A Rhetorical Study of the Public Speaking of Harold L. Ickes in the 1936 Presidential Campaign.

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A RHETORICAL STUDY OF THE PUBLIC SPEAKING
OF HAROLD L. ICKES IN THE 1936
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

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B. A., Southeastern Oklahoma State College, 1947
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ABSTRACT

This study is a rhetorical analysis of the public speaking of Harold L. Ickes, Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior. The analysis is limited to Ickes' major radio broadcasts in the presidential campaign of 1936. In that campaign, Ickes was the acknowledged "hatchet-man" of the New Deal. His speeches were devoted almost exclusively to attacks upon the Republican candidate, Alfred M. Landon, and upon Landon's leading supporters. Ickes' own Republican background and his reputation for inventive and innuendo were among his special qualifications for his campaign role.

This study analyzes the nature of Ickes' campaign task, the characteristics of his persuasion, and the effectiveness of his speaking efforts. The first two chapters discuss Democratic campaign strategy and Ickes' place in that strategy. Chapter III analyzes the speaker's general methods of preparation and delivery. In the next five chapters, five network campaign broadcasts are studied. The analysis of each speech is based upon the following-named factors: background and setting, purpose and thesis, organization and lines of argument, forms of support, use of language, and reactions to the speech. The final two chapters synthesize characteristics
of the speaker's persuasion and evaluate his performance as a speaker in his campaign role.

One of the principal sources of material for this study is the Ickes Papers deposited in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress. This collection contains speech files, including all drafts of speeches and memoranda and letters concerning them; letter files, including political correspondence; and scrapbooks, which include an extensive collection of press clippings pertinent to Ickes' activities as a campaign speaker. Personal interviews with people closely associated with Ickes in his department or in the campaign are also a source from which information was gathered.

This study concludes that Ickes achieved a large measure of success in his role as a campaign speaker. His attacks on Landon were widely publicized and, in the opinion of observers both friendly and unfriendly, achieved their desired result. The chief sources of Ickes' persuasion were psychological techniques of suggestion. Among these techniques were "name-calling," the argument of "guilt by association," the constant and varied repetition of unproved premises, and the use of persuasive humor. These psychological appeals were not always supported by sound logic or evidence, nor does it appear that all of them could have been. In this
respect, Ickes failed to demonstrate a maximum awareness of his responsibility to his audience.

Ickes' campaign oratory was neither elevated in theme nor statesmanlike in substance. It nevertheless captured public attention, and it apparently constituted politically effective persuasion in the 1936 campaign.
INTRODUCTION

A unique figure in American public life is lost to the nation and a phase of the New Deal comes to a close with the death of Harold Ickes.¹

On February 3, 1952, President Harry S. Truman marked with these words the death of Harold L. Ickes, the Illinois Republican who for thirteen years served as Secretary of the Interior under Democratic presidents. President Truman's comment was appropriate, for the public record of Ickes, like the man himself, was indeed unique. That record ended with words of high praise from the president who had six years before accepted Ickes' heated resignation. Its most important phase had begun in 1933 when Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed to his cabinet a life-long Republican who had never held public office, a man he had never before seen, and a man virtually unknown outside his own state. In a matter of weeks, Harold Ickes also became head of the Public Works Administration, and three years later he was one of the leading Democratic speakers in the Roosevelt campaign for a second term.

During the 1936 campaign, Ickes delivered ten

major political addresses.\textsuperscript{2} Five of these speeches were broadcasts, thirty minutes each in length, over national networks. According to Paul C. Aiken, 1936 head of the Democratic Speakers' Bureau, the Republican Secretary of the Interior was in great demand as a campaign speaker.\textsuperscript{3} This position was itself unusual for Ickes, who once admitted that he was "in no demand as a speaker anywhere or at any time" before becoming a member of the Cabinet, because he was "a perfectly rotten speaker."\textsuperscript{4}

The most noteworthy aspect of Ickes' campaign activity was not, however, the number and importance of his speeches; it was his unique role in the campaign. For Ickes was the Administration's political "hatchet-man." His assignment was to attack the Republican candidate for president, Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, Landon's leading supporters, his platform, and his party in general. That Ickes filled such a campaign role has been generally agreed upon by his associates.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{2}Manuscripts of these speeches are in Harold L. Ickes' Private Papers (hereafter referred to as Ickes Papers), Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.
  \item \textsuperscript{3}Personal interview, February 1, 1955.
\end{itemize}
in the campaign and by later commentators.\(^5\)

Ickes' role was one for which he had undoubtedly certain qualifications. Despite his high position, the Secretary never hesitated, on or off the platform, to be blunt and outspoken. He was always the same man who, in his autobiography, said:

> If, in these pages, I have hurled insult at anyone, be it known that such was my deliberate intent, and I may as well state flatly now that it will be useless and a waste of time to ask me to say that I am sorry.\(^6\)

He was an officer of cabinet rank whose sense of dignity would not prevent his calling Governor Landon, in 1936, "the friend of the common millionaire," Wendell L. Willkie, in 1940, the "simple, barefoot, Wall Street lawyer," and Governor Thomas E. Dewey, in 1948, "Mr. Thomas Elusive Dewey, the candidate in sneakers."\(^7\) Ickes' willingness to engage in personalities, usually

\(^5\)This role has been described in personal interviews by such Administration associates as Paul G. Aiken, Thomas G. Corcoran, Michael W. Straus, and Joel David Wolfsohn. It has been further confirmed, and with the term "hatchet-man" specifically employed, by two books dealing, in part, with the 1936 campaign: Harold P. Gosnell, Champion Campaigner: Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), p. 161; and Donald Richberg, My Hero (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1954), p. 238.


through invective and irony, has been noted by Harry S. Truman as a factor which "made him a formidable opponent in public debate." 8

In 1936, Secretary Ickes led the Democratic attack on Landon and the Republican party, and he did so with language seldom heard in the public pronouncements of a cabinet officer. The 1936 campaign was his first in the role of political hatchet-man. The purpose of this study is to analyze, first, the factors which drew Ickes into this unusual campaign role, second, his performance in that capacity, and third, the effectiveness of his efforts.

Detailed study of Ickes' speeches is limited to the five addresses broadcast by national radio networks. A study of his other five 1936 campaign speeches would reveal much duplication of both method and arguments. Further, it was the nationally broadcast attacks which were most widely heard on the air, most widely reported in the nation's press, and most significant in the campaign.

The organization of the study is as follows: Chapter I sets briefly the background of the campaign and analyzes Democratic problems and strategy. Chapter

8Ibid.
II analyzes the role of Secretary Ickes as a speaker in the campaign, with special attention to how his role fitted into Democratic strategy. Since Ickes' methods of preparation and delivery were, in the case of his radio addresses, almost identical in each speech, Chapter III analyzes general methods of preparation and delivery. Each of the next five chapters is devoted to an analysis of a network radio address. Those speeches were as follows:

"What Shall the Republican Platform Be?"—N.B.C.—June 7.
"Governor Landon, Practical Progressive"—C.B.S.—August 3.
"Hearst Over Topeka"—C.B.S.—August 27.
"Landon, Coughlin, 'et Al!'"—N.B.C.—October 9.
"Is Landon Sincere?"—C.B.S.—October 20.

In the analysis of each speech, the following aspects are considered: background and setting, purpose and thesis, organization and lines of argument, forms of support, use of language, and reactions to the speech.

The final chapter, Chapter IX, seeks to analyze and evaluate Ickes' performance in his special role. It attempts, first, to discover what persuasive methods and techniques characterized the political hatchet-man, and second, to evaluate, so far as it is possible, the
effectiveness of his rhetorical efforts. The chief criteria used in this study for evaluating effectiveness are (1) the publicity given to Ickes' attacks, (2) the degree to which Democratic strategists considered that he had accomplished what they desired, and (3) the opinions of political observers of both parties, or of neither party, concerning the value of Ickes' rhetorical efforts to the Democratic party.

Although the man's historical importance and his unique political role certainly appear to warrant such an undertaking, there have been no previous studies of the speaking of Harold Ickes. Indeed, there have been no biographies except his own. Incomplete biographical data can be obtained from Ickes' The Autobiography of a Curmudgeon and from the first three volumes of his partially-published diary. The following chronological sketch is presented as a compendium:

1874--Born on March 15 on a farm in Blair County, Pennsylvania.

1890--Moved to Chicago; entered Englewood High School.

1893--Graduated in the top ten of his high school class; entered the University of Chicago.

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9Ickes, op. cit.

10Ickes, Secret Diary, Vols. I-III.
1897—Graduated "cum laude" from the University of Chicago; began work as a news reporter.

1901—Worked in the headquarters of John Harlan, candidate for the Republican nomination for Mayor of Chicago.

1903—Wrote campaign speeches for Graeme Stewart, Republican candidate for mayor; entered law school at the University of Chicago.

1905—Managed Harlan's campaign for Mayor.

1907—Received law degree.

1911—Managed Charles E. Merriam's campaign for mayor; married Anna Wilmarth Thompson.

1912—Joined the Progressive party of Theodore Roosevelt; made chairman of the Cook County Progressive Committee.

1916—Served on the campaign committee of Charles Evans Hughes, Republican candidate for President.

1917—Worked for the Creel Public Information Committee.

1918—Worked in France as YMCA representative.

1920—Opposed Warren G. Harding at the Republican convention; later announced for James Cox.

1924—Managed the presidential campaign in Illinois for Hiram Johnson, Progressive candidate.

1928—Remained aloof from the campaign; voted for Alfred E. Smith.

1932—Headed the Western Independent Republican Committee for Roosevelt.

1933—Appointed Secretary of the Interior; later appointed administrator of FWA and the Oil Code.

1935—Mrs. Ickes killed in automobile accident in New Mexico.
1936—Active in the presidential campaign.

1937—Active as a speaker in Roosevelt's court fight.

1938—Married Jane Dahlman, then in her twenties.

1940—Active as a speaker in the campaign against Wendell Willkie.

1941—Appointed Petroleum Coordinator.

1944—Active as a speaker in the campaign against Thomas E. Dewey.

1946—Resigned his cabinet post because of President Truman's support of Edwin C. Pauley for Secretary of the Navy.

1949—Campaigned in New York for Senator Lehman against John Foster Dulles.

1952—Died on February 3 in Washington, D. C.

Of the materials available for a study of Ickes, the most rewarding for the rhetorical critic are the Ickes Papers in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress. Among the 117,000 individual items collected and indexed there are all drafts of the Ickes speech manuscripts, including the actual reading copies. The preliminary drafts are accompanied by memoranda in the form of suggestions for revision from the Secretary's staff; the final reading copies have the reading time marked off into minutes, and many of the words to be stressed are underlined. This collection also includes all correspondence about the speeches, both before and after delivery. It includes, further, a set of
scrapbooks which contain newspaper clippings from all sections of the nation, many of which reflect the news coverage of Ickes' speeches and editorial reactions to them. Favorable and unfavorable comments alike were collected by Ickes.

Two other collections of contemporary papers have been helpful: the Raymond Clapper Papers in the Library of Congress and papers from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, New York.

A great deal of pertinent information has been secured by personal interviews with friends and associates of the late Secretary of the Interior. Two Chicago acquaintances of long-standing, Edward Eagle Brown and Walter T. Fisher, were helpful for information concerning Ickes' background, his Illinois activities, and an insight into the man himself. Among the New Deal associates interviewed were Rexford Guy Tugwell, James A. Farley, Thomas G. Corcoran, Benjamin V. Cohen, Michael Straus, Joel David Wolfsohn, and Miss Helen Cunningham, a personal secretary. The Secretary's widow, Mrs. Jane Dahlman Ickes, provided first-hand information and kindly granted permission for use of material from the Ickes Papers. Also through Mrs. Ickes, a recording of a 1937 speech favoring President Roosevelt's Supreme Court plan was secured. No recordings of 1936 campaign addresses were available.
Of unquestionable value for some specific information and much background knowledge have been the wealth of volumes concerned with the New Deal—some by its adherents, some by its enemies, and several by historians. Newspapers and periodicals of 1936 have provided not only accounts of the presidential campaign, but also an insight into the social and political atmosphere into which Harold L. Ickes' speeches were projected.
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEMS AND STRATEGY OF THE DEMOCRATIC
PARTY IN THE 1936 CAMPAIGN

The speaking of Harold L. Ickes in the 1936 campaign can be studied best when placed in the political setting of that day. The purpose of this chapter is to describe significant elements of that setting, giving particular attention to apparent Democratic prospects, major Democratic problems, and Democratic campaign strategy.

President Roosevelt’s campaign opponents were selected in early June by the Republican convention at Cleveland. Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, who had received widespread newspaper support for several months prior to the convention, was nominated for President on the first ballot. Frank Knox, unsuccessful aspirant for the presidential nomination, was chosen to complete the ticket. The Democratic convention met in Philadelphia in the last week of June and quickly renominated Franklin D. Roosevelt and John Nance Garner.

APPARENT DEMOCRATIC PROSPECTS

Democratic leaders had several reasons to anticipate an easy Roosevelt-Garner victory as they weighed
their prospects in early 1936. In 1932, Roosevelt had turned Alfred E. Smith's 1928 deficit of over six million votes into a plurality of over seven million.¹ In 1934, the Democrats had reversed the usual trend of congressional losses between presidential elections, increasing their House majority to 332 and their Senate majority to 69.² The economic recovery which had swayed voters in 1934 continued in 1935 and 1936.³ In his book, The History of the New Deal, Basil Rauch wrote that the New Deal's record of recovery was "its greatest asset" in the campaign.⁴

The Roosevelt candidacy possessed also the usual electoral advantages of the party in office, plus others which resulted from recovery and relief legislation. According to a reported estimate by Democratic Chairman James A. Farley, the 296,500 new federal appointments

¹Review of Reviews, XCLL (March, 1936), 21.
²Atlantic Monthly, CLVII (January, 1936), 93.
³By April of 1936, business was reported to be ninety per cent of normal. Current History, XLIV (April, 1936), 1.
might insure a block of over eleven million votes. The Democrats also counted on drawing heavily from the votes of the twenty-four million people who were receiving relief or work-relief checks from the government.

Labor and farm groups were also expected to support the re-election of Roosevelt. Except for a few craft unions of the American Federation of Labor, organized labor supported Roosevelt almost solidly; farm groups, except for a few leaders of the Grange, also supported the President. So strong were labor and farm support for the President that Raymond Clapper, Washington political correspondent, commented upon "Roosevelt's new party, dominantly farmer-labor in character."

These were the encouraging signs as Democrats assessed their campaign prospects in early 1936, but some discouraging facts and possibilities had to be faced too. On May 27, 1935, the Supreme Court handed down three anti-New Deal decisions, the most important being the

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5"Assuming careful selection of appointees, Mr. Farley estimates, from long experience and careful checks, that every job, on average, is worth forty votes in the next election." Lawrence Sullivan, "Our New Spoils System," *Atlantic Monthly*, CLVII (February, 1936), 190.

6*Review of Reviews*, XCIII (April, 1936), 35.

7*Rauch, op. cit.*, p. 245.

8*Review of Reviews*, XCIII (May, 1936), 25.
Sohechter Poultry Corporation decision. This decision, which declared the National Industrial Recovery Act to be in violation of the constitution, constituted both a blow to the New Deal and a potentially good campaign issue on constitutional government for the Republicans. Also in 1935, the Republicans, in the off-year elections, captured the New York General Assembly, elected mayors in Cleveland and Philadelphia, carried formerly-Democratic Hudson County in New Jersey, and defeated a Democratic congressman in Rhode Island. These Democratic reverses heartened New Deal opponents and brought forth their attacks with new vigor. Of these New Deal critics, Frederick Essary said this:

Still another practical effect of the Schechter decision and the Rhode Island turnover was to bring from cover countless Administration critics, long in hiding. They emerged by the thousands. One heard them pillorying the New Deal in the halls of Congress. One heard them reviling it in the market places, arraigning it in the press and in convention assembled, in the clubs, and wherever else a hearer could be found.

Accompanying these discouraging developments were

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9 "A unanimous court decision had found the Administration and the Congress to be guilty of a violent assault upon the Constitution. At last an issue had been raised, perhaps a winning issue. Republicans were overjoyed." Frederick Essary, "An X-Ray of the Campaign," Atlantic Monthly, CLVII (January, 1936), 93.

