery, more jobs, and "the good feelings that result when times are prosperous"(18, p. 4). After the relief bill was passed by Congress, the Amarillo newspaper also noted that the bill represented "the opportunity of a lifetime. If the money is wisely spent, we shall eventually find it one of the best investments we ever made"(19, p. 4). The Abilene Morning News, another
rural newspaper, used the "opportunity of a lifetime" quote in an editorial supporting the WPA and the work relief effort (20, p. 4). On April 27, the Abilene newspaper referred to the census of unemployment and said such an undertaking "should have been started years ago" (21, p. 6)." Editorials in the Beaumont Enterprise during the spring repeated these feelings about the WPA.

The relief effort of 1935 and the WPA probably were the most successful, and controversial, of all New Deal programs. Although many WPA projects were alleged make-work jobs of scant value, the overall relief program under Harry Hopkins was involved in projects considered beneficial to the country (1, p. 125). Specifically, the WPA constructed or improved 2,500 hospitals; 5,900 school buildings; 1,000 airport landing fields; and 13,000 playgrounds. The WPA sponsored the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Writer's Project, the Federal Art Project, and the National Youth Administration. The WPA did much to relieve the monetary problems caused by the Depression. Because of the prospect of more job opportunities in Texas due to the passage of the work relief bill, the Amarillo News on April 17 already had begun referring to "the late depression" (22, p. 4).

By early June, 1935, as Congress was mired in debate over several controversial measures--extension of the NRA, passage of the Wagner Labor Relations Act, passage of a public utilities holding company bill, and passage of a social security law--Roosevelt decided to act forcefully. Although Congress was
scheduled to adjourn in June, Roosevelt suddenly insisted upon passage of all four of the controversial measures. He told Congressmen that they could not adjourn until they did as he instructed and passed all four measures. For purposes of this study, however, only two of these four measures are considered, the social security bill and the Wagner Act; the issue of the extension of the NRA is considered only in the context of its invalidation by the United States Supreme Court.

The Social Security Bill

In a message to Congress on January 17, 1935, Roosevelt asked for passage of legislation dealing with several types of security measures for the country's citizens. Part of that message is as follows:

The establishment of sound means toward a greater future economic security of the American people is dictated by a prudent consideration of the hazards involved in our national life. No one can guarantee this country against the dangers of future depressions but we can reduce these dangers. We can eliminate many of the factors that cause economic depressions, and we can provide the means of mitigating their results. This plan for economic security is at once a measure of prevention and a method of alleviation (2, p. 46).

Roosevelt outlined four types of provisions that he wanted Congress to pass relative to social security: (a) unemployment compensation; (b) old-age benefits, including compulsory and voluntary annuities; (c) aid to dependent children, given in the form of grants to states to support existing mothers' pension systems and for the protection of the homeless, neglected, dependent, and crippled children; and, (d) in-
creased aid to state and local public health agencies and increased funding to the federal public health services (2, pp. 44-45).

On the same day of the social security message, Roosevelt's social security bill was introduced in the Senate by New York's Robert Wagner and in the House by Maryland's David Lewis. Almost immediately, there were protests on Capitol Hill. Conservative congressmen said the bill denied the fundamental rights of individuals to help themselves (1, pp. 131-132). Businessmen generally opposed the plan; but much of the criticism came from the progressive congressmen elected in 1934, who claimed the Roosevelt bill was too parsimonious. Debate was heated, and it was not until Roosevelt demanded the bill's passage that a reluctant Senate passed the measure in June. The House gave its approval to the social security measure in April, 371-33, but only after a Republican bloc had voted several times to recommit the bill to a House committee (1, p. 132).

The social security bill was multifaceted. It created a national system of old-age insurance in which most employees of businesses had to participate. At sixty-five, workers received retirement annuities paid by taxes on their earnings and on their employers' payrolls; the benefits basically were computed on how much a worker had earned. The bill provided that federal funds were given to states for aid in the care of persons over sixty-five who were unable to provide for themselves. Further, the measure set up a federal-state system of unemployment insurance; and funds were earmarked to states
on a matching basis for dependent mothers, for the blind and the crippled, and for public health services (1, p. 132).

Proponents of the social security program, and even many of its detractors, referred to the bill as a "new landmark in American history" that reversed traditional laissez-faire theories of social responsibility and set up the proposition that an individual has clearly defined social rights (1, pp. 132-133). Although the social security system exempted many employees, and farmers, it was a departure from long-standing theories of social welfare. Roosevelt referred to this change when he signed the measure into law on August 14, 1935:

This social security measure gives at least some protection to thirty millions of our citizens who will reap direct benefits through unemployment compensation, through old-age pensions and through increased services for the protection of children and the prevention of ill health (2, p. 324).

Roosevelt believed that the bill assured workers that they would have enough money to live decently during periods of unemployment and when they were too old to work; he called the bill "a step which should have been taken in America a generation ago as it has been taken in other countries" (2, p. 325).

As was the case in the editorial reactions to the WPA, all Texas newspapers supported the social security bill except the San Antonio Light. The Light, guided by Hearst's increasingly anti-Roosevelt stands, found much difficulty in supporting any Roosevelt program. In an editorial on May 1, the San Antonio newspaper criticized the social security bill because the old-age pensions covered aliens residing in the United States:

"An alien who had reached that age [65] would draw the same
benefits as an American, though he had not taken out first papers and could not even speak English. No other nation in the world would think for a moment of thus pensioning off foreigners (23, p. 2). Subsequent editorials in the *Light* criticized the other provisions of the social security bill.

While the Hearst newspaper was voicing its anger over the social security bill, other urban newspapers in Texas were finding reasons to support it. After expressing concern over the extended debate on the bill in the Senate, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* referred to the bill as more "far-reaching than any of the other Administration measures" (24, p. 14). The *Star-Telegram*, however, expressed some concern over the fact that the bill extended more powers to the federal government, a common theme in the newspaper's editorials throughout the 1930s. Other editorials in the *Fort Worth* newspaper listed the provisions of the bill in some detail, criticized state welfare agencies for setting up welfare machinery prematurely in anticipation of the passage of the social security bill, and expressed some concern over taxes that would be levied on private businesses to help pay for the social security program.

Debate in the Senate on the social security measure received consistent page one news coverage in the two other major urban newspapers, the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Houston Chronicle*. The two newspapers published editorials in support of the program. The *Morning News* observed that "few can doubt" that some form of social security "is bound to come . . . . Humanity wants to draw back from the abyss of insecurity. It
is a hopeful sign that business and industrial leadership is moving toward the solution" (25, p. 20). Earlier, the Dallas newspaper published an editorial suggesting that the social security program be delayed until necessary funds could be received through taxes:

To be actuarially sound, a system must be built up on an actuarial plan and the required funds must be conceived over the period of years preceding the time of need. A contributory system can provide the proper coverage. For this reason, Government old age pensions, if they are to be provided, should look to the future and not the present (25, p. 2).

The Houston Chronicle did not cover the social security plan as extensively as the Morning News; nevertheless, it supported the bill proposed by Roosevelt and urged Congress to approve the bill quickly (27, p. 16). By mid-April, the Chronicle, obviously optimistic about the social security bill's chances for passage and its probable effect on the country, published editorials containing such impressions as "we are definitely on the mend, economically speaking" and that the country was experiencing an "obvious upturn" (28, p. 6).

Rural newspapers in Texas similarly recorded and responded to the debate on the social security bill on page one and on the editorial pages. The Austin Statesman, a consistent supporter of Roosevelt and his programs, published an editorial that enthusiastically endorsed the social security bill: "The security that such a plan gives a large body of workers is something beyond price. If more corporations did the same thing, the demand for a government pension would not be nearly so pressing today" (29, p. 4). The Corpus Christi Caller went even further in its praise of the plan. An editorial in that
newspaper mentioned that the social security bill "is breaking the trail toward badly needed social and economic reforms. In the years to come it probably will be ranked as the greatest departure from past ways that this so-called era of the New Deal has brought" (30, p. 4). A headline on page one of the Caller reflected this enthusiasm for social reform: "Social Security Measure Is Approved by House/Financial Aid Will Be Given Aged, Jobless" (31, p. 1). The headline ran over a story detailing how the House had voted 372-33 for Roosevelt's bill.

Other rural newspapers supported the social security measure, but their editorials were neither as lengthy nor as frequent as those previously mentioned. The Abilene Morning News published several editorials on the social security measure, one stating that in former years such a bill "would have produced a howl of anguish" from Republicans and conservatives, but that Roosevelt's popularity was causing some detractors to refrain from making the program an election issue in the 1936 campaign (32, p. 6). On May 25, an editorial in the Abilene newspaper advised readers to "lay your bet right now" that Roosevelt would secure without amendment the passage of the social security bill he had introduced (33, p. 6). The Amarillo News published an editorial containing the same words of praise that had appeared in the Austin Statesman, that the social security plan "is something beyond price," and that "the demand for a government pension system would not be nearly so pressing today" if more businesses had adopted private
pension systems (34, p. 4). In an editorial on April 10, the News told its readers that the bill would take definite steps toward providing care for the indigent aged (35, p. 4). Similar editorials of support were found in the Beaumont Enterprise.

The Wagner Act

In February 1935, Senator Robert Wagner of New York introduced a bill in the Senate that would guarantee the right of workers to bargain collectively with their employers and that provided that a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) be set up to safeguard this right. One of the highlights of the bill was that labor disputes would be submitted to compulsory arbitration. After surprisingly little debate, the Wagner Act was approved in the Senate, sixty-three to twelve. On May 20, the bill was reported out of a House committee. Throughout most of this four-month period, Roosevelt had not spoken out in favor of or in opposition to the bill; however, after a meeting in May with Senator Wagner, Roosevelt suddenly labeled the bill as "must" legislation along with three other measures.

With Roosevelt's backing, the House gave final approval to the Wagner Act that previously had been passed by the Senate; on July 5, Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act (1, p. 151). The bill was one of the "most drastic legislative innovations of the decade" (1, p. 151). Specifically, the Wagner Act authorized the use of federal sanctions and federal power to guarantee the right of labor to bargain...
collectively, instructed employers to accept peacefully the unionization of plants. It provided no reciprocal demands on labor unions. Roosevelt, on signing the act, said a high purpose was involved in the bill's provisions:

A better relationship between labor and management is the high purpose of this Act. By assuring the employees the right of collective bargaining it fosters the development of the employment contract on a sound and equitable basis. By providing an orderly procedure for determining who is entitled to represent the employees, it aims to remove one of the chief causes of wasteful economic strife. By preventing practices which tend to destroy the independence of labor, it seeks, for every worker within its scope, that freedom of choice and action which is justly his (2, p. 294).

Because the reactions to the Wagner Act indicated how a newspaper felt about the growing labor movement in the United States in the 1930s, editorials in Texas daily newspapers revealed specific reactions to the measure while it was being debated in Congress.

The most vehement opposition came from the state's largest newspaper, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Early in April 1935, the Fort Worth newspaper published editorials charging that organized labor was encouraging Roosevelt to support the Wagner Act, and that if Roosevelt refused, labor "might support a left-wing third party in 1935, and hence imperil Democratic success" (36, p. 8). Later, the Star-Telegram published the first of several editorials criticizing the labor bill, charging that it "sets up undefined rights and proposes to enforce them by the cumbersome and costly process of litigation and prosecution. It is a bad bill" (37, p. 16). The Star-Telegram insisted that it was doubtful that the federal government could enforce such a bill. On July 19, the news-
paper claimed that labor, by loosely interpreting the provisions to seek collective bargaining, could bring about a federal court test; such a test, the editorial said, would increase "the chances . . . that the Wagner law will take its place alongside the NRA as a New Deal casualty of the courts" (38, p. 14).