10 Ibid., p. 94.
some unfavorable results of public opinion polls. The poll of the American Institute of Public Opinion, for example, indicated that President Roosevelt's popularity declined sixteen per cent between February, 1934 and October, 1935.  

Most of the President's political advisers were keenly aware that not all signs pointed to an easy Democratic victory in 1936. Samuel I. Rosenman, for example, indicated that Roosevelt aides were alert to the presence of unfavorable indications:

Although the President was to carry every state but Maine and Vermont in 1936, in the spring the prospects for re-election did not seem quite that bright. Political opposition had begun to crystallize. The close Democratic unity had begun to dissolve; many of the old-line Democrats, especially from the South, had come to feel that the New Deal was a little too strong for their tastes. The American Liberty League had been organized, and it included among its prominent members a number of national leaders of the Democratic party. Its purpose was to prevent the President's re-election. . . .

Charles Michelson, publicity director for the National Democratic Committee, also indicated that these unfavorable developments did not go unnoticed among Democratic strategists. Michelson admitted that fear of these

11 In February, 1934, sixty-nine per cent of those polled supported the President; in October, 1935, this figure fell to fifty-three per cent. New Republic, LXXXV (November 13, 1935), 11.

adverse developments getting out of control was responsible for the Democratic decision to begin active campaigning one month earlier than originally planned.\textsuperscript{13}

MAJOR DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN PROBLEMS

Democratic strategy had to be based, in large part, upon the specific campaign problems which confronted the party. Some of the major problems faced were the almost solid opposition of business, the hostility of most leading newspapers, the defection of many Democratic leaders, and the strength of the early boom for Governor Landon. Still other problems were embodied in several potentially vulnerable spots in the New Deal record. These included the broken 1932 economy pledges, the continuation of widespread unemployment, the admitted presence of some degree of administrative inefficiency, and the increased centralization of government which many Americans feared. A brief consideration of these problems is pertinent to understanding the strategy of the Democratic campaign as a whole and of the part played by Ickes in that strategy.

That most businessmen opposed the Administration in 1936 was clear. The brief era of good feeling between

\textsuperscript{13}New York Times, November 15, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 10.
the New Deal and business, which the NRA had for a time
effected, was short-lived. The opposition of the American
Liberty League, an organization sponsored primarily by
conservative business interests, severely tried this
relationship in the 1934 congressional elections; the
President's security program and Wealth Tax Act of 1935
strained the truce still further; the successful op­
position of business to the New Deal in the November
1935 elections and the President's subsequent attack on
business in his Annual Message to Congress in January,
1936, completely ended the political honeymoon. By 1936,
the "First New Deal" was over and the "Second New Deal"
had begun. A program which was to represent primarily
farm and labor interests had emerged, and business was no
longer a partner in the undertaking. Business hos­
tility in the 1936 campaign was assured. Rauch notes

14 Basil Rauch, in *The History of the New Deal*,
refers to the "First New Deal" as that "chiefly benefi­
cial to big business and large farmers"; the "Second New
Deal," which began in 1935, was "chiefly beneficial to

15 "By 1936, the administration had virtually
abandoned its initial program of carrying out plans which
were formulated by all three of the major interest groups
in the nation, business, farmers, and labor, and of making
each of these groups the direct beneficiary of government
action to help it improve its status. Business had in
that "virtually all the substantial organizations of business were officially in opposition." Among these organizations were such well-financed groups as the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the business-backed American Liberty League.

Another Democratic problem was the hostility of a large section of the American press. The President asserted that about 85 per cent of the American press opposed him in the 1936 campaign. Rauch, without giving an exact estimate, notes that "the press was overwhelmingly favorable to Landon." This antipathy toward Roosevelt made it difficult for the Democratic campaign to receive fair and equal treatment in the press. The President himself stated: "Many newspapers and magazines went to the length of coloring, distorting, or actually omitting important facts in the news columns as well as in the editorial pages." The hostility of a large segment of the nation's press presented

16Ibid., p. 245.


18Rauch, op. cit., p. 246.

19Rosenman, loc. cit.
a problem to the Democratic campaign. Getting Democratic arguments forcibly before the voters was a much more difficult task than it would have been with an evenly divided or friendly press. Farley called it "a serious handicap that has to be met right at the start." 20

Another apparently serious Democratic problem was the defection of many prominent party leaders to the Republican candidates. The most publicized and perhaps serious Democratic defection was that of Alfred E. Smith. In late January of 1936, Governor Smith addressed the American Liberty League at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. For an hour his audience "chortled and chuckled" while the former presidential candidate "belabored and ridiculed the New Deal policies and accomplishments of his political ally, Franklin D. Roosevelt..." 21 Smith later declared for Governor Landon and actively campaigned for him. Still other conservative Democrats of some prominence who publicly opposed Roosevelt and the New Deal were James A. Reed, former Senator from Missouri; John B. Ely, former Governor of Massachusetts; Bainbridge Colby, former Secretary of State; Daniel F. Cohalan, former New

21 Ibid., p. 293.
York district judge; John W. Davis, Democratic presidential nominee in 1924; John J. Raskob, former Democratic National Chairman; Jouett Shouse, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee; and Senator Royal Copeland of New York. Some of these men undoubtedly had personal followings of varying sizes, and their influence would be felt in the returns of several states. Representative Joseph Martin, Republican Minority Leader in the House of Representatives, estimated that Alfred E. Smith alone would bring three million votes to the Republican candidates. The defection of men like Smith, Davis, Ely, Colby, and Copeland alarmed many Democrats, who expected the bolters to influence a great many votes, and their loss appeared to constitute an election hazard as the campaign got underway.

For a time it also appeared that Roosevelt faced a very formidable Republican opponent. Almost unknown outside of Kansas until 1934, Governor Landon rose rapidly into contention for the presidential nomination. In 1934, in the midst of Republican defeats elsewhere, Landon was re-elected Governor of Kansas. His reputation for governmental economy and a balanced budget

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22 Chicago Tribune, July 19, 1936, Sec. I, p. 4.
was brought to the attention of the nation in general and of Republican leaders in particular. Shrewdly managed by John Hamilton, Kansas legislator and later Republican National Chairman, Landon won the support of William Randolph Hearst in early 1936. The Landon "boom" then began to develop. Despite the opposition of such available candidates as William E. Borah, Arthur Vandenberg, Frank Knox, and Herbert Hoover, Landon won the Republican nomination in Cleveland on the first ballot. Speaking later of Landon's stature at the convention, Farley said:

The advance publicity had been cleverly handled. The public was interested in this new Plumed Knight of the Republican Party, and the opinion was widespread that an appealing political figure was about to come forward to challenge President Roosevelt on equal terms. The interest in Landon was especially keen in the agricultural states adjoining Kansas and in some of the Eastern industrial centers. His ability as a 'budget balancer' had travelled before him, and people really believed that he would be able to cut out this 'wasteful Federal spending' and at the same time continue to make benefit payments to agriculture and take care of the army of unemployed.24

Republicans believed they had found in Landon a candidate who would appeal to a wide range of voters:

From the point of view of Republican strategists, Landon was a business man associated with the oil industry who was at the same time identified with a great farm state, so that he might be made attractive to farmers without risking the 'irresponsibility' towards business of a Borah. He had

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24Farley, op. cit., p. 309.
supported the Bull Moose campaign of Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, which would appeal to liberals. He was not identified with the adamant opposition to the New Deal, but, on the other hand, he had shown little interest in the progressive legislation which Western governors usually advocated.25

Apparently the strategy of selecting a candidate who could be all things to all men proved effective during the early stages of the campaign. A Current History editorial feature noted in July that "He [Landon] may be a genius in disguise. His build-up has been perfect, if the object was to satisfy rank and file cravings."26 Though Landon looked considerably weaker by November, in the early phases of the campaign his successful build-up posed what appeared to be a serious problem to the Roosevelt forces.

All the Democratic campaign problems to which reference has been made so far have been expressed in terms of opposition forces to be overcome. Democratic strategy also had to take cognizance of some of the strongest attacks being pressed against the New Deal record. The defense of parts of this record was difficult enough to constitute a serious problem. Among the charges to which the Roosevelt record was most


vulnerable were failure to fulfill the 1932 platform of government economy, continued unemployment, administrative inefficiency in relief, and an apparent trend toward centralization of government.

In 1932, the Democratic platform promised an economy administration. In line with that promise, the President submitted his economy bill to Congress on March 10, 1933. This measure reduced normal government expenditures, especially in the field of federal salaries and veterans' benefits. It was enacted by Congress on March 11. This early indication of reduced federal expenditures was, however, short-lived. By early 1934, Congress had begun passing appropriation measures over the President's veto, and by 1935 the President's relief and public works programs had helped to pile up an increasing federal deficit. By June of 1936 this deficit reached the sum of $34,000,000,000, an increase of about $13,000,000,000 since March, 1933. This was despite the increased revenues brought about by tax raises.

The Administration was well aware that the increased federal deficit, representing as it did an

27Rauch, op. cit., p. 63.

28These figures were released by the Treasury Department and published in the New York Times, June 30, 1936, p. 6.
apparently discarded campaign pledge, would be strongly used in the Republican campaign of 1936. In June of 1936, the New York Times editorialized that it was "the issue about which Mr. Roosevelt feels probably the most self-conscious,"29 and Arthur Krock later wrote that since 1933 the President "had realized the dangers of the budget issue in his campaign for re-election."30

As expected, Republican campaigners kept up a constant fire on the federal debt and the broken economy plank of 1932. James Hagerty, newspaperman accompanying Governor Landon on his campaign tour, listed this as one of the five issues most stressed by Landon,31 and it was a chief subject in the Governor's August 26 address at Buffalo, New York. It was apparently an attack which brought good crowd reaction. The New York Times reported of the address that the rather passive audience of 20,000 "warmed up a little to his attack upon the Roosevelt administration for failure to balance the budget."32 Attacks upon this phase of the Roosevelt record posed a threat to which Democratic campaigners, including Ickes

29 New York Times, June 21, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
30 New York Times, August 16, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
31 New York Times, October 18, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
and the President, gave definite attention during the campaign.

Despite some advance against the unemployment problem, the Roosevelt administration was censured during 1936 for its failure to obtain widespread re-employment of the idle. That serious unemployment still existed, no one denied. In an October 2, 1935 address in San Diego, General Hugh Johnson, former NRA Administrator, referred to "this most dangerous of our national problems--ten million jobless," and added that "although we have tried valiantly, we haven't done anything effective yet. . . ." Among Franklin D. Roosevelt's three very "vulnerable spots," Raymond Clapper listed in July, 1936, "the 10,000,000 unemployed." Democratic campaigners were able to point to employment increases, but Republicans charged that New Deal policies were actually preventing further re-employment. Lewis H. Brown, President of the Johns-Manville Corporation, told the U. S. Chamber of Commerce that ninety per cent of the nation's businessmen believed that anti-business policies "are definitely preventing re-employment." Colonel


Henry Breckenridge, Assistant-Secretary of War under President Wilson and a Democratic foe of Roosevelt in 1936, charged that at least a third of the unemployment was because of "Wallace's and Tugwell's economy of scarcity." These attacks upon the New Deal's claims for recovery were serious enough to require denial or explanation during the campaign.

The Republicans also levelled criticism upon the New Deal methods of trying to combat unemployment, primarily upon the Works Progress Administration—the controversial WPA. Some top Democratic leaders, while favoring the aims of WPA, privately admitted that its administration was very vulnerable to attack and considered it a campaign liability.37 The New York Times, which eventually declared editorially for the President's re-election, termed WPA a leading issue in the campaign and enumerated five main charges often made against it: waste and extravagance in planning, excessive cost of supervision, preference of relief to re-employment by many WPA workers, disparities in contributions of the various states, and use of WPA by


Democrats as a political instrument. The vulnerability of WPA affected the campaign tactics of the New Dealers and influenced their use of Harold Ickes, administrator of the less controversial PWA, as a frequent campaign speaker.

Still another Republican attack which was potential dynamite to Democratic chances was the charge that the President was leaning toward alien philosophies of government. James A. Hagerty listed this as one of the issues most stressed by Landon, and it was on the lips of most of the President's enemies, both Republicans and conservative Democrats. Alfred E. Smith was foremost in the van of the attacking Democratic minority, associating the President with Socialists, Communists, and "a shower of crackpots." Probably very few voters believed the New Deal was really communistic, but it was possible that a great many really feared that the trend was toward some form of collectivism. Some may have given weight, too, to the charge that the President was approaching dictatorial power in some areas. His leadership of Congress and the powers granted to him during

38 New York Times, October 11, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
39 New York Times, October 18, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
40 New York Times, November 1, 1936, p. 43.
the depression emergency were undeniably greater than they had been under Presidents Hoover, Collidge, or Harding. The fears his opponents tried to arouse in the public mind needed to be choked off or dispelled by Franklin D. Roosevelt and his campaign aides.

The opposition of business, of the press, and of many conservative Democrats; the successful early build-up of Governor Landon as a challenging candidate; and the principal attacks upon the New Deal record and trends—these were Democratic problems, or apparent problems, which influenced Democratic campaign strategy in general and the campaign role of Ickes in particular.

DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

In this as in other national campaigns, a large portion of strategy planning was done as the campaign progressed, and many people played a part in its formulation. Benjamin V. Cohen, close adviser to the President in 1936, emphasizes that this was true of the Roosevelt-Landon campaign.41 It is possible, however, in retrospect, to observe definite campaign lines which gradually took

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41 Personal interview with Mr. Cohen on January 29, 1955. This same opinion was also expressed by Michael Straus, Ickes' Director of Information, in a personal interview on January 25, 1955.
shape and to note certain broad approaches which were taken from the outset. The following list suggests some main principles which appear to have guided the strategy of the Roosevelt forces:

(1) The Democratic campaign was one of "watchful-waiting," standing on the broad record of comparative economic recovery and attacking Republican weaknesses and errors as they appeared.

(2) The campaign capitalized to the fullest extent on the personal appeal and official prestige of Franklin D. Roosevelt, utilizing him as an asset both on the stump and in pursuit of his executive duties.

(3) Maximum effort was made, especially in the early stages of the campaign, to prevent an effective Landon build-up.

The Democratic strategy of "watchful waiting" was described by the noted American historian, Charles A. Beard:

Tacticians on the Democratic side seem to operate on the assumption that the password should be 'watchful waiting.' President Roosevelt will make no radical departures from the record already written, avoid sharp criticism of the Supreme Court, give some attention to economy, and, as in the campaign of 1932, count on Republican errors to carry the election. 42

Beard described the actual course of events rather closely. The Democrats stood on their claim for progress toward recovery, proposing no new programs and avoiding the dangerous court issue; they more often than not presented only a broad defense of the New Deal, comparing it favorably and forcefully with the previous Republican administration, and they did "wait the Republicans out," pouncing upon what they thought to be vulnerable spots and tactical errors as they appeared.

Efforts by Democratic strategists to make the campaign approach a positive one are described by Laura Crowell in her study of the President's speeches in the 1936 campaign:

The Republicans, as challengers, should have taken the offensive, driving Roosevelt to a defense of the policies of his administration. In this campaign, however, the incumbents became the challengers, constantly enforcing the comparison—with the powerful aid of the nation's recovery—between the New Deal years and the preceding Republican administrations, and never allowing the Republicans to consider the Roosevelt administration as a single factor.43

The Roosevelt forces were equally intent upon finding vulnerable spots in the Republican campaign upon which they could capitalize. The first apparent campaign error of the Republicans was that of letting

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the American Liberty League carry the brunt of the pre-convention assault upon the Administration. The Democrats decided that the Liberty League was so palpably an organization of men of wealth that public opinion would not support it. As a result, New Deal speakers and writers launched rhetorical assaults upon the Liberty League during the first few months of 1936. Farley later wrote that this organization was so thoroughly discredited by convention time that "the Republican party was frantically trying to denounce and disown it." 44

The Republican platform, placed under heavy Democratic fire, may also have been a handicap to Landon. Ickes devoted a great deal of attention to this document which Democrats denounced as "weasel worded." Arthur Krock wrote after the Cleveland convention that the Republicans' long, compromising platform had "helped the Democratic campaign prospect." 45 Krock further believed that the uncertain tenor of the whole Republican campaign was a mistake, trying as it did to attack the New Deal, but actually retaining almost all of its parts. This "shotgun strategy," he concluded, permitted Roosevelt to

44Farley, Behind the Ballots, p. 294.