Other urban newspapers in the state expressed similar views toward the Wagner Act. The Dallas Morning News questioned whether the act applied to businesses engaged in intrastate commerce (39, p. 4). Later, stories on page one of the same newspaper described organized labor's efforts to gain Roosevelt's support and the help of Congress. The three-column headline told the story: "Do As We Say or We Won't Work, Labor Tells Congress/ Green Threatens Nationwide Strike and Political Death for All Who Defy Union's Demands" (40, p. 1). In an editorial the next day, the Morning News severely criticized the tactics of labor:

President Green (of the AFl) does not propose to leave the question of these laws either to wisdom or preference. The legislation must be enacted or a general strike will be called. Congress must pass it, whether it believes or not. The American people must submit to it, whether it is right or wrong, whether they want it or not. It is impossible to construe what Mr. Green has said in any other way (41, p. 4).

On June 29, the Morning News claimed that the Wagner Act "presupposes that industry is tyrannical and that labor is fair. Neither supposition will bear the light of inspection . . . . What the Wagner bill sets up is not arbitration but a one-sided authority in which the voice of labor must rule or ruin" (42, p. 2). The San Antonio Light, which had opposed
other labor proposals, called the Wagner Act "a threat to recovery and to the industrial welfare of the nation." The editorial continued:

Employers would have no voice in determining or regulating their relationships with employees. They would be deprived of all managerial freedom or even discretion and rendered subservient to a political board of three members, whose findings, no matter how unjust, illegal or oppressive, would not be subject to review by the courts (23, p. 2).

The Houston Chronicle expressed the same belief in an editorial that said labor unions "must be voluntary and depend on their own vigor. A reliance on law . . . will deliver the entire body of workers into the hands of a federal bureaucracy to be dictated to, as in Italy or Germany" (43, p. 6).

As far as rural newspapers in Texas were concerned, only the Austin Statesman elected to support the Wagner Act. The Corpus Christi Caller was the only rural newspaper to oppose the bill, while the Amarillo News published an editorial that was noncommittal; no editorials on the Wagner Act could be found in the Abilene Morning News and the Beaumont Enterprise. In supporting the measure, the Statesman referred to the bill as "one of the most remarkable measures ever handed to the lawmakers of the nation" (44, p. 6). The Caller, in opposing the bill, claimed that it probably was unconstitutional: "The Wagner bill . . . will very likely follow the codes into the discard" (45, p. 4). The Amarillo News suggested only that it was "the responsibility of labor, industry, and government to find a peaceful solution for current difficulties" (46, p. 4)."
The Invalidation of the NRA

Probably the most chaotic period of the Second New Deal resulted from a series of court decisions in 1935 invalidating several of the New Deal measures. The results of the court actions staggered Roosevelt. Writing several years later, Roosevelt said the decisions severely limited the powers of the government and jeopardized the goals of the New Deal. "It was a complete breakdown of the system of government by three independent but theoretically cooperating branches," Roosevelt wrote (2, p. 13). The period of chaos resulted because the measures struck down by the federal courts had been lawfully enacted by Congress and involved powers that Congress lawfully had given to the President. The most ominous of the decisions as far as Roosevelt was concerned was the Supreme Court's invalidation of portions of the NRA.

In 1934, the Schechter brothers of Brooklyn were convicted of violating the Live Poultry Code of the NRA. Several counts of violations were involved, including the marketing of diseased chickens and violations of the NRA's minimum wages and maximum hours provisions. It was the business of the Schechters to buy live poultry that had been shipped into New York State and then sell slaughtered poultry to retailers in New York. The government contended that the Schechters, in violating the Live Poultry Code, were affecting the prices and quality and volume of poultry shipped into New York State; government attorneys argued that the intrastate transactions of the Schechters were so related to interstate commerce "that
adequate control of the latter required control of the former; and, it was the contention of the government that Congress had acted properly in delegating legislative power to Roosevelt (2, p. 9).

The Supreme Court, however, did not view the Schecter case in this manner. In reversing a lower court decision in favor of the government, the Supreme Court held that the Live Poultry Code was unconstitutional on two specific grounds: First, that the code-making powers given to Roosevelt by Congress were invalid applications of Congress' legislative power; and, second, that the Schechters were not engaged in interstate commerce, and, thus, that the federal government had no authority in the matter (2, pp. 9-10). Leuchtenburg wrote, "Not only had the Court destroyed Roosevelt's industrial recovery program but, by its narrow interpretation of the commerce clause, it threatened the remainder of the New Deal" (1, p. 145).

Even though the Supreme Court's ruling against the NRA had overturned the decisions of a federal district court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, daily newspapers in Texas did not publish editorials in opposition to the high court's decision. Banner headlines throughout the state told the story: "U.S. Supreme Court Brands NRA Unconstitutional," "NRA Wrecked by High Court's Decree, Code Enforcement Halted," "Supreme Court Reduces NRA to Scrap of Paper," "Supreme Court Ruling Kills Codes of NRA/Authority Given to President Roosevelt Held Unconstitutional,"
and "Supreme Court Wipes Out Codes/ Holds Delegation of Powers to President Void." Each of these headlines appeared on Tuesday, May 28, 1935, the day after "Bloody Monday"; within several days, editorials appeared in support of the court's decision.

Urban newspapers in Texas published considerably more editorials on the Schechter decision than did rural newspapers. The Houston Chronicle exclaimed that the decision came "like a refreshing breeze over desert waters to those persons who have been fearing the onward sweep of governmental centralization in the nation" (47, p. 10). The Chronicle's editorial continued:

Some aspects of the NRA have been beyond the comprehension of persons who have been raised in the belief that the federal government is one of limited powers. How, for instance, could anyone justify the fining and imprisonment, under federal laws, of a person who sold a chicken at less than a certain price, or printed a batch of cards below a certain figure . . . . The Chronicle has confidence that business leadership will rise to the occasion; will prove the ability and will of American enterprise to take us to higher planes of living (47, p. 10).

In earlier editorials, the same newspaper said many of the "practices which have grown up under the NRA appear clearly unconstitutional," and that a Supreme Court test was needed desperately (48, p. 22).

The Dallas Morning News, as early as April 1, contained editorials saying that the theory on which the recovery machinery was based was "idealistic" and "will not work" (49, p. 4). Other editorials reflected the newspaper's opinion that the NRA had been exploited by labor and business, that the law
was ambiguous, that there were too many minute details in the law, and that the NRA as a whole "had no fixed policy."

When the Supreme Court ruled against the government, the Morning News ran an editorial calling the decision "a decided victory" for private initiative:

The court has laid down definite lines beyond which the Federal Government may not pass. Hour and wage are removed from interference by it and remain within the jurisdiction of the individual states . . . . NRA has served some useful purpose. That it was a stop gap in a period of national anxiety is beyond question, and it may have averted domestic strife. Some means must be found of retaining its principles of fair dealing (50, p. 2).

Hearst's San Antonio Light expressed a more vitriolic attitude. After stating as early as April 6 that the NRA "ought to be killed" (51, p. 6), that it was "an utter failure," and that its elimination should signal the end of most other New Deal agencies (52, p. 2), the Light published a page one editorial on May 28 commending the Supreme Court:

Thank God for the Supreme Court! The Supreme Court of the United States has again upheld the constitution and Americanism . . . . It reminds the American people that the foundations of their life are deep-imbued in justice and freedom; and that reason, self-command and sobriety both of thought and conduct are still American characteristics (53, p. 1).

The Light said the court's ruling "Marks the emergence of sanity--from the welter of nonsense, confusion, crazy-bill-drafting and adolescent experimenting, which make up so large a part of the new deal."

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram adopted a more cautious stance in favor of the court's decision. In an editorial on May 29, it questioned what sort of effect the Schechter
decision could have on the remaining New Deal agencies, and what changes, if any, would need to be made if the original goals of the New Deal were to be met. About the NRA, the editorial stated:

It will always be difficult, at any time in the future, to estimate with full accuracy the career of NRA. In its nature it contained from the outset something essentially of a co-operative nature. If all who entered or were brought in to its field had had the will to see it through, it can hardly be doubted that much better results would have been shown (54, p. 10).

Two days later, on May 31, the Star-Telegram published a second editorial on the Schechter decision, expressing the belief that new legislation could restore much of the NRA, but that Congress would have to be careful not to transgress the interstate provisions of the Constitution (55, p. 10). Other editorials in the Star-Telegram called for voluntary compliance to NRA principles; and, on June 19, the newspaper expressed the belief that voluntary NRA authorities would be set up: "Industry is not unintelligent. Whatever of NRA was definitely good will, in all probability, be saved, and whatever was definitely bad will be dropped as expeditiously as possible" (56, p. 10).

Rural newspapers in Texas, although they did not publish as many editorials about the invalidation of the NRA as did urban newspapers, agreed with the action of the Supreme Court. The Austin Statesman, a steadfast supporter of Roosevelt and the New Deal, expressed hope that Congress would extend NRA for two more years (57, p. 4); however, the newspaper acknowledged following the Schechter decision that a "change in
plans" was needed to bring about continued recovery and to "stimulate abundance" (58, p. 4). The Corpus Christi Caller, in a series of editorials prior to the court's ruling, said the extension of NRA needed careful study because of problems inherent in the recovery machinery. "The job is extraordinarily complex," it declared, and "too much haste would be as harmful as not enough" (59, p. 4). Two days after the NRA was declared unconstitutional, the Caller published an editorial stating hope that many Texas newspapers shared, that businesses would voluntarily comply with guidelines for competition, wages, and hours: "There was much that was good in the codes, but there was also some evil. But if their enforcement has done some harm, it has also accomplished much good" (45, p. 4). The same editorial said, "The best of the codes should be retained that more good may be accomplished. It would be stupid to scrap the gold with the dross." In an editorial on June 5, the Caller called on Congress to extend the NRA through a constitutional amendment (60, p. 4).

Other rural newspapers expressed similar views toward the Supreme Court's invalidation of the NRA. The Amarillo News believed that the invalidation "May have little immediate effect" because violations of the codes were so widespread:

We are in a state of excitement, of course. We are most of us wondering what will happen. Does the event mean the collapse and end of an attempt to establish a new social order? Does it mean, on the other hand, that a new start toward establishment of a better social system will be made (61, p. 4)?

The Amarillo newspaper joined others in urging voluntary compliance with codes governing competition, wages, and
hours (62, p. 4). Meanwhile, the Abilene Morning News indicated that "confusion and doubt" had followed the court's ruling, and that a "gentlemen's agreement" between and among businesses should be drawn up in place of the codes (63, p. 8). In an editorial on June 1, the same newspaper said most people "would prefer a horse-and-buggy era to unconstitutional regulation of private business" (64, p. 6). Roosevelt, upon hearing of the Supreme Court's decision, had said the court had issued a horse-and-buggy definition of interstate commerce. On June 2, the Beaumont Enterprise printed a scathing reply to the demands of some people that the Constitution be altered to provide for a permanent NRA:

The Supreme Court says entrenched bureaucracy may not set aside the constitution. Now bureaucracy says, "Let us change the constitution." Quite simple! Dictatorships have been made that way, and liberties of the people destroyed (65, p. 4). Such a rewriting of the Constitution, the editorial said, "will be the worst day's work the American people have ever done."