45New York Times, June 21, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
attack instead of defending. Basil Rauch arrived at the same conclusion in his analysis of the 1936 campaign.

Aided by some of the Republican campaigners, the Democrats worked to place Landon in an untenable position in another respect. Landon attempted to prevent any impression that his program was linked to that of the "Old Guard." Stung, however, by the persistent Democratic attacks, such Republican speakers as John Hamilton and Frank Knox more and more defended the Hoover line. In addition, Hoover himself took an increasingly active part in the contest. This forged between the last Republican candidate and the current one exactly the link which Landon hoped to avoid. Such a seeming link encouraged Democratic attacks on the Republican party as the party of depression and arch-conservatism.

Democratic strategy also involved capitalizing heavily on the acknowledged abilities of Franklin D. Roosevelt as a vote-getter. Democratic campaign leaders decided early that Roosevelt himself was to be the basic issue in the election. They further believed that no one could make a more favorable presentation of himself

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46 *New York Times*, September 27, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
and his policies than the President, who was described by Arthur Krock as "unsurpassed as a campaigner." ¹⁴⁹

The chief problem was to get Roosevelt before the voters. In view of newspaper opposition, the radio was the selected medium, a medium in the use of which Roosevelt was an admitted master. To put the President on the air frequently from convention time to election time was financially out of the reach of the party's treasury. The solution hit upon fitted very nicely into the strategy of "watchful-waiting": Roosevelt remained "non-political" until the last month of the campaign. At that time he conducted a whirlwind one-month campaign—touring doubtful states, answering whatever attacks had to be answered, and getting network radio coverage for every major address. Until the final month, the Democratic candidate attended strictly to his duties as President, making a "non-political" visit to Texas and Arkansas while the Republican convention was in progress and making an extended "non-political" tour of the drought-stricken Midwest during the summer. Some Republican newspapers accused the President of playing politics. The President, however, continued to tour. As Farley later put it, the President simply "busied himself with

⁴⁹*New York Times*, September 27, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
those duties which kept him before the public eye in legitimate fashion without indulging in direct political action.\textsuperscript{50} The \textit{New York Times} got to the heart of the matter when it said: "The value of such a trip, regardless of motive, two months before an election is inestimable."\textsuperscript{51} Roosevelt appeared before the people, talked with them, and probably won votes every "non-political" mile of the way. Meanwhile, Ickes and others carried on the active campaign, keeping the Republicans busy.

On September 29, in Syracuse, New York, Roosevelt initiated his openly political campaign and began to talk on the issues. That one month has been very effectively described and analyzed by the Crowell study and will not be set down in any detail here. Farley summed it up as "the greatest piece of personal campaigning in American history."\textsuperscript{52}

Another important part of Democratic strategy was to prevent the threatening Landon boom from ever reaching its most dangerous proportions, especially during the

\textsuperscript{50}\textit{Farley, Behind the Ballots}, p. 309.

\textsuperscript{51}\textit{New York Times}, August 30, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Farley, Behind the Ballots}, p. 316.
time that the President was not actively campaigning. Farley has described the Democratic tactics employed to prevent such a possibility:

While President Roosevelt was giving a good positive picture of public leadership during the summer of 1936, the Democratic National Committee was engaged in the task of puncturing the Landon 'myth' and thus preventing the Kansas Governor from making gains. . . . We had a minute study of Governor Landon's record compiled at headquarters, and a vigorous fire was directed constantly at his official acts.

The attacks upon Landon, coming primarily from Ike and never from the President himself, will be discussed later in considerably more detail.

This describes in general the broad strategy of the Democratic campaign. A brief consideration of specific tactics employed to meet the particular campaign problems discussed earlier sheds additional light on Democratic efforts.

The hostility of business to the New Deal was, in some respects, a serious problem. It was most damaging, however, only if old party lines were intact. The Roosevelt strategy was to see that they were not intact.

53"The Democrats began the campaign with the theory that the correct strategy was to insure, if possible, that the candidate of the opponents should not be built up to an inspiring figure." New York Times, November 15, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 10.

54Farley, Behind the Ballots, pp. 310-11.
The Democrats knew during 1935 that they were alienating businessmen; but they also knew they were attracting labor and farm support. They decided to accept the hostility of large business interests and form the farmer-labor coalition which such opposition actually encouraged. In May of 1936, Raymond Clapper noted that such a party, superimposed on the old Democratic organization, was already in existence.\textsuperscript{55} When the Democrats attacked certain big business practices and interests, or when business attacked Roosevelt, the result was a natural strengthening of the new farmer-labor coalition.

Also brought into the coalition were political progressives of both Republican and independent status. Just as they had done in 1932, the Democrats won the support of leading liberals like Senator Norris, Senator Couzens, and Mayor LaGuardia. Such organizations as the Progressive Party for Roosevelt, the Good Neighbor League, and Labor's Non-Partisan League were set up to facilitate the campaign activity of such liberal and independent groups. This helped to counter the defection of Smith and other conservative Democrats, though Democrats also countered with direct attacks upon some of these insurgents.

\textsuperscript{55}Raymond Clapper, "Roosevelt's New Party," Review of Reviews, XCIII (May, 1936), 25.
The hostility of the press was met primarily by reliance on the extensive use of radio to get facts, as the Democrats saw them, before the voters. The President's tours were also used to a large extent, partly through personal contact and partly through furnishing news which could not be entirely ignored by the most hostile papers. But radio had to be the mainstay. In a post-election analysis, Farley gave large credit for Democratic victory to the use of that medium:

I have already said that the influence of the radio in determining the outcome of the 1936 election can hardly be overestimated. Without that unrivaled medium for reaching millions of voters, the work of overcoming the false impression created by the tons of written propaganda put out by the foes of the New Deal would have been many times greater than it was, and, to be candid, it might conceivably have been an impossible job.56

To the specific attacks on portions of the New Deal record, the Democrats made occasional replies. For example, Harry Hopkins occasionally would reply to charges against WPA,57 Secretary Morgenthau depreciated the amount of the national debt for which the New Deal was accountable,58 and the President himself took up

56Farley, Behind the Ballots, pp. 318-19.
57Hopkins was not very active as a speaker, since Farley believed him and his organization so vulnerable in the campaign. Farley, Jim Farley's Story, pp. 63-64.
58Current History, XLIV (August, 1936), 16.
the charges of New Deal adherence to alien philosophies in his Syracuse address. The primary defenses of the Democratic campaigners against these attacks, however, were embodied in the recognized emergency confronted in 1933 and in the partial recovery achieved by 1936. If WPA had made mistakes, it had provided income for several millions; if taxes and the national debt were higher due to pump-priming, recovery was being achieved; if there was still unemployment, it had been reduced since 1933. Using these general recovery claims as a springboard, Democrats then usually proceeded to attack the "inactivity" of the Hoover administration. Instead of making specific and detailed defenses, they more often took the offensive.

This chapter has described the principles of strategy used by the Roosevelt forces in the 1936 campaign. The November results attested, in part, to their success. The Democratic candidates entered the campaign with enough political assets to make their re-election prospects very good, but they also faced problems which, if improperly handled, could have changed the course of the election. This was the political setting in which Harold L. Ickes, Bull-Moose Republican in the Democratic camp, played his part in the campaign of 1936.

59 In September, 1936, employment was at 88.7 per cent of the 1929 levels and still increasing; this compared to a level of 56 per cent in 1933. New York Times, September 24, 1936, p. 24.
CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF ICKES IN THE CAMPAIGN

Harold Ickes was one of the most active speakers in the Democratic campaign of 1936. Between June 1, 1936, and the close of the campaign, he made twenty scheduled and prepared addresses. Ten of these speeches were openly political in nature; the other ten were delivered at public works dedications and on other essentially non-political occasions. Of the ten campaign speeches, five were broadcast over national radio networks and four others were carried by special state on regional networks.

The following-listed campaign speeches, together with information on radio coverage given them, are included in the speech files in the Ickes Papers:

June 7--Studio Broadcast--"What Shall the Republican Platform Be?"--N.B.C.

July 17--University of Virginia--"Representative Government vs. Dictatorship"--No Radio.

August 3--Studio Broadcast--"Governor Landon, Practical Progressive"--C.B.S.

August 27--Studio Broadcast--"Hearst Over Topeka"--C.B.S.

October 9--Columbus, Ohio--"Landon, Coughlin, 'et Al'"--N.B.C.

October 20—Studio Broadcast—"Is Landon Sincere?"—C.B.S.

October 21—Northwestern University—"Only Thirteen More Days to Save America"—C.B.S. (500 mile radius).

October 27—Altoona, Pennsylvania—"Why Pinchot Ran Out"—State Network.

October 28—New York City—"The Crossroads"—Special Eastern Network.1

Ickes was sponsored as a speaker by the Democratic National Committee, the Progressive National Committee for Roosevelt, and the Good Neighbor League. According to Congressman Sam Rayburn of Texas, he was the most requested of all Democratic speakers.2 The President, during the course of the campaign, indicated to his Republican Secretary of the Interior that what the Democratic campaign needed was "four Harold Ickeses."3 Secretary Ickes, seldom guilty of any display of false modesty, concurred in these sentiments. On August 19, 1936, Ickes wrote:

There is not any doubt that I have been putting more licks into this campaign on the speaking and publicity side than any other member of the Administration. As a matter of fact, I have been doing more than all the other members of the Cabinet combined.4

1Ickes Papers.
3Ibid., p. 659.
4Ibid., p. 663.
REASONS FOR ICKES' IMPORTANT ROLE AS A SPEAKER

An analysis of possible reasons why Ickes figured so prominently as a Democratic speaker is a pertinent and interesting inquiry. Certainly it was not because of any long-standing reputation he had as an effective speaker.

On September 19, 1936, Ickes commented in his diary:

I certainly was in no demand as a speaker anywhere or at any time before I became a member of the Cabinet. And the reason is not far to seek. I was a perfectly rotten speaker. I was scared to death when I stood before an audience and it wasn't any wonder that I was not in demand. If I ever did have a chance to speak, I avoided it if I possibly could.5

While his friends and associates in Chicago do not recall that Ickes was "perfectly rotten," some of them have indicated that prior to attaining cabinet office he certainly had no special reputation or ability as a speaker.6

Ickes' effectiveness as a speaker undoubtedly improved while he was Secretary of the Interior and Administrator of PWA. These positions gave him new prestige and, at the same time, required that he speak more

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5Ibid., p. 683.

6Personal interviews with Walter T. Fisher, prominent Chicago lawyer who was a neighbor and associate of Ickes for several years, and Edward Eagle Brown, Chairman of the Board of the First National Bank of Chicago and an Ickes family friend of long standing. Mr. Fisher was interviewed on December 27, 1954, and Mr. Brown on December 29, 1954.
frequently. Marked improvement was noted by some of Ickes' assistants, and one or two of the Secretary's speeches in late 1935 and early 1936 attracted the attention of the President and his advisers. In early December, Ickes addressed a forum in Detroit, delivering a fighting, progressive type of attack on certain national economic ills; in early January, he followed much the same fighting line in Rochester, New York. These speeches aroused interest more, however, through the blunt ideas and the fighting language in the manuscript than through the platform ability of the speaker. The primary reasons for the willingness of Democratic strategists to use Ickes so extensively lay elsewhere.

Actually, a combination of several factors pushed Harold Ickes into the political limelight: his eagerness to campaign, the good reputation enjoyed by both the Interior Department and PWA, the respect accorded the Secretary of several minority groups, the shortage of effective campaigners in the Administration, and, finally,

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7 Personal interviews with Michael Straus, Assistant to the PWA Administrator, and Joel David Wolfsohn, Mr. Ickes' Executive Secretary. Mr. Straus and Mr. Wolfsohn were interviewed on January 23, 1955, and February 1, 1955, respectively.

the presence of a special job in the campaign which Ickes was qualified to handle—that of attacking the Republican party, its candidates, and its leading supporters.

A definite shortage existed of Cabinet officers in the New Deal who were effective as speakers and yet were politically expedient for the Democrats to use. Morgen-thau and Dern were of little value as campaigners; Miss Perkins had little appeal outside New York; Hull was respected by voters, but was a dull speaker; Cummings was a good speaker but did not want to do much campaigning; Wallace was politically effective only in farm areas.9 Some leading New Dealers outside the Cabinet could be used little or not at all in the face of adverse public opinion. National Chairman Farley advised Harry Hopkins to speak very little,10 and Rex Tugwell not at all.11 Hopkins' WPA was believed to be a campaign liability, and Tugwell was under heavy fire for what many thought was a political philosophy too far to the left.

Any member of the Administration who was politically "good medicine," and who was eager to campaign, was

9These were the opinions expressed to Ickes by Farley in July, 1936. Ickes, Secret Diary, Vol. I, p. 632.


11Personal interview with Mr. Tugwell on December 29, 1954.
welcomed to the thin ranks of leading New Deal campaigners. The Secretary of the Interior was both.

The public works program which Ickes administered received more favorable public reaction than did WPA and some of the other alphabetical agencies. Emil Hurja, New Deal statistician, reported that a survey of newspaper editorials showed widespread support of PWA but that only six per cent approved completely of WPA; Frances Perkins believed that PWA was a definite asset to the President's cause; Farley also considered PWA a campaign asset and advised that its administrator be used as a speaker to capitalize upon it. The honesty and incorruptibility generally attributed to Ickes' operation of the Interior Department also helped to establish public confidence.

The standing of Ickes with certain minority groups, especially Jewish and Negro voters, enhanced his


13"Never has there been a breath of scandal about it [PWA]. This was to be a great help to President Roosevelt in the days to come." Frances Perkins, The Roosevelt I Knew (New York: The Viking Press, 1946), p. 275.

14Jim Farley's Story, p. 57.

15The popularity of Ickes with Negro voters was illustrated by a March 11 letter from Walter White to Ickes, in which Mr. White said: "Negro Americans have more confidence in and knowledge of yourself than of any other member of the Cabinet," Ickes Papers, Container 246.
potential value as a campaign speaker. This standing was illustrated by his frequent invitations to address them. These addresses, while ostensibly non-political, certainly possessed political value in an election season. In early 1936, Ickes addressed two Negro groups and one large Jewish rally. On March 2, 1936, he delivered the Charter Day address at Howard University; on May 24, he addressed a United Palestine Appeal dinner audience at New York's Hotel Astor (this address was broadcast by N.B.C.); and on June 29 (again before an N.B.C. microphone), he spoke to an NAACP meeting in Baltimore.

Ickes was eager to be used as a speaker. He had taken some part in almost every national political contest since his graduation from college. He was intensely partisan, and he loved the excitement of a campaign. As early as December, 1935, he urged the President to use his services in any way possible in the coming campaign; in April, he called Governor Horner to volunteer his services in the gubernatorial contest in Illinois; and, on May 8, he assured Chairman Farley that he was available for speaking assignments.

17Ibid., pp. 557-58.
18Ibid., p. 580.
Of greater significance than the preceding factors, however, was that Ickes filled one of the biggest needs of Democratic campaign strategy: the Democrats needed a political "hatchet-man" in 1936; Ickes appeared to be the best man for the job.

THE NEW DEAL'S "HATCHET-MAN"

In Chapter I it was pointed out that Democratic strategy in the 1936 campaign followed three main lines:

(1) Watchful waiting: not rushing to defend against specific Republican attacks, but resting on the broad New Deal record and moving to the attack whenever the Republicans showed a weakness or made a mistake.

(2) Utilizing Franklin D. Roosevelt's appeal and prestige as a non-political President until October and as a campaigner thereafter.

(3) Preventing the full development of a Landon boom.

The effectiveness of this strategy depended in no small degree upon the extensive use of a well-known campaigner who would launch strong and unceasing attacks upon the Republican party, its platform, its candidates, and its principal supporters; it required a good political hatchet-man.
If the Democrats refused to give specific defense to their opponents' charges, they needed someone to launch a vigorous counter-attack. If they withheld the President until the Republicans had fully committed themselves, they needed a strong covering offensive during the tactical delay. Democratic morale had to be kept up by strong counter-fire, and the impression that the Republicans had the field unchallenged had to be prevented. This required at least one political sniper prominent enough and colorful enough to get his shots publicized by a hostile press.