The Conservative Coalition

The mid-term elections of 1934 had assured Roosevelt large majorities in both houses of Congress. At least seventy senators had been consistent New Deal supporters, and about 325 representatives had been sympathetic to the President and his programs. By the time the 1935 Congressional session adjourned, nineteen of the seventy senators had voted against Roosevelt on at least two of seven major New Deal measures; these nineteen joined with sixteen Republican senators to form "a loose coalition large enough to create annoying
delay" (66, pp. 70-71). In the House of Representatives, sixty-one Democrats joined with ninety Republicans in votes against some New Deal measures.

This loosely organized conservative coalition attracted the attention of only one Texas daily newspaper, the San Antonio Light, which had published several scathing anti-New Deal editorials during the Congressional session of 1935. In an editorial on April 27, the Hearst-owned newspaper said Roosevelt "must appreciate that the most damaging criticism now being directed against him ... comes from distinguished members of the Democratic party" (67, p. 6). For most of the spring and summer of 1935, the Light had attempted on its editorial pages to link the New Deal with socialism and communism; many editorial cartoons pictured New Dealers as inept buffoons dressed in academic regalia and carrying books and pamphlets on Marx. Most of these cartoons showed scowling businessmen scolding the New Dealers, who, for the most part, were portrayed as walking on roads leading to socialism.

Historian James T. Patterson, writing of the conservative coalition, said the primary reason for growth in conservative reactions to the New Deal in 1935, was not due to Roosevelt. Instead, Patterson wrote, this increase in congressional conservatism stemmed from "the instinctive feeling among basically conservative congressmen that the New Deal had gone far enough—or too far" (66, p. 75). Patterson continued:

These men had not become more conservative; from the start they had supported the New Deal partly because it had seemed a conservative way to deal with a revolutionary impasse. But once the emergency seemed to be diminishing
they began to express their thoughts openly. These men reflected the feelings of many Americans who were beginning to think in terms of security rather than innovation (66, p. 75).

No doubt this reversion to inherent conservatism applied to Texas daily newspapers, too; but Roosevelt by 1935 still remained extremely popular with the state's newspapers, and with most of the nation. Leuchtenburg wrote that both conservatives and radicals began to speak out in the mid 1930s, and not in the early 1930s, because the conditions of poverty were so widespread early in the decade; instead, these movements gained momentum in 1934 and 1935, as conditions generally were improving (1, p. 95). Despite this growing criticism from conservatives who felt the New Deal had gone too far, and from radicals who felt it had not gone far enough, Roosevelt retained his widespread popularity, a fact that was to be underscored by the elections of 1936, 1940, and 1944.

Summary and Conclusions

The year 1935 saw the first organized resistance from Texas daily newspapers to parts of the New Deal; and this resistance followed a definite pattern. As far as the WPA was concerned, all major daily newspapers published supportive editorials, with the exception of the San Antonio Light. A similar pattern existed in the reactions to the social security bill; only the Hearst-owned San Antonio Light published editorials in opposition to this bill. On the Wagner Act, the first evidence of widespread opposition was seen. All four major urban newspapers reacted critically to the Wagner Act;
rural newspapers generally ignored this issue, and only the *Austin Statesman* supported it while only the *Corpus Christi Caller* opposed it. On the invalidation of the NRA by the Supreme Court, the major Texas daily newspapers were unanimous in their editorial support of the Supreme Court; no newspaper published editorials saying that the court ought to have upheld the NRA. For the first time during Roosevelt's first term, the conservative tendencies of Texas daily newspapers were seen; and, generally, this conservatism centered around two issues, the Wagner Act and the invalidation of the NRA, one a labor union issue, the other a constitutional issue. Urban newspapers basically published more editorials on the Wagner Act and the WPA than did rural newspapers, and the editorials in urban newspapers tended to be more critical. Perhaps, as Patterson wrote, the newspapers had not suddenly become more conservative, rather the New Deal had turned in a direction to which they were opposed.
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60. Corpus Christi Caller, June 5, 1935.
61. Amarillo News, June 1, 1935.
64. Abilene Morning News, June 1, 1935.
Because of increasing problems caused by adverse Supreme Court decisions, and because of conservative tendencies among some Congressmen by 1935, President Roosevelt hoped the campaign and election of 1936 would result in a definite expression of widespread public support for the New Deal. The Supreme Court decisions, he believed, had delayed the attainment of New Deal goals and had "served notice on the country that no law framed to obtain our social and economic objectives would be sustained" (1, p. 4). Roosevelt believed the Supreme Court, in effect, was not ruling on the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of laws, but rather on the desirability or undesirability of laws. An overwhelming victory for his Administration at the polls, Roosevelt believed, would be an overwhelming endorsement of the New Deal programs that had been ruled unconstitutional.

The Republican Party in 1936 was in no position to wage much of a fight against the President. Their candidate, Governor Alfred Landon of Kansas, was the only Republican governor elected in 1932 to survive the crushing Democratic victories of 1934; moreover, Landon's choice for Vice President,
Colonel Frank Knox, had little political experience. Knox, a nationalistic Chicago newspaper publisher, had been a Rough Rider under Theodore Roosevelt and was a great deal more liberal than his sponsors. Both Knox and Landon were former members of the Bull Moose Party, which in 1912 had sought to return Theodore Roosevelt to the presidency. Landon had fought against the Ku Klux Klan in Kansas, had demonstrated that he favored the regulation of business, and had fashioned a superb record on civil liberties. He had, in fact, endorsed any number of New Deal programs "in words that were to come back to plague him during the campaign" (2, p. 175).

Although Landon's somewhat liberal record disillusioned Republican conservatives, wealthy businessmen supported him merely as a way to register their disgust with New Deal measures. Roosevelt, whose progressive programs were alienating conservative members of his own party, decided to use the campaign of 1936 to show that he was not going to be bound by the traditions of former Presidents (2, p. 176). During the campaign, Roosevelt mentioned the Democratic Party by name only three times; he chose instead to campaign as head of a progressive movement not bound by traditional party lines. Roosevelt explained this decision:

Again and again we stressed the need of developing and spreading the purchasing power of all economic groups in the Nation: through agricultural and wage legislation. Again and again we promised continuation of the policy of checking the domination over national economics by a few closely integrated financial and industrial interests. Repeatedly we reaffirmed our determination to continue our efforts to protect our national resources and plan for their proper use, and to continue our struggle in behalf of human security (1, p. 4).
One result of Roosevelt's stance was that several Democratic leaders bolted to Landon; such distinguished Democrats as Dean Acheson, Al Smith, and John W. Davis refused to support Roosevelt. Another result of Roosevelt's campaign as head of a progressive crusade was that he attracted the support of nearly all progressives and others who feared a return to the ways of Herbert Hoover (2, p. 190). The ultimate result was to be a devastating defeat for the Republican Party.

Early in the campaign, business leaders, disillusioned Democrats, and angry newspaper publishers dominated the front pages of newspapers and periodicals through their attacks on the New Deal; the wealthy opposed Roosevelt as a reckless spender who wanted to confiscate their wealth through taxation; some business leaders openly defied the New Deal. A vice president in charge of industrial relations for United States Steel Company said he would go to jail before obeying the provisions of the Wagner Act (2, p. 177). In retrospect, historians generally agree that these attacks on Roosevelt did more harm than good to the Republican ticket.

Roosevelt based his campaign on the fact that six million jobs had been created in three years; that industrial output had doubled; that three times as many automobiles were built than in 1922; that electrical industry sales were at all-time highs; that corporate profits, two billion dollars in arrears in 1933, had increased seven billion dollars; and that net farm income nearly quadrupled in three years (2, p. 194). Although nearly eight million people still were unemployed by
the middle of the decade, the widespread feelings of despair that were present on nearly every street corner in 1933, seemed to have eased by 1936. The task confronting the Republicans was an enormous one.

The election results told the story of the Republican failures and the Democratic successes. Roosevelt won by the largest electoral margin since James Monroe's, 523 to 8. Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Connecticut voted Democratic for the first time since 1856. Roosevelt received 60.4 per cent of all popular votes cast, nearly 27,500,000. Landon carried only Maine and Vermont. In Congressional elections, the number of Democratic representatives increased from 322 to 333; Republican strength in the House of Representatives fell to a modern low of eighty-nine. In the Senate, Democrats increased their membership from sixty-nine to seventy-six. The "great popular majority" that Roosevelt sought had been realized. "The election results permitted no doubt whatsoever to remain that, so far as the policies and goal of the New Deal were concerned, The People Approve," Roosevelt explained (1, p. 5).

Criticism from the San Antonio Light

Except for Hearst's San Antonio Light, the major daily newspapers in Texas either formally endorsed or favorably commented on Roosevelt and his aspirations for a second term as President. Hearst, who long since had begun to criticize Roosevelt and the New Deal, saw to it during the 1936 campaign that his newspapers were extremely antagonistic toward the
President and his policies; Hearst, a supporter of Roosevelt in 1932, reverted to the tactic of using page one editorials. Specifically, Hearst "ordered his newspapers to oppose Roosevelt and attack him in every possible way." Because of this vocal opposition, the anti-Roosevelt sentiment appeared to be so strong that many observers believed Landon would win. Hearst himself predicted the Republican would win in a landslide (3, p. 291).

The San Antonio Light's first attack during the campaign came on October 2, when it charged that Roosevelt had reneged on his promise to look after the "forgotten man"; an editorial that day claimed the New Deal "sees to it that they never catch up with the cost of living or with taxes" (4, p. 2). From this beginning, the Light's editorials became more vehement. After Al Smith bolted to Landon and Knox, Hearst wrote that Smith had made "a patriot's choice":

He has taken a course that assures the security of America, in preference to a political course that presents peril to his country.  
A former presidential candidate of the Democratic party, he has endorsed the Republican candidate for the presidency, Alfred M. Landon . . . . He is pledging himself to the saving of America from what he conceives to be the obvious menace of unsound leadership, of mistaken policies and of sinister doctrines that have impregnated the present national administration (5, p. 2).

One day after this editorial appeared in the Light, Hearst charged that Roosevelt was not campaigning as head of the Democratic Party, "but of the Communist rulers of Russia for the furtherance of their invasion of America" (6, p. 2).

Throughout October 1936, a disproportionate amount of news
space on page one of the *Light* covered Landon's campaign, while stories about Roosevelt, for the most part, were placed on inside news pages.

On October 8, an editorial in the San Antonio newspaper contended that Roosevelt had defied the wishes of the American people by merely suggesting possible alliances with foreign countries. The newspaper claimed that the American people had repudiated such alliances in the presidential election of 1920, when Republican Warren E. Harding was elected; the editorial said: "Washington seems to have forgotten that overwhelming vote. The time has come for another warning" (7, p. 2). Hearst later wrote that the "full tide of independent thought in America has turned irresistibly to support of Alfred M. Landon" (8, p. 2). Throughout October, the newspaper made such editorial claims as "the new deal will not survive," "the country cannot tax itself out of the new deal marshes," and voters "will have a chance to indicate their loyalty to American democracy and liberty on November 3 by casting a ballot for Landon and Knox." Typical editorial headlines in the newspaper during October were "Henry Ford Knows U.S. Needs Landon," "Landon Offers Real Recovery," "America Stands at Crossroads," and "Shall It Be Freedom or Dictatorship?" The last headline appeared on page one, the first of several page one editorials in the *Light* during late October and early November.