The type of personal campaign which the President wanted to conduct also called for someone else to keep the Republicans under heavy fire. President Roosevelt preferred to proceed on a discussion of broad issues, never indulging in personalities in a speech or even mentioning the name of his opponent:

In this campaign, as in all subsequent ones, the President adhered to his policy of never mentioning his opponent by name, and seldom even by any allusion. There were several reasons for this deliberate practice. Since he was the President running for re-election, an attack by him could only result in giving his opponent more publicity than he otherwise would get. It would give his opponent a chance to answer him, and the very fact that he was answering a President would build up publicity for the answer. 19

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While it may have been expedient for the President to keep himself on a higher and more general plane, obviously someone needed to mention some names occasionally. In the opinion of at least one inside New Dealer, it was specifically with this strategy in mind that the President assigned himself a 'hatchet-man.'

The third phase of broad Democratic strategy, that of preventing a successful Landon boom, was certainly consistent with the assignment of at least one leading campaigner to concentrate his speeches upon the Republican platform and candidates. Landon's early build-up could be neither ignored nor met in mere general terms. His rapidly increasing popularity and prestige needed to be countered by strong and persistent attack on his record, his platform, and his supporters. When Ickes became the New Deal's "orator of the attack," this became his number one job.

The evidence indicates clearly that Ickes was given such an assignment. The number of his attacks and the importance apparently ascribed to them by the Roosevelt forces support this conclusion. During the few weeks of the campaign, Ickes attacked Governor Landon, Frank Knox, Herbert Hoover, Alfred Smith, William Randolph

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Hearst, Father Coughlin, Gifford Pinchot, Colonel Robert McCormick, William Hard, an assortment of duPonts, the Republican platform, and the Republican party in general. The Democratic National Committee, and other organizations supporting the Democratic ticket, considered these attacks important enough to put nine of them on some kind of radio network. Five of them, totaling two hours and fifteen minutes of radio time, were sent out on coast-to-coast networks.

In retrospect, many writers have pinned the hatchet-man label on Harold Ickes. Donald Richberg, one-time administrator of the NRA, says of Ickes:

His intense partisanship made him the anointed 'hatchet man' of the Administration. He could be relied upon to attack any opposition with a vehemence which would insure bruised, battered, and angry opponents wherever he swung his war club. 21

Harold F. Gosnell, in Champion Campaigner: Franklin D. Roosevelt, also refers to Ickes as Roosevelt's hatchet-man. 22

Personal interviews with several men active in the 1936 election produce unanimous agreement that Ickes filled this role of attack in the campaign. Paul C.


Aiken, who directed the Democratic Speakers Bureau in 1936, referred to Ickes as the Administration's "axeman," adding that Roosevelt and Farley made calculated use of Ickes' talents in that direction.23 Thomas G. Corcoran, while agreeing that Ickes was the appointed hatchet-man of the New Deal, added still another term. According to him, Ickes was often referred to by New Dealers as "the king's champion."24 This reference to the special knight of old, whose job it was to do the king's fighting for him, seems to fit Ickes' relationship to Roosevelt. Some of the Secretary's close associates, while agreeing that he played the part just described, indicated the opinion that he made his own role—it was not one simply assigned.25 This version undeniably has some accuracy. Ickes had always been a reform agitator, albeit an unsuccessful one, and his speeches had often been characterized by invective before 1936. Two such addresses have already been cited, one in Detroit and one in Rochester. It was shortly

23 Personal interview with Mr. Aiken on February 1, 1955.

24 Corcoran interview.

25 Both Straus and Wolfschon, in interviews previously cited, stated the opinion that Ickes, with his eagerness to attack, made his own role, and that the President and Farley approved—but did not originally designate—this special function.
after these speeches that Steve Early, Presidential Secretary, told Michael Straus that his Republican boss would undoubtedly be sent out for more New Deal speeches.  

In this sense, Ickes made his own job. Further, Ickes was usually in the forefront of those suggesting that various attacks be made, and he often volunteered to make them. As early as January 18, 1936, he urged Early to get someone assigned to go after Alfred E. Smith and William Randolph Hearst.  

He first suggested that attacks be aimed at Landon on May 22 but found the President unwilling for him to open up so soon. Combining as he did a firm belief in a strategy of attack and an obvious availability as a speaker, Ickes made himself the logical candidate for the job of "king's champion." Thus his role was partly created by himself, partly assigned as deliberate strategy, and partly developed by circumstances as the campaign progressed.

That the President called the shots for his Secretary of the Interior, as for all Administration campaigners, is certain. On June 1, the President told Ickes to prepare his attack on the Republican platform for broadcast

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26 The Early comment, coming on the same day that another Roosevelt secretary, Grace Tully, told Ickes the same thing, was construed by Ickes to represent the views of the President. Ickes, Secret Diary, Vol. I, 512-13.

27 Ibid., pp. 517-19.
on June 7.\textsuperscript{28} On July 7, the President conducted a strategy meeting at which he discussed with Farley and other advisers the strategic moment at which to turn his "champion" loose on Landon.\textsuperscript{29} By this time, Ickes' role as chief orator for the attack had apparently become a confirmed part of Democratic plans. On July 1, the President described the assignment to him in a general way:

I \textsuperscript{28} asked the President what part he expected me to play in the campaign and he said he wanted me to attack. I told him that I hoped he would feel free to call upon me for anything that I could do at any time and he said again that I made such a grand attack that that was what he wanted.\textsuperscript{30}

Before the campaign progressed very far, some Republicans and Republican newspapers were apparently aware of the nature of Ickes' assignment. In August, the \textit{Kansas City} (Missouri) \textit{Times} called Ickes the Administration's "catch-as-catch-can" fighter,\textsuperscript{31} the \textit{San Diego Tribune} labeled him the Administration's "dragon hunter,"\textsuperscript{32} and Congressman Joseph Martin designated him the "chief mudslinger" of the New Deal.\textsuperscript{33} As a matter

\begin{footnotes}
\item[28]Ibid., p. 615.
\item[29]\textit{Jim Farley's Story}, p. 63.
\item[30]Ibid., p. 627.
\item[31]\textit{Kansas City Times}, August 4, 1936.
\item[32]\textit{San Diego Tribune}, August 29, 1936.
\item[33]\textit{New York Times}, August 29, 1936, p. 5.
\end{footnotes}
of fact, suspicion existed before the campaign got under­way that Ickes was going to be used in a special and active capacity. The Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican made this editorial comment on May 28, 1936:

The activity of Secretary Ickes as a widely traveled speaker in behalf of the Roosevelt administration lends interest to a report which has been current for some time and which has cropped up again as the date approaches for the Republican national convention at Cleveland. According to the report, the job of smashing Governor Landon, in case he becomes the Republican candidate, will be assigned to Mr. Ickes, who is mysteriously credited with having 'something on' Governor Landon which will enable him to carry out his assign­ment.34

Whether the term 'hatchet-man' or some similar word-picture be applied to the campaign role of Ickes, certainly his primary job was leading the attack on the Republican party and particularly on its presidential candidate. This was not, to be sure, Ickes' only function in the campaign. He continued to dedicate PWA projects as his share in the Democratic emphasis upon recovery through planning, and he made "non-politi­cal" addresses to minority groups where he could prove effective. His big job, however, was to press the attack against Landon and company, and it is with this aspect of the campaign that the present study is primarily concerned.

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34 Springfield Republican, May 28, 1936.
ICKES' QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE JOB

Aside from his general availability as a campaign speaker, the Roosevelt forces felt that Ickes possessed some special qualifications for the role he played. To begin with, he was a Republican who consistently declined to switch to the Democratic label. Moreover, he was a Progressive Republican of the old "Bull Moose" variety. He had managed the Cook County campaign for Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 and the Illinois campaign for Hiram Johnson in 1924. In 1936 Landon was strongly represented by his backers to be a Theodore Roosevelt type of Republican. The presence in the Democratic inner camp, therefore, of a Republican with an unquestionable background as a leading progressive was a Roosevelt asset not to be ignored. The Democrats had a progressive Republican to loose against a Republican candidate who himself claimed to be a progressive. According to Paul C. Aiken, director of the Democratic Speakers' Bureau in 1936, this was one of the chief reasons why the Roosevelt forces were eager to use Ickes so often against Landon and his followers.35

Another qualification Ickes was thought to possess

35Aiken interview.
as a hatchet-man was his relative invulnerability to counter attack. John Hamilton, Landon's campaign manager, said early in the campaign: "You can't win the campaign by being nice."\(^{36}\) Certainly if the Republican forces had been able to discredit the man who attacked them so persistently, they would have done so. The fact is that Ickes was not particularly vulnerable. His administration of the Interior department and of PWA had been free of scandal and of serious charges of political influence. While the self-styled "curmudgeon"\(^{37}\) had made many enemies, both inside and outside the Administration, he had won respect for his honesty and his painstaking care as an administrator.\(^{38}\) Ickes' record before entering the Administration was, apparently, also able to bear close scrutiny. His opponents expended money and great effort in Chicago trying to find something which could be effectively used to discredit him, apparently without

\(^{36}\)Gosnell, op. cit., p. 156.


\(^{38}\)"PWA is one alphabetical agency which even the Republicans have not dared to ridicule." Newark Ledger, June 16, 1936. "The gimlet-eyed Chicagoan who has kept PWA so amazingly free from graft." Columbia (South Carolina) Record, June 19, 1936. "There have been few charges of favoritism \(^{PWA}\)." Washington Star, August 2, 1936.
result. 39 The most damaging personal item which was turned up against Ickes during the election was his securing for his son, Robert, a minor clerkship on a federal housing project in Boston. 40 For the most part, the Republicans had to be content to refer to him as a "mudslinger," and to emphasize the excesses of his attacks. He proved difficult to discredit, either as a public official or as a private citizen. After the 1936 election, he was still referred to as "Honest Harold."

Ickes had another qualification which Democratic campaigners thought would make him a good hatchet-man: he was good "copy"; his speeches would be listened to and read. By campaign time, he had a reputation as a hard-bitten, colorful character. He had battled publicly with Henry Wallace, Harry Hopkins, Robert Moses, Governor Talmadge, Senators Long and Tydings, and numerous congressmen. When he spoke his mind, he pulled no punches; 41 this had landed him often in print.

Newsmen considered him good copy, partially because of his use of colorful expression. Drew Pearson and Robert

39 Brown interview.


41 Ickes said of himself in this regard: "I have always envied the ability to thrust with a rapier but since I can't do that I must be content with a bludgeon." Letter to Henry J. Allen, editor of the Topeka State Journal, August 18, 1936. Ickes Papers.
Allen, in their "Washington Merry Go Round," said of him: "Not only is Ickes the boss of an outfit that makes news by its activity, but also the sardonic turn of his mind produces words that make headlines."\textsuperscript{42} Ernest K. Lindley, along this same line, referred to the Secretary of the Interior as "the Cabinet wit."\textsuperscript{43}

His reputation as a political scrapper who did not pull punches, his ability to make news by his use of forceful and humorous language, and his important position in the Administration all gave Ickes publicity potential. The radio audience was likely to listen to him and the newspapers to print what he said.\textsuperscript{44} This fact undoubtedly increased his qualification for the special job assigned him in 1936.

In summary, then, Harold Iokes was used in a unique and important capacity as a speaker in the 1936 campaign. It was his job to lead the Democratic attack on candidate Landon and indeed upon any important opposition to the President. His assignment was one which he took with enthusiasm, one to which the President gave

\textsuperscript{42} Washington Post, November 19, 1935.


\textsuperscript{44} The President himself expressed this as a reason for using Ickes so frequently as a speaker. Ickes, Secret Diary, Vol. I, p. 659.
complete approval, and one for which Ickes appeared to be well qualified. It is the further purpose of the present study to inquire into the performance of Harold L. Ickes in his assigned role.
CHAPTER III

PREPARING AND DELIVERING THE ATTACK

All of the five speeches given special consideration in this study were broadcast to a national radio audience.\(^1\) Radio broadcast required that each of these speeches be carefully prepared and timed for manuscript reading. It further required their delivery under the physical limitations of microphone usage. For this reason, the general methods and techniques employed by Secretary Ickes for the preparation and delivery of his speeches were almost identical for all five speeches.

Mr. Ickes had systematized his preparation and delivery to a very high degree by the time the 1936 campaign was underway. The frequency with which he had accepted invitations to speak had virtually necessitated such systematic preparation, if not delivery, of speeches.\(^2\)

To avoid chapter-by-chapter repetition, a generalized treatment of the speaker's preparation and delivery is, therefore, presented in this chapter.

\(^1\)In only one of them, the speech delivered at Columbus, Ohio, was there a "live" audience; the other four were studio broadcasts.

\(^2\)Ickes' speech files show that at least 110 speech manuscripts were prepared between 1933 and June, 1936. Ickes Papers.
Especially pertinent to the study of the speaker's preparation and delivery are these factors: the origin of the speech ideas, the preparation and revision of the manuscripts, publicizing the speeches, and the delivery of the speeches.\(^3\)

**ORIGIN OF THE SPEECH IDEAS**

The specific subjects with which Ickes dealt in his attacks on Republicans were usually Ickes' own ideas. The first all-out assault on Governor Landon, which was eventually delivered on August 3, was suggested and outlined to the President by Ickes on June 17.\(^4\) Ickes had

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3The information concerning speech preparation has been gleaned chiefly from two sources: the collection of Ickes' private papers in the Library of Congress, and personal interviews with several of his assistants and other close associates. The Ickes collection contains such items as letters concerning the formulation of speech plans and ideas, first drafts of speeches as dictated, all subsequent drafts as revised (including the final copies from which Ickes read), and memoranda from the Secretary's staff suggesting possible speech revisions. Informants who proved most helpful in picturing Ickes' system for preparing and publicizing speeches were Michael Straus, Joel David Wolfschohn, and Miss Helen Cunningham, all of the Secretary's staff; Thomas Corcoran and Benjamin Cohen, presidential advisers and close friends of Ickes; Paul C. Aiken, who directed the Democratic Speakers Bureau; and Mrs. Jane Dahlman Ickes, Harold Ickes' widow. All of the people on this list were also helpful in regard to information about delivery.

agitated for some kind of attack on Governor Landon even before Landon was officially nominated and had already noted ideas upon which he later based assaults on Landon's record. The same may be said of the speeches castigating William Randolph Hearst. The first attack aimed primarily at Hearst came on August 27, though Ickes had paid passing respect to him in an earlier speech on June 7. The broad outline of the attack was suggested by Ickes to the President and to Jim Farley early in July.\(^5\)

The only major attack made by Ickes which was definitely somebody else's idea was his June 7 attack on the Republican platform. The suggestion for the general lines of that speech came to Ickes from the President, though the idea originated with Stanley High, one of Roosevelt's "ghost writers."\(^6\) It is not to be inferred that Ickes had a completely free hand as to subject matter and time of attack. All of the speeches were screened by the President or one of his advisers, modifications sometimes being effected, and the time of the delivery of speeches was determined by Roosevelt and his closest political advisers.

The ideas in the content of his speeches were,

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 633.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 613.
according to Ickes, largely his own. Presidential advisers screened Ickes' speeches, but they never wrote them. The insinuation was made several times in Republican newspapers that Charles Michelson, publicity director for the Democratic National Committee, was the real author of the speeches. The fact is that, according to Ickes' associates, Michelson did not write any of them, nor did anyone else but Ickes. A few people might make suggestions for them before the first draft was written, several people assisted in revising and editing them, but the Secretary himself was the author of the speeches.

THE PREPARATION AND REVISION OF SPEECH MANUSCRIPTS

In his personal diary, Ickes has described briefly the routine used for preparing his speech manuscripts:

After I have dictated a speech and revised it for the first time, I send copies to several members of my staff for corrections and suggestions. They go over the draft very carefully and then I go over the speech again, giving considerations to their suggestions. Some of them I adopt and some of them I do

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7Ibid., p. 669.


9Stated by Mr. Corcoran, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Straus, Mr. Wolfsohn, Miss Cunningham, and Mrs. Ickes in personal interviews between January 23 and February 1, 1955.
not adopt. And yet I have never felt that any of these men were writing my speeches. I adopt this method merely because I think that every one in my position, speaking to a national audience, needs some checks not only as to his facts but as to his expressions.10

The first draft of Ickes' speeches were dictated, with the assistance of only a few notes, to a private secretary. This dictation was usually done at the Secretary's office or home, though he dictated at least one speech while riding a train.11 According to one of his secretaries, Miss Helen Cunningham,12 Ickes could dictate rapidly and well, with only a very few references to previously prepared notes. This first draft was typed double-spaced with numbered lines to facilitate later revision. The first revision was made by Ickes, and then the manuscript went to several assistants for criticism and further revision.