With the election scheduled for November 3, Hearst began his strongest effort on behalf of Landon and Knox in the November
1 edition of the San Antonio Light. In a signed, page one editorial, Hearst used a series of one-sentence paragraphs to state his belief that Roosevelt would be defeated:

I believe that Governor Landon will positively be elected president of the United States on Tuesday next. I base that belief on my confidence in the common sense of the American people. They are taking no risks financially, socially or politically, if they elect Landon. They are taking no risks personally or nationally (9, p. 1).

The next day, Hearst published another page one editorial in the Light, urging readers to vote for Landon and Knox, and another editorial that day carried the headline "Enemies of U.S. Want Roosevelt" (10, p. 2).

Editorial Criticism of Landon

Most of the other newspapers supported the re-election of Roosevelt; however, not all these newspapers formally endorsed the Democratic ticket. Some newspapers urged their readers to give money to the Democratic campaign fund to offset heavy business contributions to the Republican Party; others predicted that Texas would vote overwhelmingly for Roosevelt; and nearly all criticized Landon severely on their editorial pages.

As far as most Texas daily newspapers were concerned, Landon was a perfect target for editorial criticism. The Dallas Morning News, which had opposed Roosevelt several times during congressional debates on certain New Deal issues, published an editorial on September 6, saying Landon "realizes he is defeated this year and is guiding his campaign with an
eye to 1940"(11, p. 2). Later in the campaign, the Morning News intensified its attack on the Republican candidate. The opposition party, one editorial charged, "offered a meaningless platform and a weak candidate"(12, p. 2). In another editorial, the Dallas newspaper said the Republican Party had failed to make any headway in the South: "Efforts of the G.O.P. to break apart the solid South, as was done in 1928, appear to have resulted in a sorry fizzle"(13, p. 6). Subsequent editorials in the same newspaper asserted that Landon was "not specific," that he had a "lack of personal magnetism," and that his campaign had no real chances for success. Two weeks before the election, the Morning News remarked that a "more colorful and forceful figure than Governor Landon" could not have succeeded (14, p. 2).

Another urban daily newspaper, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, was more vocal than the Morning News in its attacks on the Republican candidate. Several editorials charged that Landon was the spokesman for big business, and that his tactics of denouncing the New Deal would result in his overwhelming defeat at the polls. A Star-Telegram editorial on August 24 observed that the Republican campaign appeared to be giving "a new interpretation to the ancient maxim about concealing the doings of the left hand from the right. Governor Landon, as Governor of Kansas, welcomed New Deal measures for the aid of his state"(15, p. 10). Throughout the campaign other editorials called Landon "obscure and confusing," "lacking in ability," and "frantic and desperate" in his attempts to win votes. As
far as Landon's views on relief were concerned, the Star-
Telegram editorialized that his goals were "exactly what the
current relief policy of the Roosevelt Administration is
pursuing" (16, p. 4). An earlier editorial lambasted Landon
for his lack of leadership ability and contrasted that short-
coming with the powers exhibited by Roosevelt:

> Leadership in the White House during the next four
> years is as necessary to the Nation as leadership there
> was needed in 1928 and 1929. Through Franklin Roosevelt's
> leadership the Nation has made great tentative advance
> along a multitude of fronts, economic, social, and
> political. If advance is to be continued, this nation
> is to reach the security which mastery of changed world
> conditions alone can assure, it must continue to have
> leadership (17, p. 10).

Concerning the Republican attacks on Roosevelt's leadership,
the Star-Telegram said the opponents "are not 'for' anything;
they are simply, and frantically, 'against' Roosevelt" (18, p. 10).

The Houston Chronicle published editorials nearly every
day during October citing the weaknesses of the Republican
candidate; and its publisher, Jesse Jones, who was head of the
Reconstruction Finance Corporation, spoke on nationwide radio
on behalf of Roosevelt's candidacy. On October 3, the Chronicle
charged that Landon was "far too vague and colorless to stem
the Democratic tide" (19, p. 4); the same editorial indicated
that Roosevelt was "making a strikingly sincere and effective
presentation of what the New Deal has accomplished and what
he hopes it will continue to accomplish." In an editorial
on October 19, the Chronicle predicted Roosevelt would win
the election in a landslide (20, p. 6). The day before the
election, the newspaper concluded, "Mr. Landon has done his
best. It has not been good enough" (21, p. 6)."

Rural newspapers in Texas published similar editorials criticizing the Republican campaign in general and Landon in particular. The Abilene Morning News began its commentary on the campaign on August 19, by attacking Landon's lackluster image:

Governor Landon is catching fish in Estes Park. Governor Landon is visiting his Pennsylvania birthplace. Governor Landon is ill. Governor Landon is conferring with republican leaders. Governor Landon is working on his speech.

So the news goes about the republican nominee and the dullest campaign ever known in mid-August of a presidential year. The republicans won't get started and the democrats don't have to (22, p. 6).

At that early date in the campaign, the same newspaper predicted Roosevelt would win the election with 55 per cent of the popular vote. In subsequent editorials, it predicted that Landon's appeal to Negroes for votes would not work, that Herbert Hoover's speeches on behalf of Landon would do no good, and that Al Smith's switch to Landon "has merely affirmed the sentence imposed upon him eight years ago." In an editorial later in the campaign, the Abilene Morning News suggested that the symbols for the political parties be changed "from donkey and elephant to airplane and horse-and-buggy" (23, p. 12).

In the Texas Panhandle, the Amarillo News criticized Landon's record on public schools, and then urged its readers to "send your contribution to the local Democratic campaign committee to help assure the return of President Roosevelt to the White House" (24, p. 4). The editorial said that teachers
in Landon's own state were paid an average of nine dollars a week, placing the state in twenty-seventh place among all states; before Landon became Governor of Kansas, the state had ranked fifteenth, the editorial claimed. About Landon's proposals to help farmers, the *Amarillo News* said they bear "striking resemblances to that which President Roosevelt already has put into effect" (25, p. 4).

Perhaps the most scathing editorial against the Republican candidate appeared in the *Austin Statesman* on September 27. After charging that Landon was "trying to run on an imitation new deal platform," the editorial said:

Landon's "do-nothing" background, his avid acceptance in past years of the Roosevelt benefits and New Deal measures helpful to his people; his vague attacks upon these programs, while contradicting himself by claiming them; his forthright refusal to tell any audience just what he would do about anything, or how, or when, or with what agencies, or where he would get the money; or where he would save money; whom and what he would tax, and how much, have bogged him so deep in fuzzy incoherencies that his campaign voice sounds thickly, as from the bottom of an oozy sea of mud (26, p. 6).

The headline on this editorial was "Landon Bogs Down Again."

Two other rural newspapers, the *Corpus Christi Caller* and the *Beaumont Enterprise*, were more cautious in their attacks on Landon and the Republican campaign. The Corpus Christi newspaper, which published few editorials on the campaign, occasionally referred to Landon as "a colorless individual" who stood little chance of winning the election (27, p. 4). Other editorials in the *Caller* said that Roosevelt was almost guaranteed victory in the election and that the Republican campaign had degenerated into a state of desperate-
ness (28, p. 4). Both the Caller and the Enterprise contained proportionate amounts of news stories on page one dealing with Roosevelt and Landon; but the Enterprise, in its editorials, seemed less certain of an overwhelming Roosevelt victory. In an editorial on September 6, the Beaumont newspaper stated that the "odds against Landon are not as great as democratic campaign headquarters would like for the country to believe. Governor Landon is making a better impression as the campaign proceeds" (29, p. 4). One of those impressions, a later editorial said, was Landon's punctuality; but it "takes more than the habit of being punctual to make a capable president of the United States," the editorial continued (30, p. 4). Both newspapers pointed to the large amounts of money that big businesses had contributed to the Landon campaign as a sign of what interests would benefit most from the election of a Republican.

Editorial Support for Roosevelt

While the editorials criticizing Landon and the Republican Party were appearing in print, Texas daily newspapers were publishing other types of editorials on the campaign; one particular type of editorial defended Roosevelt from the attacks of the opposition party. Specifically, these editorials praised Roosevelt for the job he had done during his first term. The Dallas Morning News, heretofore a critic of several New Deal programs, defended the President against claims Roosevelt was the choice of communists, a charge made by Hearst's San Antonio Light. Such a charge, the Dallas newspaper said
in an editorial on September 22, had no foundation (31, p. 2).
The main gauge as to how the campaign was progressing, the Morning News believed, was the existing condition of American business:

Optimistic business reports and prospects add to the Democratic advantage. Stock and bond quotations speak so loudly that they may largely offset Republican attempts to reclaim the votes of the small businessmen and corporation stockholders. The argument that Republicans themselves used for many years—that one should not rock the boat in times of smooth sailing—has been turned against them (32, p. 4).

Subsequent editorials in the Dallas Morning News during October said that nine tenths of the nation’s labor force would vote for Roosevelt, that farmers had been aided by the New Deal even more than labor, and that the President’s re-election campaign was being run "with constructive force and devastating effect on his opponents." Finally, on November 2, the Morning News acknowledged that Texas voters would cast their ballots in overwhelming numbers for Roosevelt (33, p. 2).

The state’s largest newspaper, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, became a consistent supporter of Roosevelt during the campaign. In an editorial published early in the campaign, the newspaper advised every American to read Joseph Kennedy's book I'm For Roosevelt: "His book is the sanest, calmest, most reasoned and most reasonable discussion of matters and considerations entering into the present campaign yet offered for the edification of American citizens" (34, p. 4). Later, the Star-Telegram cited current business statistics to indicate widespread recovery: "These figures are not politics.
They are the sober, unbiased records of a national bureau. Nevertheless, they are the answer to distortion, buncombe and misrepresentation occasionally encountered in a national political campaign" (35, p. 16). The Houston Chronicle, another major urban newspaper, published editorials saying that voters would not be swayed by "the vague and unfillable promises of the Republican party," and that Roosevelt probably would win "an overwhelming majority of the states and of the electoral vote."

Similar editorials of praise for Roosevelt appeared in rural Texas newspapers. The Beaumont Enterprise said in an editorial on September 27 that Roosevelt could count on receiving at least 249 electoral votes to 138 for Landon, with many votes still undecided (36, p. 4). The Enterprise later acknowledged that the President's re-election was "a reasonable certainty, and not a few think it to be a certainty without qualification" (37, p. 4). Following the election, the Beaumont newspaper published an editorial containing a revealing passage:

There is today in the world one man, and only one, who can speak with so great an authority dictators will be compelled to listen. Well may Mr. Roosevelt be sobered by the extent of his victory at the polls and the proof the American people have given of their confidence in him. He realizes better than anyone else, perhaps, his responsibilities and will do his best to meet them "in the American way (38, p. 4)."

Another pro-Roosevelt during his first term, the Austin Statesman, published an editorial prior to the election with the headline "Texas Demos Must Vote"; the editorial predicted that Texas could go democratic "8-to-1 or 9-to-1 on November 3" (39, p. 4).
Some rural Texas newspapers were more forceful in their support for Roosevelt. The Abilene Morning News, for instance, urged its readers as early as September 2 to raise money for the Democratic national campaign:

The Lone Star State has been the beneficiary of many New Deal measures. In addition it has a native son on the national ticket in the person of John Garner. In 1932 it was the prize democratic state of the nation in the matter of vote percentage. In spite of republican and so-called "Jeffersonian" democratic claims to the contrary, Texas is safe for democracy this year (40, p. 6).

On September 27, the same newspaper claimed that Roosevelt had "more emotional appeal" than any other President, and that Landon was "about as emotional as one of those shads washed up by the recent eruption of the South Fork of the Concho River"; the editorial concluded with the statement, "We're for him [Roosevelt], win, lose, or draw" (41, p. 8). The Abilene Morning News encouraged its readers on several other occasions to vote for the Democratic ticket.

The Amarillo News praised Roosevelt's record on conservation and on farm issues. An editorial on October 10 said that during Roosevelt's first term, "the average price of farm commodities rose to above 100 per cent compared to the pre-war level" (42, p. 4); the same editorial said that during Hoover's last year in office, "the average price of farm commodities dropped from 45 per cent above the pre-war level to 45 per cent below that level." Later, the News predicted that the South would remain solid for Roosevelt, partly because cotton farmers could not afford to support the Republican Party, which traditionally favored high tariffs (43, p. 6).
The Corpus Christi Caller, which published similar editorials praising Roosevelt, had this banner page one headline two days after the election: "Wall Street Buying Follows Roosevelt Victory/ Liberalism Of New Deal Has Full Support/ Bitterest Opponents Say Americans Must Back President/ GOP Shaken/ Only Two States Stand In Landon Column at Latest Count"(44, p. 1).

The Straw Polls

Another topic relevant to the presidential campaign of 1936 was the straw polls, and the daily newspapers in Texas frequently commented on them. The straw poll conducted by Literary Digest was the most famous, and it received the greatest number of comments from Texas newspapers. Literary Digest, a well known publication during the 1930s, had based its presidential election survey primarily on telephone lists and automobile registration lists, a procedure followed in previous surveys by the magazine. In 1936, more than two million people were interviewed to determine their preferences in the campaign between Roosevelt and Landon, and the survey indicated that Landon would be elected.

Most Texas daily newspapers did not take the magazine's poll seriously. The Dallas Morning News believed that the average person was perplexed over the results of the Literary Digest poll. "The Literary Digest stands on the fact that it has never erred as to general results and that is true," the editorial in the Dallas newspaper said; and the newspaper said such a poll was accurate only when one particular
political party won an election in a landslide, and "a 1936 landslide for either candidate is unlikely . . . . The election will speak for itself" (45, p. 2)." The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, on the other hand, was highly critical of the poll:

"If the Literary Digest stands by its old formula which holds that telephone directories and automobile registration lists supply an accurate cross section of the population--and if the result in November bears out the Digest forecast--we shall know not only that science can predict election results but that it can forecast miracles" (46, p. 14).

Neither the Houston Chronicle nor San Antonio Light, the state's other urban newspapers, mentioned the poll on their editorial pages.

As far as rural daily newspapers were concerned, the Literary Digest poll was a mere diversion in a campaign heading toward a certain Democratic victory. On several occasions the Amarillo News commented on the Digest's poll. On October 14, it said it "would take the seventh son of a seventh son to figure out just what the various straw polls add up to--unless we accept the fortune tellers' prognostications that Roosevelt will win, if Landon doesn't" (47, p. 4). The following day the News commented that the poll conducted by Literary Digest was flawed in that the sample was not representative. Such a flaw, it said, "virtually destroys the value of the publication's straw vote for forecasting purposes. If the returns were from a representative cross-section of the electorate, Democrats would have had much more cause for worry" (48, p. 6).

The Abilene Morning News asserted that a Roosevelt victory would destroy the Literary Digest's credibility.
"It might be an excellent thing if this election could somehow cast just a shade of doubt upon the accuracy of the whole straw vote process," the Abilene newspaper said (49, p. 6). The Austin Statesman agreed, saying that a Roosevelt win would cast "just a shade of doubt upon the accuracy of the whole straw vote process" (50, p. 4). The Beaumont Enterprise adopted a more cautious approach similar to the one in the Dallas Morning News:

Let no one, whether he is a pro-Landon democrat or republican, make the mistake of thinking the election will mean a landslide for the Kansas governor. Whatever the popular and electoral votes received by the two major candidates, the possibility of a landslide for either is ruled out (51, p. 4).

The Enterprise editorial concluded with a prediction: That the South would remain solidly in the Democratic column. The Corpus Christi Caller, which did not comment on the Literary Digest poll during the campaign, said after the election that straw polls "should be forbidden by law on the ground that they interfere or might interfere with the orderly process of our American political system of secret ballot by qualified electors" (52, p. 4).

Formal Editorial Endorsements

Even though nearly all daily newspapers in Texas more or less conceded the election to Roosevelt, with the notable exception of the San Antonio Light, surprisingly few of the newspapers chose to endorse the Democratic candidate. Only the Fort Worth Star-Telegram published a formal endorsement of Roosevelt's candidacy. The Star-Telegram claimed that the
President was "leading the country from the slough of the world's worst depression to a high point on the road of recovery" (53, p. 10). The *Dallas Morning News* did not formally endorse Roosevelt, but after the election, it said, "In supporting President Roosevelt for re-election, The News agreed with him that social change is underway, a sort of social revolution if you please" (54, p. 2). The other urban newspaper, the *Houston Chronicle*, which had endorsed Roosevelt in 1932, did not publish a formal endorsement in 1936; but an editorial one day after the election said the Roosevelt victory was "stupendous" and "so great . . . that it is impossible to view its full significance" (55, p. 18).

A similar pattern was seen in the editorials of the rural daily newspapers. Although there were no formal endorsements for Roosevelt or Landon, the smaller newspapers praised Roosevelt in their editorials. Two of the newspapers, the *Amarillo News* and the *Abilene Morning News*, repeatedly urged their readers to donate money to the Democratic national campaign. The *Austin Statesman*, *Beaumont Enterprise*, and *Corpus Christi Caller* had published editorials criticizing Landon and praising Roosevelt throughout the campaign. All the rural newspapers predicted that Texans would vote in overwhelming numbers for the Democratic candidate. Following the landslide Roosevelt victory, only favorable comments appeared in the editorials of rural newspapers. The *Corpus Christi Caller* described Roosevelt as "a great personality" (56, p. 4); the *Abilene Morning News* believed he was "not that
kind of man" who would "cram his theories down the country's throat unwillingly" (57, p. 6); other newspapers printed similar remarks in their editorials.

Summary and Conclusions

Thus, Texas daily newspapers, despite their increased criticism toward the New Deal by the middle of the 1930s, did not support the candidacy of Republican Alf Landon; the only exception was the San Antonio Light. The candidacy of Franklin Roosevelt in 1936, despite mounting antagonisms in Congress and among a few disillusioned Democrats, was more attractive and more desirable than the candidacy of Landon; editorials during the fall of 1936 repeatedly indicated this preference. All the state's major newspaper except the San Antonio Light predicted Roosevelt would certainly carry Texas by a landslide, and probably the nation, too; all the newspapers except the Light harshly criticized Landon for his lack of ability and for denouncing the New Deal at the same time he was accepting its benefits; several of the state's newspapers urged their readers to donate money to Roosevelt's campaign. By the end of the campaign, most of the state's newspapers were looking toward the future and the second administration of President Roosevelt. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, in an editorial on November 5, typified the mood of the other Texas daily newspapers:

The Nation had reason to be thankful for the qualities of mind and heart of Mr. Roosevelt in 1933 and later. It has reason to be thankful likewise today. For a lesser man a triumph of popular favor so overwhelming might well transform the ambition of public
service into the ambition of public mastery. That is something for the Roosevelt haters to think over (58, p. 16).

As far as Texas newspapers were concerned in the fall of 1936, there were few second thoughts or doubts about the re-election of President Roosevelt.


27. Corpus Christi Caller, October 4, 1936.
28. Corpus Christi Caller, November 1, 1936.
32. Dallas Morning News, October 15, 1936.
33. Dallas Morning News, November 2, 1936.
34. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, August 29, 1936.
35. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, September 11, 1936.
37. Beaumont Enterprise, November 1, 1936.
41. Abilene Morning News, September 27, 1936.
42. Amarillo News, October 10, 1936.
43. Amarillo News, October 18, 1936.
44. Corpus Christi Caller, November 5, 1936.
46. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, October 6, 1936.
47. Amarillo News, October 14, 1936.
52. *Corpus Christi Caller*, November 8, 1936.
53. *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 2, 1936.
55. *Houston Chronicle*, November 4, 1936.
56. *Corpus Christi Caller*, November 8, 1936.
58. *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 5, 1936.
Roosevelt believed the election of 1936 constituted an overwhelming public endorsement of those New Deal programs, goals, and ideals that had been invalidated by the United States Supreme Court during the preceding two years. He further viewed his landslide re-election as an indication that the American people were prepared to accept more progressive legislation. Writing in 1941, Roosevelt said the election of 1936 pitted the New Deal against the federal courts:

By the time of the election of 1936, it had become clear that this new concept of government and of its relation to economic and social problems was in danger of complete frustration. And the road ahead, for further, or even different, effective action to meet these problems, seemed to be completely blocked. For a dead hand was being laid upon this whole program for progress—to stay it all. It was the hand of the Supreme Court of the United States (1, p. 1).

The Supreme Court, Roosevelt believed, had not invalidated every New Deal program, but, "the whole question of the power of the federal government to handle these problems in an effective, decisive way had been placed not only in doubt, but in positive jeopardy" (1).

In the three years beginning in October 1933, the Supreme Court had set aside twelve federal statutes, and five of them had been invalidated in one year, the October 1935 term of the Supreme Court (1, p. 111). Roosevelt soon began to believe
that his problem concerned not the Constitution, but the Supreme Court. Since many of the decisions had been handed down by a bare majority of the Court, Roosevelt believed that any significant reform legislation should be aimed at increasing the Court majority.

The question as Roosevelt saw it was simple: Were the conservative members of the Court to be permitted to continue judging laws based on their particular economic and political predilections? Since the radical departures of the New Deal had not been received favorably by the members of the Supreme Court, and since none of the justices had been appointed by Roosevelt, the President began to give more serious consideration to the actual composition of the Court. Five of the nine justices were seventy years of age or older, and most had been appointed by Republican Presidents. Their opinions during the twenty years following World War I "ran counter to the thought and objectives of progressive opinions throughout the modern civilized world," Roosevelt thought (1, p. xlvii). It was Roosevelt's opinion that the Supreme Court as it existed in 1937 offered "little hope for the future."

The Court Reform Proposal

In his second inaugural address on January 20, 1937, Roosevelt said the New Deal was preparing for a more radical turn; nevertheless, few were ready for his subsequent message to Congress on February 5. Roosevelt informed members of Congress that day that a backlog of cases in federal courts
was due to judges who were too old or incapable of handling the work load. He recommended that when a judge who had served at least ten years did not retire within six months after his seventieth birthday, the President should appoint a new judge to that bench. One of his provisions was that no more than six new justices could be appointed to the Supreme Court, and no more than forty-four additional judges to the lower federal courts (2, p. 233).