Among the advisers who were frequently asked to make corrections and suggestion were Michael Straus, Harry Slattery, Milton Fairman, Aubrey Taylor, R. B. Armstrong, and Joel David Wolfschon. All of these men

11The first draft of the speech "Governor Landon, Practical Progressive" was dictated in part to Ickes' private secretary, Mr. Cubberley, enroute from Washington to New York. Ibid., p. 650.
12Personal interview, January 31, 1955.
except Slattery were former newspapermen from Chicago. A study of memoranda suggestions from them, found in the Ickes Papers, reveals that they were thorough in their work. For the speech "What Shall the Republican Platform Be?," for example, Straus made twenty-nine suggestions, Slattery nine, and Taylor thirty-eight. The Slattery memorandum, the shortest of the three, is quoted here, in full, to illustrate the type of suggestions usually made:

June 5, 1936

MEMORANDUM for Secretary Ickes:

I have read this draft over and it certainly is a bull's eye.

I suggest on page 1, line 9, you delete the word miscegenetic. You might say the 1934 marriage.

On page 3, line 10, I would suggest the wording "so that the child can later play he is a farmer."

On page 4, lines 14 and 15, I think because of the radio you will have to identify Colonel Robert R. McCormick. You might call him the newspaper Colonel.

On page 5, line 20, I think you should include Mr. Hearst.

On page 6, line 22, might it not also be wise to add Mark Hanna?

On page 10, line 13, I suggest eliminating Senator MoNary and substituting Senator Dickinson.

On page 12, lines 6 and 7, I think that this sentence does not stand up well.

On page 13, I suggest that you delete the sentence from line 13 to 15.
On page 20, line 22, I think you will have to identify more definitely to your radio audience Lord of San Simeon.

Harry Slattery

Of these nine suggestions, only two were completely rejected, the rest being followed entirely or in part.

It should be noted that Slattery's suggestions touched upon subject matter as well as mechanics and style. The same was true of the longer memoranda of the same date from Straus and Taylor. Taylor went so far as to submit an entirely new first page, and Straus offered a new concluding section; these two suggestions were ignored in the final draft, but most of the others were not.

The preparation for an Ickes campaign speech was thorough. From three to six members of the Interior and PWA staffs worked on each speech, and as many as seven different drafts were sometimes prepared and revised before a final manuscript emerged. Any excesses in thought or language which may have appeared in Ickes' attacks were not the result of hasty or skimpy preparation.

It should also be emphasized that these attacks were never made without the approval of the White House.

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13Ickes Papers, Container 315.
14Ibid.
They were often read by the President, and they were almost always checked by Stephen Early, presidential secretary, or his assistant, W. D. Hassett. For example, Hassett read the speech entitled "Is Landon Sincere?" and sent a memo to Early referring to it as "a forceful address, a stinging indictment of the Republicans." Early then read the speech and sent the following approval to Straus:

Bill [Hassett] and I think the Secretary's speech is a masterpiece of ironical and logical analysis of the issues of the campaign. Let me know when he goes on the air with this. I don't want to miss it.  

PUBLICIZING THE ATTACK

One of the chief objectives of Ickes and his staff, which included several former newspapermen, were being sure that a radio address would be well publicized. They wanted it not only widely-heard, but also widely-read. Consequently, Ickes fought for radio time and extensive radio coverage; he arranged advance publicity for his broadcasts; and he selected controversial

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15 Memoranda from Straus to Early, from Hassett to Early, and from Early to Straus. Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York. These memoranda reveal that Straus normally sent Ickes' speeches to Early. Either Early or Hassett--or both--read the speeches and sent White House approval.

16 Memorandum from Early to Straus on October 2, 1936. Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
subjects and provocative speech titles to help gain both radio listeners and newspaper readers.\textsuperscript{17}

For Ickes' speeches, securing a nation-wide, or at least regional, radio audience was almost a "must." Michael Straus was under instructions to have sponsors of the Secretary's speeches secure the widest possible radio coverage. This became an important criteria in determining which speaking invitations would be accepted.\textsuperscript{18} Indeed Paul C. Aiken of the National Democratic Committee organization found it almost impossible to get Ickes to accept engagements unless network facilities were promised.\textsuperscript{19}

To insure further their being widely heard, Ickes' speeches were announced several days in advance, usually in a way calculated to create curiosity and interest. For example, two announcements were released to the press prior to the August 27 attack on Landon and Hearst. On August 24, the \textit{New York Times} carried advance notice under the heading "Ickes To Give Talk Over Radio Thursday"; the sub-heading was "Secretary's Subject Not Disclosed."

\textsuperscript{17}From personal interviews with Straus and Aiken.

\textsuperscript{18}Straus interview.

\textsuperscript{19}Aiken interview.
Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, will speak on a national radio hook-up over the Columbia Broadcasting System at 9:45 P.M. (E.S.T.) Thursday, the Democratic National Committee announced last night from its headquarters in the Hotel Biltmore. Secretary Ickes' subject was not disclosed, but it was indicated that he would discuss some of the questions raised in Governor Landon's talks at Chautauqua Lake and in Buffalo.20

As a matter of plain fact, Ickes' speech was to ignore almost completely the two Landon addresses just cited, but this hint could be expected to create interest. Closer to the truth, though indirectly promising more than the speech would deliver, was the preview carried by the New York Times on the eve of the address. This item of advance publicity was headed "Secret Documents Promised by Ickes," and the sub-title was: "Democratic Committee Says He Will Give Hearst Letters in Radio Address." The Committee's release was quoted, in part, as follows:

Secretary Ickes has sources of information of his own which without aid of the committee have produced documentary evidence of a most enlightening character. It appears from these documents, involving not only the Republican candidate but also the Republican Vice Presidential candidate and Republican National Committee members, that when Landon followers want to convey suggestions to their hope, the method they consider most effective is via William Randolph Hearst. When 'suggestions' come from San Simeon, they rate as 'orders' in Topeka.21

By hints which were varied but not always accurate, and by predictions which captivated interest but perhaps promised too much, Ickes' major addresses were given build-up publicity. The potential listener or reader might have been tempted, too, by the titles selected for the Secretary's broadcasts. Such announced titles as "Governor Landon, Practical Progressive," "Hearst over Topeka," "Is Landon Sincere?", "Landon, Coughlin, et Al," and "Landon's Angels" were probably provocative enough to win many listeners and assure more than average newspaper publicity. These titles became especially effective when coupled with Ickes' reputation for vitriolic attack, withering sarcasm, and sharp invective, a reputation upon which Ickes capitalized and which he apparently fostered in order to secure a wide hearing. The effective use of publicity was one of the strongest elements in Ickes' efforts as a campaign speaker.

DELIVERING THE ATTACK

Ickes' prepared addresses were all read directly from manuscript. The final reading copy of the manuscript was typed double-spaced on half sheets of heavy paper, each half-sheet being designed for a reading time of one
Little distinction needs to be made between Ickes' delivery for broadcast speeches before a live audience and for those which were studio broadcasts. For the most part, Ickes paid little or no attention to the audience present. He very infrequently looked up from his manuscript, and he seldom used any bodily action beyond head gestures. The only characteristic gesture recalled by informants who were present at Ickes' addresses was one used to halt audience applause. Fearful of running over his radio time, Ickes would raise one arm to request silence when applause threatened to be at all prolonged. This gesture was necessitated by the fact that Ickes frequently rebelled at cutting his speeches sufficiently to get them comfortably into radio time. Straus, Wolfsohn, and Corcoran all observed that this was a serious problem to those attempting to revise Ickes' manuscripts.

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22 Ickes' speaking rate was between 135 and 150 words per minute. It was 147 for the June 7 address, 145 for the August 3 address, and 135 for the October 9 address. This compares with the average of 120 words per minute for representative college orators reported in William Norwood Brigance's "How Fast Do We Talk?", Quarterly Journal of Speech Education, XII (November, 1926), pp. 337-42.

23 Mr. Straus, Miss Cunningham, and Mrs. Ickes all mentioned this use of a common gesture on Ickes' part. Mrs. Ickes tried to get him to allow time for applause so the radio audience would be aware of the local response. Interviews.
Ickes hated to see anything cut and sometimes restored passages cut for time economy by his aides. He usually wound up trying to pack a thirty-minute or longer speech into twenty-seven minutes.

Ickes' voice, while somewhat "dry," was strong, and his articulation and pronunciation were considered exceptionally good by some who heard him. His tendency to have to rush his rate of delivery, however, made him a little difficult at times to follow. Upon occasion, also, his voice tended to become harsh and shrill. This was only during the most denunciatory sections of his speeches.

Despite these faults, most of them because of a tendency to have to rush the reading of the manuscript, Ickes' delivery was effective. His delivery had one important saving feature: a driving sincerity which

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24Personal interviews with Mr. Straus, Mr. Wolfsohn, and Mr. Corcoran.

25"His voice is dry, without melting cadences or dramatic overtones." Louisville Herald Post, October 26, 1936.

26Mr. Straus and Mrs. Ickes both expressed this opinion of his articulation and pronunciation, and the recording of his 1937 speech favoring the President's Supreme Court plan supports that opinion. According to Straus, Ickes made almost constant reference to a large dictionary on his desk to confirm both word usage and pronunciation.

27Straus interview.
carried conviction. Ickes was an enthusiastic partisan who believed in the Roosevelt cause and believed in his own speeches. His voice reflected this feeling and carried a certain contagious sincerity, even amid the sarcasm and sometimes cruel humor. It was this animated presentation which compensated for delivery deficiencies which otherwise might have rendered him ineffective as a speaker.

In summary, Ickes' preparation for his verbal assaults on the Landon camp were both systematic and thorough; his advance publicity was extremely well-handled; and his delivery, while suffering from several weaknesses, was generally effective.

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28 Thomas G. Corcoran believes this the outstanding characteristic of Ickes' delivery, and Michael Straus also commented favorably upon it. Interviews. That quality of animated sincerity is unmistakable in the 1937 recording previously cited.
CHAPTER IV

"WHAT SHALL THE REPUBLICAN PLATFORM BE?"

Ickes' first important 1936 campaign address was delivered on June 7 and was broadcast over an N.B.C. network. Entitled "What Shall the Republican Platform Be?", this speech satirized and denounced the Republican party on the eve of its convention.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF THE SPEECH

The assignment to deliver the speech on the Republican platform came to Ickes on short notice. On June 2, he explained:

The President asked me whether I was willing to make a speech over the air on Sunday night for the purpose of somewhat taking the wind out of the sails of the Republican National Convention with respect to its platform. This convention will meet in Cleveland next week. He outlined one or two things that he thought I might develop in my speech. The plan appeals to me as being a good one, provided I can deliver on my end of it. The subject can be handled in such a way as to deflate the platform pomposities and insincerities of the Republicans to a considerable extent. It seems that Stanley High, who is now very close to the President in a confidential capacity and who appears to be a highly intelligent and certainly a progressive individual, first conceived the idea. He approached Senators Norris and LaFollette to see whether either of them would make such a speech, but they did not get the point. They both said they would rather wait until after the convention and then criticize the platform.
Then thoughts turned to me, with the result that the President made the proposal to me and I accepted.¹

That afternoon, after discussing the proposed speech with Stanley High, Ickes set to work on it. By June 4, copies of his once-revised draft were in the hands of four of his assistants: Straus, Slattery, Taylor, and Fairman. On June 5, each presented a memorandum containing suggestions for revision. On the basis of these suggestions, Ickes revised his speech and prepared it for final delivery. Copies of the original draft were also sent to the President and High, both of whom expressed enthusiastic approval.²

Ickes was also pleased with this speech. He had been chafing at the relative inactivity in the Democratic campaign. He considered the American Liberty League, William Randolph Hearst, Landon, and several other enemy targets to be extremely vulnerable, and this speech gave him an opportunity to get at most of them in a single effort. The Landon candidacy, in particular, he thought should be attacked; and the only direct reference to the

²Ibid., p. 615.
Kansas Governor so far had proved a mistake. It seemed evident at this time that Landon would secure the Republican nomination. On May 20, Herbert Hoover indicated that he would not be active in any "stop-Landon" campaign, thus severely handicapping the efforts of conservatives who desired to rally about the ex-President. On June 3, Landon's prospects were further enhanced by a break in a three-state Eastern bloc which had been thought opposed to him. J. Henry Rorabauck, Republican leader in Connecticut, announced that his state's nineteen votes would go to the Kansan on the first ballot. The next day, Charles Michael of the New York Times reported that some Republican leaders were freely predicting his nomination on the first ballot. It appeared that Landon was the candidate Roosevelt would face in November and that the time had come to open fire upon his party.

The problems the Republicans faced in drafting a platform made them appear vulnerable to the type of attack the President wanted. To maintain serious hopes for

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3 In May, Farley publicly referred to Landon as the Governor of "a typical prairie state." This was pounced upon by Republicans as a slighting reference to a Midwestern state and the President considered the reference a definite error. Samuel I. Rosenman, Working with Roosevelt (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 128.


victory, the Republican party needed to win back the support of the progressives of their own party, who had supported Roosevelt in 1932, and to appeal to liberal independents. Yet, at the same time, they had to retain the wholehearted backing of the conservatives who constituted the bulk of the party's strength. To write a platform guaranteed to appeal to these almost antipodal groups was indeed a herculean task. On the same day that Ickes was to deliver his address, Arthur Krock noted the extreme difficulty of framing a platform upon which Landon could run and yet upon which the supporters of Herbert Hoover, Arthur Vandenberg, and William E. Borah could agree.6

Some specific planks upon which Eastern business interests and Western agrarian factions were already divided before the Republican convention were those concerning currency, business regulation, foreign policy, and the farm program. On June 1, the Supreme Court created another divisive factor; by a 5-4 decision, it invalidated the New York state minimum wage law. Previously, Republicans had been united in praising the Supreme Court in its defense against New Deal "assaults upon the constitution"; now the Court had rendered a

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6 New York Times, June 7, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 4.
decision manifestly unpopular with labor groups and liberal elements within the party. Hamilton Fish, Republican congressman from New York, asserted that this decision would cost the Republicans a million votes. It undoubtedly presented another headache to the already beleaguered Republican platform framers. Into such a background, Harold Ickes projected his pointed and partisan observations about the forthcoming Republican platform.

PURPOSE AND THESIS OF THE SPEECH

The purpose of the June 7 address, as stated by the President, was "taking the wind out of the sails of the Republican party with respect to its platform." In the face of such divergent interests within the Republican party, Democratic leaders felt certain that the platform adopted at Cleveland would be vague and fence-straddling on many difficult issues. It was possible, however, that these unresolved conflicts could be camouflaged beneath generalized language in some places and covered completely by strong attacks on the New Deal in others. It was Ickes' task to expose these conflicts to public view, indicating to voters what they should examine closely in the finished platform. The emphasis upon irony and sarcasm which Ickes

gave to the speech was not without purpose either. Making the efforts of the Republican convention an object of humor and ridicule was calculated to undermine the picture of a "crusade" against the New Deal which Republican leaders were painting.

Locating the thesis of this speech is much more difficult than analyzing its purpose. At no place in the development did the speaker make any perceptible effort to clarify for the listener the proposition which he was supporting. A close study of the manuscript reveals no single, definite proposition, and Ickes' own analysis of the speech indicated none.\(^9\) As a later analysis of his forms of support reveals, the speaker seemed more intent upon creating certain audience attitudes than upon supporting any specific thesis. That Ickes' specific purpose in this address required support of no single proposition is a recurring factor in the further analysis of the speech.

LINES OF ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION

Briefing an Ickes speech is not a simple task. So numerous were the targets which Ickes attempted to hit and so varied the ideas which he injected during the course of a speech, that the organization was often loose and

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 615.
indefinite. From the June 7 speech, however, four main lines of argument can be seen:

(1) Republicans are trying to produce a platform which will appear new and progressive but which will, in reality, remain ultra-conservative.

(2) The Republican platform-makers must serve too many conflicting interests to be able to produce a frank and definite platform.

(3) Republicans face serious dilemmas on several specific planks.

(4) The Republican convention, ostensibly free, will still be controlled by bosses and special interests.

Actually, since he was trying more to create audience attitudes than to support a particular thesis, Ickes probably considered these four lines of thought less important than the treatment of personalities which accompanied them. His own synopsis of the speech gives weight to such a conclusion:

I gently kid the Republican leadership, the platform makers, and Governor Landon, who, from every indication, will be the Republican nominee, perhaps on the first ballot. I even poke fun at my old friends William Allen White, Clifford Pinchot, and Frank Knox. I do discuss possible Republican party planks in a serious vein, but I go no further than to point out the dilemma in which the Republicans will find themselves at Cleveland. I comment on the fact that William Randolph Hearst was the discoverer of Governor Landon, and I picture him as the dictator of the Republican platform and the
absentee boss who will determine the deliberations at Cleveland as successor to former Republican bosses, such as Tom Platt, Murray Crane, Mark Hanna, Matt Quay, and Boise Penrose. I point out that an effort has apparently been made to select as the candidate of the Republican party the man who is the least troubled by views on any subject and who is least qualified, on the basis of experience, to be President of the United States.10

Always jealous of his speech time, Ickes spent little of it in introduction or conclusion. In this particular speech, the introduction proper consisted of one paragraph of three sentences:

You have all heard about the mountain that conceived and brought forth a mouse but have you ever heard about the mouse that conceived and brought forth a mountain? This may seem to be an impossible achievement but nevertheless it is about to be attempted at Cleveland, Ohio. There, if you are sufficiently interested, you will be able this week to witness a supreme effort on the part of a political mouse to produce a platform which will lift its peaks in sheer rugged grandeur into the very heavens from an arid and barren waste.11

From this point, Ickes went directly into a satirical description of the personnel charged with delivering and caring for "baby platform." Each man was assigned a role presumably based on his special function at the convention. For example, Herbert Hoover was the obstetrician; William Allen White was the plastic surgeon;

10Ibid., p. 615.

11All quotations from the speech are taken from the final manuscript from which Ickes read. A copy of this manuscript is in the Ickes Papers.
William E. Borah supplied the anti-monopoly bib and isolation tucker; Gifford Pinchot donated a conservation romper; Frank Lowden supplied overalls and toy pitchfork for playing farmer; and William Randolph Hearst and Robert R. McCormick sponsored the baby. In this section of the speech, Ickes did more than set the stage for further argument. While apparently presenting it for humorous effect, he nevertheless made the point that the platform would be progressive in superficial appearance but conservative in reality.

Next, departing from figurative exposition, the speaker noted that the varied interests which the Republicans would attempt to satisfy made a clear-cut platform impossible. Among the groups Ickes cited were, politically, the "rugged individualists" of the Hoover line, and, economically, the "vested interests." Among the individuals whose views had to be considered were Andrew Mellon, William E. Borah, Ogden Mills, Gifford Pinchot, Frank O. Lowden, and, finally, William Randolph Hearst. Ickes said he excluded Landon because "since first he was discovered by William Randolph Hearst and his fellow wise men from the East, Governor Landon has had no clear-cut, forthright views—at least none that he has ventured to express openly."

After a brief digression to attack Hearst, considered
by many a political liability to Landon, the speaker then took up the dilemmas of the Republicans on specific planks. The New York Times in a June 8 summary of the speech listed these six planks: attitude toward the Supreme Court (after the New York minimum wage law was struck down), the gold standard, balancing the budget, the farm program, social security legislation, and relief. To these six should be added the subjects of banking and federal housing. In each area, Ickes pointed up what he believed to be dilemmas from which the Republican platform could not escape with credit. On several points he challenged Republicans to present specific improvements over the New Deal.

Finally, Ickes charged that the convention would not be a "free" one, that its platform and its candidate would in reality be dictated by William Randolph Hearst. He added that the candidate selected would be the one "whose record is the most colorless, whose views on the burning issues of the day are least known, and whose convictions are most accommodating."

The conclusion of the speech was even more brief than the introduction. Spending no time in summary, it concluded in a single sentence: "Of a truth, it does

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appear that the Republican party is about to fare forth on a blind date, the location of which is unknown."

THE FORMS OF SUPPORT

For the purposes of organization and clarity, the analysis of Ickes' rhetorical forms of support is based on the Aristotelian classification of three types of appeal: ethical, emotional, and logical.13 These appeals are not, to be sure, always used separately; a single argument may rest on a combination of elements of all three types of appeal. They do, however, present functional divisions of the basic character of arguments, and as such they have become almost stereotypes in rhetorical criticism:

Rhetoricians since Aristotle have generally accepted his concept that the modes of persuasion, depending upon the effect they produce in hearers, 'are of three kinds, consisting either in the moral character of the speaker or in the production of a certain disposition in the audience or in the speech itself by means of real or apparent demonstration.' These, in the order mentioned by Aristotle, are usually called the ethical, the pathetic or emotional, and the logical. Most rhetorical estimates are based in some degree upon this classification, many being so firmly founded

13 "Of the means of persuasion supplied by the speech itself there are three kinds. The first kind reside in the character [ethos] of the speaker; the second consist in producing a certain [the right] attitude in the hearer; the third appertain to the argument proper, in so far as it actually or seemingly demonstrates." Lane Cooper (trans.), The Rhetoric of Aristotle (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1932), p. 8.
upon it as to become noticeably stereotyped. ¹⁴

In Ickes' address entitled "What Shall the Republican Platform Be?", his argument, judged by rhetorical standards for logical demonstration, was weak; nor was the appeal through the character of the speaker especially strong. His strongest appeals were directed toward the emotions of his national radio audience.

The speech did not suffer greatly from demonstrable inaccuracies of fact, from inconsistency, or from fallacies in the reasoning process. It simply did not lay much stress upon logical proof. Little attempt was made, for example, to establish the validity of the factual matter involved in the speech. Facts for a speech are normally established by use of statistics, testimony, or example; ¹⁵ to a very large degree, Ickes shunned two of these. A study of the text of this thirty-minute address reveals only one use of statistics and only one of authoritative testimony. These both appear in a single argument. When refuting the claim of Henry J. Allen of Kansas that Great Britain was achieving


better recovery than the United States at a lower cost, Ickes presented this brief argument:

In his enthusiasm to make an onslaught on the New Deal, Mr. Allen did not tell all the facts. According to the Wall Street Journal's London correspondent, Great Britain paid more than two billion dollars last year, or about one seventh of its income, for its elaborate system of health, unemployment, old age, widows and orphans' pensions, grants to keep children in school, low cost housing and other projects. To equal this the United States, with three times England's population and a present income of fifty billion dollars, would have to spend about seven billion dollars a year, a figure far beyond the current outlay.

In this argument lay the only attempt in the entire speech to establish a conclusion by use of statistics or testimony. The speaker was somewhat less stinging with the use of example. He used, in fact, a large number of examples, but in only one instance were the examples used as "argument" in the strictest sense of the word. Most of the examples were used as exposition and amplification. Since, however, exposition and amplification can be, and often were, used as less direct forms of persuasion, these instances should not be entirely ignored. The more obvious use of examples as argument occurred when Ickes attempted to demonstrate that the Republican record gave little reason to expect a favorable Republican agricultural program. First, he alluded to their recent record while in opposition:

It is to be taken for granted that a soft pedal will be put upon such men as Senator Daniel O.
Hastings, representing the State of the liberty-loving duPonts, who insulted several thousand farmers not long since when he declared that they had been bribed to come to Washington to present their grievances. It is to be doubted whether the platform will applaud the decision of the Supreme Court which put an abrupt stop to the farmer's production adjustment programs. The Republicans will not point with pride to their vote of 64 against 19 for in the House of Representatives and of 11 against and 5 for in the Senate on the Soil Conservation and Domestic allotment Act which represented an attempt to salvage whatever might be possible after the Supreme Court had declared the A.A.A. Act to be un-constitutional.

Then he turned to the record of the last Republican term in office:

They [the farmers] remember how the Hoover-Wall Street steamroller flattened out Mr. Lowden and the farmers at the Republican Convention at Kansas City in 1928, even although: [sic] after Mr. Lowden and the farmers had gone home on that occasion, the Convention paid its usual sardonic lip service [sic] to agriculture. They recall how after the McNary-Haugen plan, which they wanted, had been junked, the Farm Board plan, that they hadn't asked for, was enacted; how the Fordney-McCumber industrial tariffs were boosted still higher in the Smoot-Hawley Act; and how agriculture, along with the rest of the country, came to a grand smash in 1932.

The ostensibly expository examples appear in support of three of the four main lines of argument. In demonstration of his belief that the Republican platform would be superficially progressive but basically conservative, Ickes enumerated and characterized the men who he said would be key figures in determining the platform. Through his half-humorous, but usually "slanted," descriptions, he cited as examples of "progressive window-dressing" Gifford Pinchot and William Allen White, men
respected by liberal and progressive voters; as the true powers in the platform determination, he cited Herbert Hoover and William Randolph Hearst, names which were political anathema to progressives of both parties.

In Ickes' argument that the Republicans faced too many conflicting interests to come up with a frank and definite platform, he cited several examples of people and groups who would have to be pleased or appeased. Again in his contention that specific planks presented difficult dilemmas, Ickes turned to the example to develop his idea. He cited the specific problems, but, with the exception of that concerning farm policy, he merely explained the problem, making no forecast and drawing no conclusions.

While Ickes did little to prove his statements through logical support, it should be noted that he was dealing, in many cases, with rather generally accepted information. The platform problems of the Republicans had been aired in newspapers for several days preceding the speech. The New York Times had already mentioned these problems both in news columns and editorially. For example, Amos Pinchot had been quoted on the gold standard problem on June 1; Charles R. Michael discussed platform

16 New York Times, June 1, 1936, p. 2.
difficulties in general on June 4, more specifically on June 5; and Arthur Krock pointed up platform conflicts among the Landon, Borah, Vandenberg and Hoover forces editorially on the same day that Ickes spoke.

More than once in Ickes' speech he asserted that Landon had no stated views of his own on important questions and that both he and the convention were dominated by publisher Hearst. The first of these two statements might have been sustained from other sources; concerning the second, certainly Hearst was vigorously supporting the Kansas Governor, but the assertion that Hearst controlled Landon and the convention required proof. An analysis of the validity of this charge will be reserved for the chapter dealing with the speech "Hearst Over Topeka," in which Ickes attempted to prove his charge. On June 7, however, it was not generally asserted or

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19 *New York Times*, June 7, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 4.
20 Krock stated on June 3: "Little or nothing is known of his /Landon's/ views on the most acute public questions." *New York Times*, June 3, 1936. Senator Vandenberg was reportedly disturbed also by Landon's failure to state his views. *New York Times*, June 7, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 4.
believed, and it required proof to be sustained. Logical proof was, however, something relied upon very little in the speech hitting the unborn Republican platform. Ickes relied primarily upon partisan exposition of generally accepted premises and upon repeated and varied assertion of more controversial conclusions. After all, he was more intent upon creating attitudes of suspicion and distrust toward the forthcoming platform than he was in logically demonstrating a specific proposition. For this reason, demonstrable fact and logical development played a secondary role to suggestion and innuendo.

One of the three most important means of persuasion, according to the Aristotelian division, resides in the personality and character—the "ethos"—of the speaker. This personal factor undoubtedly aided Ickes in his June 7 speech, though he made relatively little attempt to capitalize consciously upon it. It has been pointed out in Chapter II that Ickes had a good reputation as an honest and efficient public official and as a private citizen. He brought to the platform with him the prestige of an important man in the Administration and

21Ickes himself later expressed dissatisfaction with the public reaction to the Hearst charge, especially with the almost unanimous newspaper rejections of it. Ickes, Secret Diary, Vol. I, p. 671.

22Cooper, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
the respect accorded an honest and efficient one. The major concern at present is with his own efforts as a speaker—in this particular speech—to enhance his ethical appeal.

Any attempts Ickes made to lend weight to his words by the revelation of his own character were indirect ones. The speech was approached from the third-person point of view; at no time did the speaker refer directly to himself. Instead he referred to "this Administration," "the Roosevelt Administration," and "President Roosevelt." Ickes spoke as a representative of the New Deal, for it was the ethos of the Administration that he sought to build. For example, Ickes said of the future Republican farm plank:

The farmers know what the Roosevelt Administration has done and is continuing to do to improve their economic and social lot. They know that while this Administration has made few promises it has tried in good faith to keep its pledges, despite constant Republican opposition and notwithstanding the bitter antagonism of Wall Street and those interests closely allied with the Republican party.

A few paragraphs further on, the same type of appeal appeared again:

This Administration has made an honest and determined effort to strengthen our banking system so as to prevent a recurrence of what happened during the preceding Administration, when thousands of banks toppled over, carrying with them the savings of millions of American citizens. We have also enacted legislation to protect those who buy securities. These reforms have been effected in spite of the bitter opposition of men and interests influential in the councils of the Republican party.
These typical examples show how Ickes emphasized the "intelligence, character, and good will" of the Roosevelt Administration. It is worth noting that with the build-up for the Administration went a contrasting application of negative ethos to the Republican party. This process of stripping from the Republicans those attributes which win confidence was especially in evidence in those places where Ickes described, ridiculed, and derided individual Republican leaders. The insinuation of insincerity and the sardonic commentary upon past performance were well-calculated to undermine Republican prestige.

As he lauded the Democratic Administration and attacked the Republicans, Ickes remained simply an Administration spokesman. The closest approach to a personal reference came at a point where his personal pride in PWA expressed itself:

They [the public] know that useful, valuable, and socially-desirable public works that have added greatly to the assets of the country have been built with a resultant uplift of business and industry.

In the main, Ickes stuck to building up Administration ethos and destroying that of the opposition. The

23 These are the attributes, according to Aristotle, which gain belief through the person of the speaker. *Ibid.*., p. 92.
emphasis was predominantly upon the latter.

The strongest appeals in the speech were directed to the emotions of the audience: to fear, to prejudice, to the desire for security. In his efforts to create an air of uncertainty and suspicion, Iokes associated the Republicans with the dark days of the depression.

Following the same line adopted by most Democratic speakers in 1936, he cast the blame for the severity of that depression on the Republicans, especially upon the Hoover Administration:

The people remember all too well the vacillation, the ineptitude, the division of counsel and the actual cowardice that controlled the Republican party when the depression broke over the land in the fall of 1929.

At other points in the speech, he referred to the "plunge toward the economic abyss that this Administration halted when it came into power in March of 1933," to "the precipitous road that we were following toward national ruin," and to "what happened during the preceding Administration, when thousands of banks toppled over, carrying with them the savings of millions of American citizens."

Iokes also aroused the fear of "boss control," both directly and by innuendo. He charged that the platform had been "drafted by a few men and approved in advance by the same interests that have controlled the Republican party since the days of Theodore Roosevelt," and that the convention would be controlled by an
"absentee boss," William Randolph Hearst. He managed, too, several occasions for injecting into his speech passing references to former Republican "Bosses" Tom Platt, Murray Crane, Mark Hanna, Matt Quay, and Boise Penrose. Nor did he neglect the naming of Warren Harding in a "meeting at midnight in a smoke-filled hotel room."

A third element of doubt and uncertainty was drawn from the likely Republican candidate. The absence of public information concerning Governor Landon's views on important issues was the weapon selected by Ickes. On three separate occasions, the speaker referred to Landon's unknown views. He asserted that Landon had "no clear-cut, forthright views," and labeled the Kansas Governor "a new political Messiah, than whom no Delphic oracle has been more abstemious or cryptic in his utterances."

Ickes closed with a statement epitomizing the elements of doubt and uncertainty with which he had been stirring the fears of the voters: "Of a truth, it does appear that the Republican party is about to fare forth on a blind date, the location of which is unknown."

Coupled with the stirring of apprehension concerning the Republican platform and candidate were positive appeals to the desire for security. He referred to the Roosevelt Administration's record of economic recovery
in glowing terms. He cited the Democratic efforts to revive the American economy, to relieve the deprivation which depression had entailed, and to provide future security for the people individually and collectively. Special appeals were directed toward workers, farmers, and small investors. The running contrast of the Hoover Administration as a "do-nothing administration" with the Roosevelt Administration as a "do-something administration" was calculated to stir up vague fears on one hand and a feeling of confidence on the other.