The court reform proposal of February 5, 1937, evoked widespread debate. Although Roosevelt said he had offered the plan in the interest of judicial efficiency, his opponents soon countered that the President merely was attempting to obtain federal courts that were more responsive to the New Deal. Justice Louis Brandeis, one opponent of the plan said, was Roosevelt's most consistent supporter on the Supreme Court, and he was eighty years old in 1937 (2, p. 233). Some even believed that Roosevelt's plan could lead to a dictatorship. Historian James T. Patterson wrote that many Americans harbored strong suspicions about any proposal to alter the Supreme Court (3, p. 87). Congressmen, too, were suspicious of the plan because they were not told of it beforehand; Roosevelt simply had not consulted congressional leaders about his intentions (3, p. 90). Within days after the court reform proposal was revealed, a nationwide crusade had been organized to stop it.

Texas daily newspapers offered differing opinions in their editorials concerning the court reform plan. Urban
newspapers, which had agreed unanimously with the Supreme Court's invalidation of the NRA in May 1935, were not in agreement in February and March 1937. The San Antonio Light and the Dallas Morning News published editorials in opposition to the court reform plan; the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reluctantly sided with Roosevelt, and the Houston Chronicle took no editorial stand on the matter. Concerning rural newspapers, the division of editorial opinion was not so pronounced. Only the Austin Statesman supported Roosevelt, a stand that corresponded to the newspaper's continued support of the President on most New Deal issues. The other rural newspapers, the Beaumont Enterprise, Corpus Christi Caller, Amarillo News, and Abilene Morning News, opposed the court reform plan.

Two days after Roosevelt introduced his court reform bill in the Senate, the Dallas Morning News claimed that the measure would not work unless it were applied to all branches of the federal government. "If Supreme Court justices are too old to think accurately at 70, it follows that senility must set in at that age on diplomats and, of course, on Presidents," the Morning News editorial argued (4, p. 8). On February 9, the Dallas newspaper described the measure as a "political trick" that any later President could use to turn the Supreme Court "into a costly joke" (5, p. 2). Later, the same newspaper editorialized that Roosevelt's "methods are not equal to his mental stature" in his struggle to secure the bill's passage (6, p. 2).
The other urban newspaper to oppose the plan, the San Antonio Light, published an editorial on February 8 that exclaimed, "To tamper with the Supreme Court is to tamper with the very life and soul of our political and economic system" (7, p. 2). The next day, the Light, the only Texas newspaper to endorse Landon for the presidency in 1936, said in an editorial that the American people knew of Roosevelt's intentions during the 1936 campaign:

Of course the program means that democracy is dead as a door nail, and that we are now living under a dictatorship.

The executive has long since taken control of the legislative branch of government, and now he is about to take control of the courts . . . . Toll the knell (8, p. 2)!

At no time during the debate over the court reform bill, however, did this newspaper revert to its previous practice of publishing page one editorials.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram took a different position. It did not believe Roosevelt's court reform plan was as radical as some proposals, including one by Senator Burton Wheeler that would have given Congress the power to override a Supreme Court decision invalidating a law enacted by the Congress. Roosevelt, the Star-Telegram claimed, "is convinced that the only practical method for getting things done, without waiting for the slow machinery of amendment to move, is to resort to the legislative device utilized in his proposal" (9, p. 4). On March 10, the newspaper indicated that even many opponents of the court reform bill were dissatisfied "with certain recent decisions of the present court involving
interpretation of the 'due process' clause of the Fourteenth Amendment." The same editorial said the country and its citizens "must take action to save the Constitution from the court and the court from itself" (10, p. 5)." Later, the Star-Telegram proclaimed, "Our Federal Government is strong, in every respect save that it is chained to the early concept of weakness by constitutional interpretation" (11, p. 10).

Editorials in the Houston Chronicle during February 1937 remained noncommittal. Two days after Roosevelt made the court reform proposal, the Houston newspaper published an editorial containing the following passage:

It will be interesting to see where the majority of the people will stand in this fight. Unquestioningly the majority of the people are heart and soul for President Roosevelt but, likewise, despite all the criticism of the Supreme Court heard in the last couple of years, the people as a whole have deep respect and affection for the court and its justices, look upon it as the chief bulwark of their liberties, and will be inclined to go slow about any significant changes in its composition (12, p. 22).

In another editorial, the Chronicle told its readers that only one portion of Roosevelt's court plan was at issue, "the one providing for appointment of new Supreme Court and other federal court justices for each judge past 70 who refuses to retire. That is the proposal that practically all the fight is centering about" (13, p. 20)." The Chronicle gave no endorsement to either side.

Among the state's rural newspapers, the Austin Statesman alone supported Roosevelt's efforts to secure passage of his court reform bill. In an editorial on February 15, the
Statesman said, "Critics of President Roosevelt's, in their furious protests, failed to say how short of constitutional limits he went asking Congress to streamline the venerable supreme court." The editorial added that Roosevelt's plan "didn't ask so much" (14, p. 4). Later, the Statesman continued its defense of the court reform plan: "If we can just realize that the Constitution as it stands is only another law--and as such is a product of human errors, political deals, and plain, everyday expediency--we may be able to discuss it intelligently, instead of emotionally" (15, p. 4).

Editorials in the Beaumont Enterprise and Corpus Christi Caller took positions in favor of retaining the existing structure of the federal courts. On February 14, the Enterprise argued that no branch of the federal government "should usurp the power of another branch, but all three continue to function as parts of a whole, each performing the duties assigned to it and exercising the powers given to it by the constitution" (16, p. 4). A week later, the Enterprise discussed what it called the "big question" surrounding the court reform controversy:

The big question is not Mr. Roosevelt's future, or even the future of the "New Deal," but whether or not the American people want to exchange their present form of government for the kind of government Mr. Roosevelt has in mind. That government will, to a large extent, destroy the political identities of the states and leave them little more than geographical subdivisions (17, p. 4).

The Corpus Christi Caller initially refused to take seriously the debate over the court reform bill. In an editorial on
February 20, the Caller said, "While the country has its eyes on the general subject of court reform, it might be a sound idea to forget all about the federal judiciary and concentrate for a while on the courts nearer home" (18, p. 6). The editorial said the average person was more affected by what transpires in state and county courts. Later, however, the Caller published an editorial acknowledging no precedent for Roosevelt's court reform bill (19, p. 4).

Two other rural newspapers, the Amarillo News and the Abilene Morning News, opposed the court reform plan, and they additionally conducted straw polls of their readers to determine local reaction to the President's plan. The Amarillo News opposed the court plan in an editorial on February 6, saying such a bill "would be clothing him with a power not intended by those who founded and have preserved this nation." The editorial continued:

There is no emergency that demands the establishment of a dictatorship. No doubt President Roosevelt has no such ambition in mind, but if the amendment is passed as he recommends he will equal Hitler and Stalin and Mussolini in power. In four years he will retire and others would inherit this dictatorship. This is what it is, call it what you may (20, p. 1).

The Abilene Morning News opposed the court plan in an editorial on February 18. The editorial claimed:

One need not follow Mr. Roosevelt blindly in this matter. One can still admire him tremendously and believe implicitly in his sincerity and honesty of purpose. But one does not have to do violence to the traditional spirit of democracy in order to remain loyal to an individual. We yield to no one in admiration of and respect for Mr. Roosevelt, but this time we believe he has overreached himself. He has gone too far in his zeal to put over his economic and sociological theories (21, p. 6).
Concerning the straw polls conducted by the two newspapers, and the polls included ballots printed on page one of both newspapers, the results ran counter to the editorial positions. Ballots in the *Amarillo News* explained briefly Roosevelt's court reform plan and then asked the readers to mark either "I am in favor of the plan" or "I am against the plan." This poll resulted in 2,130 people saying they favored the plan and 1,456 people saying they opposed the plan. In the *Abilene Morning News* poll, 1,163 people said they were in favor of the court plan, and 943 people said they opposed the court plan. Both newspapers published the results of a nationwide poll conducted by Newspaper Enterprise Association, and these results consistently were in opposition to Roosevelt's court reform plan. Despite the results of the two local polls, both the *Amarillo News* and the *Abilene Morning News* continued to opposed the court reform bill on their editorial pages.

During the debate in Congress over the court reform bill, as more and more senators were moving in a direction diametrically opposed to such progressive measures, the plan suddenly died during the summer of 1937. Several incidents led to the defeat of the plan. For all intents, the court reform bill died when Roosevelt directed Vice President Garner, after the unexpected death of Senate Majority Leader Joseph Robinson, to try to secure a compromise. What resulted was a bill that provided minor ways of expediting the judicial process. Patterson wrote, "The plan itself, his failure to
consult his leaders, and his refusal to compromise marked the worst congressional bungling of his career (3, p. 125)."

Roosevelt regarded his court reform proposal as one of the most important pieces of legislation during his first two terms in office (1, p. xlvii). The reason for this was that the Supreme Court began to reverse itself in its rulings on New Deal measures. On March 29, 1937, the Supreme Court upheld state minimum wage laws in Washington; in April, a series of rulings upheld the Wagner Act; and on May 24, two five-to-four decisions upheld the unemployment insurance provisions of the Social Security Act, and a third decision (seven-to-two) said the old-age pensions of the Social Security Act were constitutional (2, pp. 236-238).

Other than the death of Senator Robinson, who had organized support for the court reform plan in the Senate, and the retirement of Justice Van Devanter, Roosevelt believed that the reversals by the Supreme Court itself brought about the defeat of his court reform bill:

But the startling fact which did more than anything else to bring about the defeat of the plan in the halls of Congress, was a clear-cut victory on the bench of the Court for the objectives of the fight. The Court yielded. The Court changed. The Court began to interpret the Constitution instead of torturing it. It was still the same Court, with the same justices. No new appointments had been made. And yet, beginning shortly after the message of February 5, 1937, what a change (1, p. lxvi)!

Roosevelt believed the reversals by the Supreme Court would not have occurred had not he made his court reform proposals. Although the President felt that 1937 "marked a definite turning point in the history of the United States" (1, p. xlvii),"
Patterson said it was an indication of the first serious damage to "what had amounted to a myth of the Rooseveltian invincibility. He had fought hard for a dear project and for the first time had had lost badly" (3, p. 127).

The Recession of 1937

Despite the problems his administration suffered through the handling of the court reform bill, Roosevelt, by the end of the summer of 1937, could point to an economy that had improved considerably since the low point of the Depression, the winter of 1932-1933. Indeed, it was in the spring of 1937 that the country had pulled above the 1929 levels of industrial production for the first time; Roosevelt referred to this as one strong indication that his New Deal was working. Then, in August 1937, economic disaster struck again. While the country seemed to be headed inexorably toward economic recovery, industrial activity suddenly fell off sharply; it was one of the most severe economic crises in years (2, p. 243). Specifically, steel production went from 80 per cent of capacity to only 19 per cent of capacity; the New York Times Business Index fell from one hundred to eighty-five, a drop that erased all gains realized since 1935.

In his message to the extraordinary session of Congress on November 15, Roosevelt said the economic downturn had not reached serious proportions, but that it did have the effect of decreasing national income, a matter that was of definite concern (1, p. 491). Roosevelt said he was aware of uncertainties
in the nation's economy, triggered mainly by a rapid rise in consumer prices:

The fundamental situation is not to be compared with the far different conditions of 1929. The banking system is not over-extended. Interest rates are lower. Inventories are not dangerously large. We are no longer over-extended in new construction or in capital equipment. Speculation requiring liquidation does not overhang our markets (1, p. 492).

Roosevelt recommended that private enterprise cooperate with government agencies to raise the level of industrial activity because such cooperative efforts would bring about a balanced federal budget, a major concern of businessmen at the time. If private enterprise refused to respond to the economic crisis, the President told Congress, then "government must take up the slack"(1, p. 492)."

The prosperity achieved by the spring of 1937 had been achieved primarily through deficit spending on the part of the federal government (2, p. 244). Mass employment had been brought about through massive spending measures; but Roosevelt, by early 1937, had become concerned about inflation and had cut governmental spending sharply. Government, in short, had been "priming the pump" of the nation's economy and had stopped that involvement. Roosevelt's assumption was that private enterprise would assume the burden of spending to maintain high levels of employment, but that assumption was incorrect, as businesses and industries were not at that point willing to spend. Leuchtenburg believed that if businesses had been willing to spend in the fall of 1937, the economic crisis of 1937 probably could have been avoided (2, p. 244).
What resulted during the last five months of 1937 and the first five months of 1938 became known as the "Roosevelt Recession." By late March 1938, approximately four million people had lost their jobs, the Federal Reserve Index fell to a mere ten points above its 1932 level (seventy-nine), and the Dow Jones stock averages dropped drastically. Waves of selling overwhelmed the stock markets; two million people lost their jobs between Labor Day 1937 and the end of the year. Business leaders met with Roosevelt but offered no new solutions. Finally, after a tour of Western states convinced him that the American people still supported him, Roosevelt decided to call a special session of Congress (2, pp. 244, 254, 256; 3, pp. 188-190).

Daily newspapers in Texas, for the most part, did not criticize Roosevelt directly for the economic recession. As early as August 1937, there was a common plea from the newspapers for Roosevelt to balance the federal budget by eliminating measures that called for deficit spending. Urban daily newspapers particularly were concerned with this aspect; rural daily newspapers did not publish as many editorials on the recession as did the larger metropolitan newspapers. As the economic downturn worsened, however, headlines on page one of the state's newspapers told of continued hard times: "Message To Congress Awaited/ Most Important Since Inaugural Speech In 1933/ Business Wants Action To Halt Recent Slumps," "Stock Market Trades In Frenzy," "Cotton Crop History's Largest/ Prices Decline On Heels Of Huge Bale Report," "Economy Issue
Flares As Congressmen Gather," and "Roosevelt To Whip Up Business Revival/ President Is Mapping Recovery Plan."

One of the first Texas urban newspaper to urge a balanced federal budget was the Dallas Morning News. As early as March 18, 1937, the Morning News claimed that the federal government had "run up expenditures to an unprecedented level and is unable to get them down" (22, p. 4). The same editorial said the "national administration ought to set as its goal the balancing of the budget." Later in the year, the newspaper observed that continued deficit spending had the "depressing psychological effect of a continuously unbalanced budget" (23, p. 2). On December 13, the Morning News said the economic recession could be ended by "insistence on a balanced budget, even though it hurts. The situation is not so bad at present that the application of the sound remedy will be more than temporarily painful" (24, p. 4). An earlier editorial in the Dallas newspaper said, however, that the business recession had had little effect on Texas (25, p. 4).

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram was not so critical of Roosevelt as the Dallas Morning News. Instead, it praised the President for his efforts to cut federal spending. In an editorial on April 16, the Star-Telegram said Roosevelt "knows that even as wealthy a country as the United States can not go on indefinitely spending nearly twice its income without eventually coming to grief" (26, p. 10). Months later, when the recession was in full swing, the newspaper observed, "If the Roosevelt Administration determines on
more pump-priming to stimulate industry and narrow unemployment, armaments might well be the chief repository." (27, p. 10).

This editorial made reference to worldwide buildups in weapons of war, a theme that became more common in Texas newspapers in 1937 and 1938. On the more immediate topic of the recession, the Star-Telegram said it was "one of the mysteries of our democratic system" how the country continued to fall victim to the "economic vicious circle that operates to nullify gains . . . and produces economic instability that punishes everybody sooner or later" (28, p. 10).

The San Antonio Light published fewer editorials about the recession than did the Dallas Morning News or the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. The Light, nevertheless, was quite critical of the Roosevelt administration. In an editorial on December 1, the San Antonio newspaper said "less punitive action toward business" on the part of the federal government would alleviate the causes of the economic downturn:

The pivotal question before the American people is whether the present business slump is to prove to be a short recession or a prolonged depression. The pretensions of new deal economic planners that they have found the key to stability have been exploded by the recent trend of events (29, p. 2).

The New Deal, according to the Light's editorial, had caused the recession.

The Houston Chronicle, on the other hand, was not at all critical of the New Deal. A Chronicle editorial on December 12 advised that the recession "can be overcome and the recovery process resumed on a higher level than it reached..."
last spring if the production of durable goods is stimulated"; the editorial referred to the slow-down in major industrial activity as a characteristic of all business recessions (30, p. 2). The Chronicle later expressed the common belief that construction in Texas "for the eleven months of this year would indicate that there is no recession in the Lone Star State"(31, p. 2).

Fewer editorials were published in the state's rural newspapers concerning the recession. The Abilene Reporter-News (a merger of the Abilene Morning News and the Abilene Daily Reporter had been completed in April 1937) apparently did not believe there was a recession. In an editorial on October 17, the Abilene newspaper said, "We are now enjoying a fair measure of prosperity"(32, p. 6). Still, subsequent editorials in the Reporter-News seemed critical of the federal government. "Business is greatly in need of a breathing spell, and it can't get it while under constant assault in Congress," the newspaper argued (33, p. 6). The Reporter-News believed that government had "meddled too much" in the affairs of business, and that was a primary cause of the recession (34, p. 4). An editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise took a different approach, saying that the over-production of farm goods had greatly harmed business in general: "Is the American farmer so stupid that he alone cannot do what other producers of an exportable surplus do? Is the agriculture industry so disorganized and demoralized that the federal government has to save it from self-destruction"(35, p. 4)?"
The Austin Statesman covered the same topic, explaining that American farmers "are little by little approaching the status of a European peasant class, working tremendously but gaining little proportionate income--and meanwhile some thirty million of them and their dependents are gradually and increasingly receding as buyers of the products of American industry and labor" (36, p. 4). Overproduction was the problem, the same editorial said. In November the Statesman urged that surplus farm products be sent to underprivileged people in the United States, a group the newspaper called a "submerged third market" aside domestic and foreign markets (37, p. 4).

Farmers and ranchers in the Panhandle, explained an editorial in the Amarillo News, were suffering from the business recession because residents of that part of the state could not afford to purchase their products (38, p. 6). The News believed, too, that the business recession was due in part to the trend of purchasing foreign items. "Just because a thing comes from afar or costs a lot doesn't make it the most valuable," an editorial on November 16 said (39, p. 6). Subsequent editorials in the News were more pessimistic about the recession. On December 7, an editorial said:

So the country approaches the end of the year in a state of anxious expectancy, wondering whether the old business cycle is going to have its way under new deal as old. Are we, after all, helpless? Is there nothing we can do but take it, decade after decade?

As of today there doesn't seem to be much reason for optimism (40, p. 4).

A week later, the same newspaper exclaimed that any nation "that could live through the last depression can live through
anything, very likely, and what is ahead of us can hardly be worse than what we have been through" (41, p. 4).

The Fair Labor Standards Act

By the time the extraordinary session of Congress convened on November 15, 1937, Roosevelt still was immensely popular throughout the country, but he was no longer able to dominate Congress as he had in the past unless his coalition completely supported him (3, p. 210). The conservative coalition that had begun to form in Congress in 1935 had been strengthened by the fight over the court reform bill and the problems encountered in the economic recession. The Roosevelt administration angered the conservative congressmen with another proposal, albeit not a new proposal, in mid-November 1937, when the President asked Congress to enact legislation to guarantee minimum wages and maximum hours to laborers engaged in interstate commerce. The proposed bill because known as the Wages and Hours Act, or the Fair Labor Standards Act.

First introduced in the Senate in May 1937 by Senator Hugo Black of Alabama, the wages and hours bill quickly aroused the ire of Southerners, who had profited from traditional wage differentials with Northern businessmen. After considerable debate, the Senate passed the bill in late July; however, the House balked, and in December a bare majority of the representatives voted to recommit the bill to the House Labor Committee (2, p. 261; 3, p. 245). It was not until April of the following year that a new wages and hours bill was reported out of the
committee. This particular measure was more acceptable to the American Federation of Labor, but it contained no provision for the continuation of the wage differential between Northern and Southern industries. Southern congressmen again had the bill sent back to committee, this time to the House Rules Committee. Finally, on May 6, 1938, the bill received the 218 signatures necessary for discharge from the committee. After two weeks of dealing with other legislation, the House passed the wages and hours bill overwhelmingly, 314-97; (2, pp. 261-262; 3, pp. 195-196, 244-245).

After the House passed the wages and hours bill, it was sent to a conference committee where differences with the Senate's version of the bill would be alleviated. The result was a compromise wages and hours bill that set up advisory wage boards for most interstate jobs to consider existing competitive conditions; provided minimum wages of twenty-five cents an hour for the first year, thirty cents an hour for the second year, and forty cents an hour for the third year; gave some companies up to five years to reach the forty-cent-an-hour level; provided a timetable whereby minimum weekly hours would be dropped from forty-four to forty; and listed numerous businesses and industries that were exempted from these provisions (3, pp. 245-246). In a fireside chat on June 24, nine days after the wages and hours bill was signed into law, Roosevelt called it "the most far-reaching, far-sighted program for the benefit of workers ever adopted here or in any other country. Without question it starts us toward a better standard
of living and increases purchasing power to buy the products of farm and factory"(1, p. 392).' Before the summer had ended, the nation's economy appeared to be pulling out of the recession.

In Texas, daily newspapers were not enthusiastic about a bill that seemed to them to provide many of the labor guarantees that were nullified in the 1935 Schechter case overturning the NRA. The *Dallas Morning News*, for example, said the bill "works a hardship on new enterprise which must build up from nothing to success and on established enterprise which may temporarily lose ground in competition"(42, p. 6). The same editorial called the wages and hours bill a "hard and fast rule" that was "far more likely to increase unemployment than to help labor." Another urban newspaper, the *San Antonio Light*, stated that the wages and hours bill was a New Deal attempt to control the economy, and that such an attempt would fail. "The lesson is as plain as day," the *Light* editorial maintained. "Planned economy does not and cannot work, whether it be an old deal or a new deal that does the planning"(43, p. 4).

The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* observed that the wages and hours bill was essentially controversial. In an editorial on May 26, the newspaper warned that the bill would extend the powers of the federal government:

The voices of those who regard with deep alarm a further extension of governmental control over the nonpolitical relations of the Nation's life, are overwhelmed. If this encroachment should be held off by the Senate, it will not be because of awakened realization
of the dangers to democracy inherent in such expansions of government, but merely because of a quarrel over a detail of this particular expansion (44, p. 10).

Subsequent editorials in the Star-Telegram found items in the wages and hours bill that were commendable. The abolition of child labor was "worthy of praise," an editorial on June 7 said (45, p. 10); and the attempt to "recover the central idea of the NRA ... is less threatening than the first fears of opponents. It is also less promising than the first hopes of supporters" (46, p. 14).