A type of supporting device used by Ickes which can be included under the general heading of emotional proof was humor. While humor is probably used more often as a device for holding attention or for creating good will toward the speaker, it can also be used as subtle but effective persuasion. Ickes used it primarily in this way. His description of the personnel assisting in the birth of "baby platform" was, for example, satire gentle in degree but sharp in purpose. It was clever enough in wording and resembled reality enough in its implications to make the Republican convention a subject of ridicule. This paragraph helps to illustrate the method employed:

This expected progeny, the result of a mesalliance between the Republican party and the Liberal League, is awaited with hope-filled hearts, not only by the
parents, but by all the surviving members of a once numerous family. Nothing has been spared in the way of prenatal care. . . . Famous medicine men, skilled in their several specialties, already have foregathered in Cleveland, and are hurrying there, to chant their incantations while introducing to the world a product which, if it lives up to advance notices, will constitute a new world prodigy.

Having thus set the slyly humorous tone of the satire, the speaker proceeded to specific party leaders who would be present. The following paragraph is typical:

Properly to clothe the infant, a layette has been carefully collected. After all, it would be an affront to good taste to expose the infant in all its nakedness. William E. Borah, of Idaho, if still present, will be granted the privilege of supplying an anti-monopoly bib, as well as a tucker to protect against the chilling blasts of foreign alliances. Frank O. Lowden, of Illinois, will present a suit of overalls and a toy pitchfork so that the child can play at being a farmer. Gifford Pinchot, of Pennsylvania, will supply a conservation romper done in his best style.

The close blending of fact and fancy enabled Ickes to suggest effectively by innuendo what might have been less graphic and more difficult to establish if attempted through more obvious forms of argument. His satirical approach struck at Republican ethos through gentle ridicule and, at the same time, argued against Republican sincerity and good faith. The same purposeful humor was also used in figurative references to Landon's discovery by "William Randolph Hearst and his fellow wise men from the East," and to the monetary assistance expected by Republicans from Jouett Shouse, President of the Liberty
League," as "wet nurse" and the duPons as "pulmotor operators."

Ickes told no funny stories and introduced no humor simply for humor's sake. He specialized in irony and broad satire. His was humor designed to persuade, not just to amuse.

Although Ickes' use of language is discussed later under another chapter sub-heading, it should be mentioned here that his use of word symbols possessing emotive value contributed substantially to the emotional proof of the speech. By the suggestion involved in carefully chosen language symbols, Ickes pictured the Republican party as the party of special interests, of political corruption, and of arch-conservatism. Ickes' references to "the Liberty League," "the liberty-loving duPons," "Andrew Mellon," "Wall Street," and "vested interests" were primarily emotive rather than referential, constantly associating the Republican party with special financial interests. By the same token, references to "Ballinger, Fall, and Sinclair," to the "Ohio gang," and to "a smoke-filled hotel room" were clearly intended

24According to Thonssen and Baird, words have both "referential" and "emotive" value, the former value being strictly denotative and the latter arising out of the emotional reaction the word calls forth from the reader or hearer. Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., pp. 368-69.
to picture the Republican party as a party of graft and corruption. Such terms as "Old Dealers," "rugged individualists," and "Republican reactionaries," taken in context, were intended to leave no doubt that the Republicans were a party of political arch-conservatism.

Ickes' attack on the Republican platform placed heavy emphasis upon emotional proofs, and the use of "loaded" language stereotypes was one of the strongest manifestations of that emphasis.

USE OF LANGUAGE

Ordinarily, one of the most important criteria for rhetorical analysis of a speaker's language is whether the style is more characteristically oral than written. William Norwood Brigance has emphasized the difference between these two styles:

There are sharp and important differences between the use of written words and the use of spoken words. These differences grow out of the fact that one style is intended for the eye and the other for the ear. The reader may absorb at leisure; the hearer must take it on the wing. . . .

In short, the difference between written and spoken style is this: written style must be ultimately intelligible to the reader. Spoken style must be instantly intelligible to the hearer. 25

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In Ickes' case, the finished manuscript needed both to read well and deliver well. As noted in Chapter II, Democratic campaign leaders were interested in getting Ickes' attacks widely printed as well as widely heard. This particular speech revealed primarily characteristics of oral style, but, in one or two respects, it leaned toward a style more effective for readers than for hearers.

The "instant intelligibility" of which Brigance speaks may be gained in several ways. Among these ways are the using of language which is both vivid and simple and of employing sentences and clauses which are relatively short and uncomplicated in structure. Ickes' language was certainly vivid enough. His speech was dotted with illustrations, comparisons and contrasts, figurative language, and rhetorical questions. His illustrations and comparisons have been previously noted in the discussion of forms of support. Of his extensive use of figurative language there can be no question. Indeed, almost the first ten minutes of the thirty-minute address was built around figurative exposition. The first paragraph treated the Republican party as "a political mouse" trying to create a

26 Brigance lists these as the main objective elements of vividness in language. Ibid., pp. 200-01.
"mountain," an imposing platform. Ickes then pictured the entire convention as a birth and post-natal occasion, with the platform as the baby and leading Republicans as attending personnel. Even after becoming more literal, Ickes indulged in countless figurative and vividly descriptive words and phrases. He referred to the platform writers as "phrase mongers" and as "verbal tightrope walkers"; he called the depression an "economic abyss"; he accused the Republicans of "shadow-boxing" and of "spreading weasel-words"; he denounced "the Hoover-Wall Street steamroller" of the 1928 Republican convention; he likened the Republican overtures to farmers to the grandmother guise of Red Riding Hood's big bad wolf; he sarcastically characterized Governor Landon as a "new political Messiah" and likened him to an almost-silent "Delphic Oracle"; he likened the Republican convention to a "marionette show"; and he pictured the Republican selection of Landon to run on an indefinite platform as "a blind date, the location of which is unknown." Such striking and pictorial language helped Ickes to maintain the attention of his hearers and to make his thoughts "instantly intelligible" to them. The language employed also read well enough to elicit chuckles from President Roosevelt as he read the manuscript of the speech.27

Ickes also made fairly extensive use of the question, another language form which adds rhetorical clarity and directness. Some of the questions employed were purely rhetorical. The opening sentence was of this type: "You have all heard about the mountain that conceived and brought forth a mouse, but have you ever heard of the mouse that conceived and brought forth a mountain?" Another rhetorical question was used after Frank O. Lowden was referred to as a "show window" display for farmers: "He is all dressed up but has he in fact any place to go?"

Many of the questions used by Ickes were put directly as challenging dilemmas to the Republican convention, and they usually occurred in a series. In regard to social security, the Secretary posed these questions:

What will be the pronouncement of the platform on this subject? Will it be a vague, indefinite and meaningless generalization? Will the Republicans declare for a national system of social insurance or will they say that it is a matter for the states? And if the states are to handle all questions of social insurance will the Republicans propose a plan that will work and which the states will adopt?

Both of these types of questions, those rhetorical and those directly challenging, added directness to the speaker's oral style.

In respect to sentence length and simplicity,
Ickes' style was occasionally more suitable to literary than to oral presentation. Some of his sentences were extremely long and somewhat involved. According to standards predicated by Brigance in *Speech Composition*, about half of Ickes' sentences were longer than desirable for maximum hearer comprehension. Brigance put it this way:

> When any sentence gets over 20 words it starts to be 'fairly difficult', when it gets over 25 words it becomes 'difficult', and when it goes beyond 30 words it becomes 'very difficult'.

Brigance adds, of course, that this general observation does not rule out occasional long sentences.

Ickes' manuscript for "What Shall the Republican Platform Be?" contained a total of 133 sentences. The shortest used 8 words, the longest 124. Forty-eight of his sentences were 20 words or less; 14 sentences were between 20 and 26 words in length—"fairly difficult"; 15 sentences were between 25 and 30 words in length—"difficult"; and 56 sentences were over 30 words in length—"very difficult." The average sentence length was 29.8 words. While many of Ickes' long sentences were the result of parallel structure, utilizing

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28Brigance, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

29This compares with Sir Winston Churchill's average of 26 words per sentence and Franklin D. Roosevelt's 17 to 27, depending on the type of audience. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
several semi-colons, it is also true that a few were simply too long and involved for immediate hearer comprehension. With these few exceptions, the sentences were appropriate for oral presentation.

One definite weakness showed up in Ickes' choice of language in this, as in later, speeches. In his desire to be vivid and colorful, he occasionally neglected to follow the dictates of simplicity in word selection. He sometimes used words and allusions which were beyond the immediate, and perhaps ultimate, comprehension of a large part of his audience. Among such words were these: mesalliance, quadrennium, accouchment, emanations, inditing, effrontery, abstemious, progeny, and cryptic. Obviously, words or phrases less impressive but more immediately comprehensible could have been selected. Perhaps the best example of Ickes' occasional vocabulary parade was in this sentence referring to Governor Landon's candidacy:

The railroad sidings at Topeka, Kansas, no longer support the ostentatious display of the private cars of those humble American citizens who dutifully joined in the pilgrimage thither of William Randolph Hearst in order to do homage to a new political Messiah, than whom no Delphic oracle has been more abstemious or cryptic in his utterances.

Ickes was extremely interested in words. He had been a student of Latin in his school days, and in

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later life he showed an obsession for vocabulary, keeping always near and consulting constantly a large dictionary. His interest sometimes betrayed him into a violation of the simplicity of word choice necessary for audience understanding.

It may be said, in general, that Ickes showed a tendency in this speech to employ words infrequently used and not widely understood, and that his structuring of language was sometimes involved. These defects, however, were more than compensated by his use of vivid, expressive, and emotive language. His use of language was vivid and colorful enough to command the hearers' attention, to be humorously and suggestively persuasive, and to make good newspaper copy.

REACTION TO THE SPEECH

Ickes' first major attack upon the Republicans and their candidate was somewhat milder than that of subsequent speeches. Outside the New Deal, the reaction to it was also calmer than it was for later speeches.

31 This was stated by Michael Straus in a personal interview on January 23, 1955, and confirmed by Mrs. Ickes in an interview of January 31, 1955.

32 In analyzing reaction to all of Ickes' speeches, the writer has consulted the Washington Star, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Chicago News, the Chicago Tribune, the New York Times, and numerous weekly publications. The sources used most, however, were the Ickes scrapbooks in the Ickes Papers. These contain clippings from magazines and newspapers from all parts of the country.
Coming as it did when the Republicans gathering in Cleve­
land held the public eye and the air was full of pronounce­ments from prominent political figures, Ickes' speech received less newspaper publicity than did later radio addresses. None of the leading dailies carried the speech in full, though several carried reports of its arguments and quoted at some length from the speech. Both the New York Times and the Washington Post of June 8 carried a full-column report on page four. The St. Louis Post­Dispatch gave a partial report of the speech but relegat­ed it to page 7C. The Chicago Tribune carried no report at all. Many smaller newspapers gave their readers partial reports and also mentioned the speech editorially.33 The reactions of the Hearst press and other Republican papers were, of course, hostile. Those which mentioned the speech carried with it the following Hearst-authorized comment: "Mr. Ickes' whole broadcast is rather absurd, but his remarks about Mr. Hearst are particularly vapid."34 Most of the unfavorable newspaper comment about the speech centered around the Hearst issue,

33Typical of smaller newspapers from which clippings found their way into Ickes' scrapbooks were the Winston-Salem (North Carolina) Sentinel, the Springfield (Missouri) Events, the Houghton (Michigan) Gazette, and the Santa Fe New Mexican.

34Baltimore Sun, June 8, 1936.
ignoring other issues in the speech. The *Pueblo Star Journal* labeled the Hearst charge "ludicrous" and said Ickes was "mudslinging." Even the Democratic *Paducah Sun* questioned the validity of the charge of Hearst domination, saying that Landon realized Hearst backing was "the kiss of death." The Democratic *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, however, said that Landon might like to shake off Hearst but probably could not do so. The Hearst-controlled *San Diego Tribune* denied that Hearst even started the Landon build-up, giving credit instead to the *Kansas City Star*. The general consensus was that the Hearst charge had not been sustained. The rest of the speech, as might be expected, received generally favorable comment from the minority Democratic press and generally unfavorable reaction from the majority Republican press. Most of the letters, cards, and telegrams received by Ickes in the wake of the speech were similarly divided along obviously partisan lines.

From the Administration point of view, the speech was apparently a successful effort. Partisan Democrats

35 *Pueblo Star Journal*, June 8, 1936.
36 *Paducah Sun*, June 9, 1936.
37 *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, June 11, 1936.
38 *San Diego Tribune*, June 9, 1936.
39 Ickes Papers, Container 246.
were enthusiastic, and many requested copies of the speech to be used as campaign material. The newspaper coverage was undoubtedly sufficient to focus some attention on the manner in which the Republican platform framers met their problems, which was another purpose of the speech. Stanley High, who originated the idea of the speech, enthusiastically approved of it and, according to Ickes, tried to claim credit for writing most of it. That the President was enthusiastic about the speech has been previously noted. It might be added, as further evidence of his approval of Ickes' first major attack, that it was on July 1—three weeks after the initial Ickes speech—that the President indicated definitely to Ickes that his job in the campaign was "to attack." The President had, by this time, had ample opportunity to assess the reaction to Ickes' first major performance in his role of "hatchet-man." He apparently considered it favorable enough to continue Ickes' rhetorical efforts along the same line.

40Ibid.
42Ibid., p. 627.
SUMMARY EVALUATION

The idea behind the attack upon the Republican platform efforts was strategically good, and Ickes' analysis of the problems faced by the Republican convention was sound. In presenting those problems and attempting to create a public attitude of suspicion and uncertainty about the convention's efforts, Ickes did little to establish his conclusions through logical demonstration. He relied primarily upon emotional appeals, especially those built around effective use of humor and emotive language. He concentrated, too, upon undermining Republican ethos while strengthening that of the Roosevelt Administration. The speech was broadcast nationally and given relatively good newspaper coverage. Though press reaction to the first Ickes' assault was understandably divided, President Roosevelt and his advisers considered the effort successful enough to warrant repetition. It had cheered partisans, had supplied many Democrats with campaign material, had secured publicity for attacks on Landon and his leading supporters, and had put the Republicans partially on the defensive on the eve of their convention. To consider whether it won any votes would merely be idle speculation. The speech appears to have been fairly successful at doing what the Administration, in the belief that it would affect the ultimate outcome of the campaign, wanted it to do.
"GOVERNOR LANDON--PRACTICAL PROGRESSIVE"

On August 3, Secretary Ickes delivered his second major radio address of the 1936 campaign. This speech, entitled "Governor Landon--Practical Progressive," was broadcast by a C.B.S. network from 10:45 P.M. to 11:15 P.M. Delivered as a reply to Landon's July 23 acceptance address, it was the first direct attack upon the Republican presidential candidate by a member of the Administration.\(^\text{1}\)

BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF THE SPEECH

In the period of almost two months between Ickes' first and second major radio addresses, organized Democratic campaign activity was negligible. Democratic strategy originally called for only one month of full-time campaigning, and the President did not make his first avowed campaign speech until September 29. Meanwhile, the Landon boom appeared to make progress. On July 20, the farm poll conducted in thirty-two states by the Farm

\(^{1}\text{The President had ordered that no member of the Administration was to mention Landon by name in any speech given before the Kansas Governor's speech of acceptance. Ickes, Secret Diary, Vol. I, p. 642.}\)
Journal showed Landon leading by a ratio of five to four. After other minor polls showed similar results, Democratic statistician Emil Hurja took sample polls of his own. The results indicated that Roosevelt support had dropped to barely over fifty per cent and that he was trailing on electoral votes. Hurja and Ickes both regarded the situation as serious.

Ickes made six speeches during the interval between his first two major broadcasts, but only one of these speeches was frankly political in nature. On June 29, he was the principal speaker at a meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Baltimore, Maryland. During the month of July, he made speeches in his capacities as Secretary of the Interior and Administrator of PWA at four formal dedications.

On July 17, he addressed the University of Virginia's Institute of Public Affairs as the Administration's representative in a political debate. Republicans were represented by former Senator Hiram Bingham of Connecticut. Each speaker had an advance copy of his opponent's

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4 This speech, in part emphasizing the value of the New Deal to colored people, was broadcast by N.B.C. and was reported in the New York Times, June 30, 1936, p. 10.