Another urban newspaper, the Houston Chronicle, deplored the bargaining that was apparent as Congress attempted to bring the wages and hours bill to a vote (47, p. 4). The Houston newspaper, however, expressed the hope that the bill, if it were properly administered, would "raise the standard of living of a considerable part of the population, and eliminate the 'chiseler' who pays smaller wages than his neighbor who has identical conditions in his plant" (48, p. 6).

Rural newspapers in Texas did not publish as many editorials about the wages and hours bill as did their urban counterparts; nevertheless, editorials in the smaller newspapers appeared to disagree with the provisions of the bill. The Beaumont Enterprise, for instance, charged that the wages and hours bill would "create a new NRA, impose restrictions upon industry which it could not observe and survive and, in short, do far more harm than good" (49, p. 4)." The bill, the editorial continued, was badly drawn up and discriminatory against the South. A later editorial said, "Northern insistence
upon fixed wages and hours without differentials favorable to the South was caused by the desire of Northern industrialists to rid themselves of Southern competition" (50, p. 6)." Even the Austin Statesman, which had steadfastly supported the New Deal, acknowledged that the wages and hours bill would be "tough on Texas":

Growing opposition to the proposed bill is voiced by the farmers. They, too, are employers of labor. But just now agriculture and those engaged in its pursuit are in the doldrums . . . . Result is a wide spread between what they buy and what they sell. The agricultural dollar has shrunk to about the size of fifty cents (51, p. 4).

The Abilene Reporter-News took a similar position in its editorials on the wages and hours bill. On December 3, 1937, the Reporter-News said the bill would "give the manufacturing centers of the East, already favored by high tariffs, a still greater advantage over Southern factories and farms" (52, p. 4)." Subsequent editorials in the Abilene newspaper were even more antagonistic toward the wages and hours bill. On December 5, the newspaper maintained that the bill "well might bankrupt Southern industry . . . . Most of these industries have been struggling along for years, always only a couple of jumps ahead of the sheriff" (53, p. 14)." The bill, in short, was "one of unmitigated evil, so far as the South is concerned," the editorial concluded.

Summary and Conclusions

Texas daily newspapers became more critical of the New Deal during the two years following Roosevelt's overwhelming
re-election in 1936. This was due in large part to the first major proposal Roosevelt made after his 1936 victory, the bill to reform the federal judiciary. Only two newspapers supported Roosevelt in this matter, one urban newspaper and one rural newspaper, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and the Austin Statesman. The Houston Chronicle did not support or oppose Roosevelt on this issue, and all other newspapers were strenuous in their objections to the court reform bill. Most newspapers had expressed strong approval of the Supreme Court's rulings invalidating portions of the New Deal. As far as the recession of 1937 was concerned, nearly all newspapers urged that cuts be made in federal expenditures; only two newspapers, the Dallas Morning News and San Antonio Light, criticized Roosevelt's efforts to stimulate the economy. On the Fair Labor Standards Act, all newspapers criticized the Administration for its efforts to secure passage of the bill. Urban newspapers in particular opposed this bill, while rural newspapers, even though they published fewer editorials on this topic, also found objectionable provisions in the bill. The trend among Texas newspapers toward increasing criticism of the New Deal, begun in 1935, continued through 1937 and 1938.


7. San Antonio Light, February 8, 1937.

8. San Antonio Light, February 9, 1937.


10. Fort Worth Star-Telegram, March 10, 1937.


18. Corpus Christi Caller, February 20, 1937.

27. **Fort Worth Star-Telegram**, December 28, 1937.
29. **San Antonio Light**, December 1, 1937.
30. **Houston Chronicle**, December 12, 1937.
42. **Dallas Morning News**, June 9, 1938.
43. **San Antonio Light**, June 1, 1938.
44. **Fort Worth Star-Telegram**, May 26, 1938.
45. **Fort Worth Star-Telegram**, June 7, 1938.
46. **Fort Worth Star-Telegram**, June 15, 1938.
47. Houston Chronicle, December 3, 1937.
51. Austin Statesman, November 27, 1937.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A definite pattern appeared in Texas daily newspapers during the 1930s in their editorials concerning Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, a pattern marked by widespread support early in the decade and increasing opposition later. This support appeared in the presidential campaign of 1932 and in the First New Deal of 1933; scattered opposition appeared in 1935, 1937, and 1938. The only interruption in the apparent shift from support to opposition came in 1936, when all but one major Texas newspaper supported Roosevelt for re-election.

Although only three newspapers, the San Antonio Light, Austin Statesman, and Houston Chronicle, formally endorsed Roosevelt in the 1932 presidential election, all other newspapers supported him on their editorial pages. No newspaper published editorials that supported the re-election of Herbert Hoover. For the most part, Hoover was portrayed in editorials as being indecisive, Roosevelt as being a man of action. Editorials throughout the state praised Roosevelt for his promises to use federal funds to stimulate the economy and to increase employment. Hoover, on the other hand, was criticized for his attempts to seek re-election by denying that his Administration had caused the Depression. There was no obvious
difference in the editorials that appeared in urban and in rural newspapers, with the exception that urban newspapers published more and often lengthier editorials than did rural newspapers. As far as editorial reactions to Roosevelt and Hoover were concerned, there were no differences between urban and rural newspapers; all supported Roosevelt.

The first official act of the Roosevelt Administration in 1933 was the banking act, and Texas newspapers responded with immediate enthusiasm. None of the newspapers opposed the banking act. Only two newspapers, one urban newspaper and one rural newspaper, opposed the Roosevelt farm relief program in 1933, the AAA; the opponents were the Dallas Morning News, which strenuously objected to most of the bill's provisions, and the Abilene Morning News, which opposed portions of the bill. All newspapers supported the industrial recovery program, the NRA, although urban newspapers were critical only of portions of the program. All newspapers similarly supported the concept of a conservation army, the CCC, even though the program was later to have a strong influence on the state's unemployed. On the general issue of relief, all newspapers strongly supported the actions taken by Roosevelt.

In 1935, the first signs of widespread criticism toward parts of the New Deal appeared. The San Antonio Light strongly opposed Roosevelt's work relief scheme, the WPA, while all other newspapers supported the measure. The same pattern followed in the editorial reactions to the social security bill; only the San Antonio Light objected to this proposal.
On the Wagner Act, however, opposition appeared in the editorials of all urban newspapers; one rural newspaper, the Austin Statesman, supported the Wagner Act, and another, the Corpus Christi Caller, opposed it; all other rural newspapers ignored the issue on their editorial pages. When the Supreme Court invalidated the NRA, this opposition continued, as both urban and rural newspapers published editorials supporting the Court's ruling; no newspaper spoke out editorially against the invalidation.

In 1936, the swing from constant support to scattered opposition was halted, temporarily, as all but one newspaper supported Roosevelt's re-election. Only the San Antonio Light chose to endorse Alfred Landon for the presidency; but, only the Fort Worth Star-Telegram chose to endorse formally Roosevelt for re-election. The other newspapers criticized Landon's campaign and praised Roosevelt's efforts to secure re-election; two rural newspapers, the Abilene Morning News and Amarillo News, urged their readers to donate money to the Democratic national campaign. Except for the editorials in the San Antonio Light, there was no apparent difference in the reactions of urban and rural newspapers to the campaign.

The first major proposal by Roosevelt in 1937, however, evoked strong objections from all but two Texas newspapers, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram and Austin Statesman. This proposal was the court reform bill, a measure that drew widespread criticism from both urban and rural newspapers. The only newspapers to support the court reform bill, one urban newspaper
and one rural newspaper, gave indication of how this proposal affected editorials. All rural newspapers opposed the court reform bill, and one other urban newspaper, the Houston Chronicle, declined to take an editorial stance. Later in 1937, the San Antonio Light continued its criticism of Roosevelt during the recession that fall and winter; a rural newspaper, the Abilene Reporter-News, joined in this criticism, as did another urban newspaper, the Dallas Morning News. Nearly all newspapers urged Roosevelt to eliminate measures that called for deficit spending, and to take action to balance the federal budget. The following spring, Texas newspapers unanimously opposed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which most thought was an attempt by Roosevelt to secure another NRA; urban and rural newspapers alike opposed this bill, and there was little difference in the content of their editorials.

What occurred in the editorials, then, was a definite shift from support to opposition as the New Deal shifted its emphasis in the mid-1930s from agrarian measures to urban and labor questions. Texas newspapers supported the New Deal so long as it remained fairly conservative and dealt primarily with non-urban and non-labor problems; however, as the New Deal changed its emphasis in the mid-1930s, Texas newspapers began to grow increasingly critical. This criticism seemed to parallel the growth of the conservative coalition in Congress during the middle part of the decade. What interrupted this trend among Texas newspapers, nevertheless, was their near-unanimous support for Roosevelt in 1936. Following the
election of 1936, the newspapers reverted to the pattern of criticism toward the New Deal. Despite attempts by Roosevelt to cut back on federal spending measures in 1937, attempts that Texas newspapers previously had supported, the criticism from the newspapers continued. The Fair Labor Standards Act, which was signed into law in May 1938, evoked widespread criticism from the state's newspapers.

Since the central hypothesis of the study was that urban newspapers were more critical of urban measures and rural newspapers were more critical of rural measures, several points need to be made. First, urban newspapers like the Dallas Morning News opposed rural measures like the AAA; second, rural newspapers like the Corpus Christi Caller opposed urban measures like the Wagner Act; third, the state's newspapers often were unanimous in opposing a New Deal measure, as occurred in the reactions to the Fair Labor Standards Act; fourth, the urban San Antonio Light opposed all New Deal issues from 1935 to 1938; fifth, all newspapers showed a tendency to become more critical of the New Deal after 1935; and sixth, all urban newspapers supported the creation of a primarily urban program, the NRA, but later unanimously supported its invalidation by the Supreme Court. What can be concluded from the editorial reactions is that Texas newspapers did not respond to the New Deal along definite urban and rural lines; often the reactions were mixed, sometimes they were unanimous.

From the editorials themselves, it must be concluded that the central hypothesis of the study is not supported, even
though there were scattered examples during the 1930s that corresponded with it. What was evidenced was a shift in the content of editorials concerning the New Deal; whereas the editorials early in the decade tended to be highly supportive of the New Deal, the editorials in 1935 and after tended to be more critical of the New Deal. The only exception occurred in the election of 1936. Because of numerous examples of editorials that did not follow the patterns of the central hypothesis, the hypothesis is rejected.
APPENDIX A

NEWSPAPER CIRCULATIONS
CIRCULATION FIGURES TAKEN FROM THE 1933 VOLUME OF N.W. AYER & SON'S DIRECTORY OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abilene Morning News</td>
<td>13,080</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amarillo News</td>
<td>27,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin Statesman</td>
<td>11,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont Enterprise</td>
<td>29,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corpus Christi Caller</td>
<td>7,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas Morning News</td>
<td>89,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth Star-Telegram</td>
<td>99,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Chronicle</td>
<td>80,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio Light</td>
<td>71,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Circulation figures listed are Sunday distribution figures; smaller figures were listed for weekday circulation for each newspaper.
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Corpus Christi Caller, 1932-1938.


Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 1932-1938.

Houston Chronicle, 1932-1938.

San Antonio Light, 1932-1938.