5 Text of these speeches, delivered on July 4, 11, 14, and 22, are in the Ickes Papers.
speech and each used the title "Representative Government versus Dictatorship." Bingham, speaking first, argued that Roosevelt was directing a trend toward dictatorship; Ickes contended that Republicans stood for economic dictatorship while the New Deal worked toward greater freedom for the common people.

Although this debate was broadcast only by local radio facilities, it received good newspaper coverage. Reaction, in general, followed party lines. However, some opposing papers, although not agreeing with all of Ickes' arguments, commented favorably upon his effort. The President apparently did not express his reaction after the speech at Charlottesville, but William D. Hassett, assistant to Stephen Early, had conveyed enthusiastic White House approval of the manuscript prior to delivery of the speech.

Ickes was active politically between his first

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6The New York Times of July 20, gave a fairly complete report of the arguments on page 13; the Washington Star, also July 20, reported them on page 1; and the Ickes scrapbooks contain reports from newspapers all over the country.

7The Lincoln State Journal (Nebraska) of July 27, disagreed with Ickes but said he "showed all the skill of the experienced lawyer," and the Washington Post of July 20, conceded his argument that Roosevelt had no desire to establish dictatorial power.

8Ickes Papers, Container 247.
two major speeches in one other way. At a June 18 press conference he attacked the Republican platform, terming it "ambiguous and weasel-worded." This post-convention comment, coupled with similar remarks in his Charlottesville speech, served as follow-up to the charges made in his June 7 attack on the Republican party.

Ickes' insistence that the Administration ought to level early and frequent attack upon Landon, and his own availability for the task, were noted in Chapter II. For a time it appeared that he was to be denied the opening assault. On July 20, Charles Michelson informed the Secretary that he was to reply to Landon's July 23 acceptance address on the following evening. On July 21, the President changed the plans, seemingly reluctant to allow a Cabinet officer to initiate the attack. On July 30, after Ickes had been urged upon him by Michelson, Farley, and High, and after he had seen the draft of the proposed speech, Roosevelt approved Michelson' original plan.

Ickes' initial eagerness to make the reply to

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Landon was whetted by the Kansan's speech of acceptance. On July 24, after listening to that speech, Ickes wrote in his diary:

Landon, in my judgment, has laid himself wide open to a devastating attack and I am eager to make it. Particularly in what he said about the Oil Administration he played right into my hands. We have in our files in this Department quotations from Landon's letters, telegrams, as well as a speech he made as chairman of the oil conference here in 1933, with which we could rake him fore and aft. . . . I feel very keenly that Landon has let down his guard and that this is the time for a smashing blow.11

The speech previously prepared was altered to meet the Landon address, radio time was secured for the evening of August 3, and advance publicity was arranged. On August 1, the New York Times reported that the Secretary of the Interior would "contrast the remedies which Governor Landon urged upon the Roosevelt Administration three years ago with the policies he is now urging as a candidate for President."12 On August 3, the pro-Roosevelt New York Daily News carried what looked almost like a commercial advertisement, urging listeners to tune in on "one of the country's best radio talkers."13 The stage was set for what Ickes termed "a highly concentrated attack on Landon."14

11 Ibid., p. 649.
12 New York Times, August 1, 1936, p. 4.
PURPOSE AND THESIS OF THE SPEECH

The primary purpose of the August 3 speech was to discredit Landon; this was to be the "smashing blow" mentioned in the Ickes quotation previously cited. The thesis, alluded to in the title of the speech and developed in the first few paragraphs of the text, was that Landon was a "practical"—not a "true"—progressive. Ickes cited the Landon record in several particulars and concluded after each that the Republican candidate was "practical" (the Webster definition "capable of being turned to use or account" was cited), but that he was not a progressive. This was a double-barreled thesis, serving two purposes. On one hand, the speaker denied the claims of many Republicans that their candidate was truly progressive; this half of the thesis was directed toward progressive Republicans and liberal independents. On the other hand, the exposition of the Kansan's former views and statements favorable to the New Deal was not likely to increase the confidence of conservative Republicans in their candidate. This dual aspect of the speech was noted by the Detroit News:

There will be no question of Ickes' intent to keep the progressive vote in line for Mr. Roosevelt, but the Democratic idea in putting him on the radio couldn't have failed to consider an effect in weakening Landon among the Eastern conservatives. The latter don't like Landon's radical streak. That's as true as that most of the westerners won to his
support because of his liberalism don't like his association with the Old Guard GOP-ers.\textsuperscript{15}

Both of these ideas were potentially harmful to Landon's candidacy. The fact should be added, too, that the exposure of the candidate's apparent inconsistencies and vacillation was likely to decrease his standing with all groups.

The \textit{Miami News} thought it saw still another purpose in the "exposure" of the Kansas Governor's change of views between 1933 and 1936:

Bear in mind that one of the anti-Roosevelt issues of this campaign was to be President Roosevelt's departure from the platform of 1932, his change of mind since 1932. Thanks to Ickes, we now have the opponents of President Roosevelt, in defending their candidate for his change of mind, defending Secretary Ickes' candidate for his change of mind. The change-of-mind issue—the 1932 platform issue—is now out of the campaign, which might well have been exactly what the acute Ickes hoped and planned to accomplish by his speech.\textsuperscript{16}

That the Landon change of views influenced the effectiveness of Republican charges of Roosevelt platform violation can be demonstrated. No evidence has been uncovered, however, to indicate that this was a planned purpose of the speech.

The speech's primary purpose was to damage Landon prestige, especially with progressive and liberal voters.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Detroit News}, August 5, 1936.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Miami News}, August 9, 1936.
The thesis was that he was a political opportunist tied to a conservative campaign and was not, in 1936, a progressive candidate.

**LINES OF ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION**

The lines of argument in this speech were more clearly organized and developed than in the speech on the Republican platform. The thesis, while not expressed in a single sentence, emerged clearly in the first two minutes of the thirty-minute address. The opening paragraph went right to the subject:

Governor Alfred M. Landon has decided that he is a 'practical' progressive. That this is the designation that he would apply to himself is clear from his speech of acceptance in Topeka the night of June 23.17

After referring to how "practical" was defined by dictionaries and commenting to the effect that Landon like the Republican platform, represented an impossible attempt at compromise, the speaker returned directly to his thesis:

Now, whether Governor Landon is fifty per cent 'practical' and fifty per cent 'progressive' or whether he leans more to the progressive West than to reactionary Wall Street might be a close question.

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17 In that address Landon had said: "Practical progressives have suffered the disheartening experience of seeing many liberal objectives discredited during the past three years by careless thinking, unworkable laws, and incompetent administration." *New York Times*, July 24, 1936, p. 11.
if in his speech he had not himself thrown some light upon the subject.

At that point, introduction ended and the first argument began.

These arguments, unlike those of his June 7 address, could be sharply defined; they were seven in number:

(1) Landon has swung from Theodore Roosevelt's type of progressivism to a "States' rights" philosophy.
(2) He is not a progressive in regard to civil service.
(3) He is obscure, but not progressive, regarding labor unions.
(4) His present views on executive powers represent a "practical" shift of conviction.
(5) He is a product of William Randolph Hearst, who is not a progressive.
(6) He is supported by reactionary elements.
(7) He is running on a reactionary platform.

These premises, if properly supported, constituted an effective indictment of Landon and adequate argument for Ickes' thesis. If Landon held a "States' rights" point of view, opposed extensive exercise of executive functions, paid only lip-service to a merit system, and disapproved of strong labor organization, he was not in
line with historic principles of the progressive movement.\textsuperscript{18} The last three premises were more circumstantial types of indictment, since a candidate for political office cannot always be fairly judged by the views or the merit of his supporters, or even entirely by his party's platform. If Ickes proved that Landon was supported by Hearst and by leading reactionary groups and that he had accepted a reactionary platform, claims that he was a progressive would certainly be open to suspicion. To give the indictments fullest significance, however, the Secretary would need to show strong presumption that Hearst and other "non-progressive" Landon supporters were really going to exercise strong influence on the candidate in the event of his election. Ickes did conjecture upon that point, but devoted no real effort to establishing any commitments. In the case of the Republican platform, such a commitment had been made. Ickes' premises, if adequately supported, were probably conclusive enough for the progressive Republicans and liberal independents for whom they were primarily intended.

After a partial summary of his main arguments, Ickes launched into an emotional philippic against "the

money power of America," which was purportedly backing Landon, and asserted that the election's real issue lay between this force and the President. His conclusion proper was brief:

Governor Landon cannot at the same time be the candidate of the exploiting and of the exploited. Not even a 'practical' progressive ought to be able to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds.

FORMS OF SUPPORT

In the speech on the Republican platform Ickes had concentrated on emotional appeals while subordinating logical and ethical proofs. In his August 3 address, logical and emotional proofs were more nearly balanced, with ethical proofs almost ignored.

Most of the speaker's premises had some element of logical support, with testimony and example being used most frequently. To support his conclusion that Landon "began as a strong nationalist but ended as an advocate of States' rights," Ickes used one quotation as sole evidence. That quotation was from Landon's acceptance address:

As a young man I was attracted to the idea of centralizing in the Federal Government full power to correct the abuses growing out of a more complex social order. When the people rejected this alternative I was as disappointed as any one. But in spite of this rejection I have lived to see many of those views substantially corrected by the forty-eight State Legislatures in their fields and by the Federal Government in its field of interstate commerce.
The Secretary concluded from this statement that "the Governor, in effect, is apologizing for having followed Theodore Roosevelt as a Progressive in 1912." He added that "the language itself is obscure, but the clear meaning is there to quiet the fears of the reactionaries." Quoting Landon himself on his altered point of view was an excellent idea. Nor was the quotation taken out of context. Error lay, however, in the over-extension of the conclusion drawn by Ickes from the quotation. It obviously did not say, without subjective interpretation, all that the speaker concluded from it. Perhaps it was even intended to quiet conservative fears, but that the speaker did not prove. The quotation was sufficient to arouse doubt about Landon's views, but it alone was not sufficient proof that the Kansan had completely abandoned all previous progressive ideas. The premise that Landon was not truly progressive on civil service was supported both by example and by comparison and contrast. Ickes, noting that the Governor had even gone beyond his party's platform in declaring for a merit system, used the failure of Kansas to implement a merit system as an example of Landon's real inclination. The facts involved in the example had been confirmed by
Harry Woodring, Landon's predecessor as Governor of Kansas. The speaker then contrasted this failure with the action of the President in regard to civil service. The President had requested civil service legislation, which Congress had defeated. He then issued an executive order placing postmasters in three categories under civil service. Republicans charged that the President's move was purely political, but, disregarding motive, the contrast was valid on the basis of actual performance.

Ickes' argument that Landon did not take a progressive view regarding labor organization was brief enough to be quoted:

He [Landon] believes that employees have the right to organize by plant, by craft or by industry. He is for the closed shop and he also believes in the open shop. If there were any other forms of association in which employees could indulge, it is a fair guess that Governor Landon would favor that also.

Certainly those great industries which, by fair means or foul, have prevented their employees from organizing according to their own wishes have nothing to fear from Governor Landon's attitude on this question.

The speaker used no actual evidence, but he was referring

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19 This information is contained in a memorandum from R. B. Armstrong, an Ickes assistant, to the Secretary. Ickes Papers, Container 315.

20 Joseph Martin, Republican congressman from Massachusetts, aired this charge as part of his reply to Ickes speech. New York Times, August 5, 1936, p. 12.
indirectly to Landon's statements about labor in his speech of acceptance. The interpretation made by Ickes corresponded closely with that of most labor leaders. The Republican candidate's position was denounced the day after it was presented by John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers, George L. Berry, Chairman of Labor's Non-Partisan League, Sidney Hillman, President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Arthur O. Wharton, President of the International Association of Machinists, and Francis J. Gorman, Vice-President of the United Textile Workers of America. 21

Ickes' charge that Landon's expressed fears of Roosevelt's use of federal authority were politically motivated, and not sincere, was supported by 1933 and 1934 quotations from the Kansas Governor. The use of testimony was, perhaps, strongest in support of this premise. Eight different Landon quotations were used to demonstrate his earlier support of Roosevelt's use of federal authority: four from speeches, three from telegrams, and one from a letter. Most of the statements were specific and difficult to misconstrue. One 1933 quotation was general, but gave definite approval of Roosevelt's actions:

I desire to acknowledge, in a tangible way, the appreciation of the people of my State of the courage with which President Roosevelt has attacked the depression. If there is any way in which a member of that species, thought by many to be extinct, a Republican Governor of a Middle Western State can aid him in the fight, I now enlist for the duration of the war.

More specific statements put Landon on record as favoring the Oil Code, price-fixing, and the National Industrial Recovery Act. This part of the argument was rather easy to support. Arthur Krock, who appeared neutral, if not sympathetic, to the Landon candidacy at this stage of the campaign, made this concession: "The other night, reviewing some of Mr. Landon's less recent activities, Secretary Ickes made against him, and easily proved, charges of inconsistency."  

A New York Times editorial of August 5, while reacting unfavorably to the speech as a whole, drew the same conclusion:

Secretary Ickes had no difficulty on Monday night in proving that Governor Landon said things and took positions in 1933 and 1934 very different from what he is now saying and advocating.  

This premise was one generally accepted and one which Landon's early New Deal utterances made easy to support.

The premise that Landon had been nominated largely through the support of William Randolph Hearst, if not

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extended to imply too much beyond that, was also relatively easy to support. As proof for it, Ickes offered statements from two of the Kansan's leading supporters. The first was from the Topeka State Journal, the newspaper of Henry J. Allen:

With all due respect to the work of Governor Landon's supporters and his personality and ability and to his natural appeal to the nation, it was William Randolph Hearst who placed his name on the lips of the American people.

The second was from a William Allen White article entitled "How Landon Won--The True Story of the Birth, the Boom and the Climax of the Kansan's Nomination":

When the two private cars (carrying Mr. Hearst and his party) were parked in the Topeka switchyards, all Kansas knew that her Governor was beginning to be somebody.

These quotations, coming from Landon partisans, constituted a type of authority about which Bryant and Wallace say: "Finally, does the opinion run counter to the author's natural interest and bias? If so, it can be given great weight." That Hearst was influential in the Landon boom was then a matter of general knowledge and is today generally accepted. Basil Rauch writes:

Early in the 1936 political season, Hearst made a visit of inspection to Governor Alfred Mossman Landon of Kansas, and presently his chain of

newspapers began aggressively to support the Governor for the Republican nomination. . . . This was the first notice given the country as a whole of the availability of Governor Landon. 25

The two quotations used by Ickes, considering the lack of serious controversy on the point directly involved, constituted sufficient proof. They did not necessarily point to the further implication that Hearst would control Landon. This was implied when the speaker said of Governor Landon and Colonel Knox: "There is not any doubt that they are Hearstian." That implied premise was suggested, but it was not proved.

The elements which New Dealers would classify as "reactionary," banking and big business interests, undoubtedly supported the Republican candidate. If the listener or reader agreed that these interests were of the nature Ickes assumed them to be, proving that Landon had "reactionary" support was not only easy, but almost unnecessary. That they were reactionary and their support reprehensible was put merely as emotionally-colored assertion:

Since when did the liberty-loving duPonts, Andrew W. Mellon, Ogden L. Mills, Winthrop W. Aldrich, J. Henry Roraback, Henry P. Fletcher, Senator Jesse H. Metcalf or John D. M. Hamilton, the latter an offshoot of the machine of the late Dave Mulvane and,
until recently, the bitter antagonist of that pro-
gressive group in Kansas which now fawns upon him,
show any except a malevolent interest in a real
progressive principle?

Can it be that Wall Street, The New York Herald
Tribune, The Chicago Daily Tribune, the San Fran-
cisco Chronicle and the Los Angeles Times, to say
nothing of the Liberty League and the papers of
William Randolph Hearst and other wealthy re-
actionaries, out of a tender regard for the welfare
of the plain people of America have suddenly de-
serted the special interests and have gone progres-
sive?

While the paragraphs just quoted gave valid examples of
conservative men and groups who openly supported Landon,
Ickes' assumption that they were "reactionary" and
"malevolent" was not supported by logical proof. Fur-
ther, while this line of argument did illustrate that
Landon was supported by some men and groups certainly
not considered progressive, it did not prove that the
Kansan would necessarily reject all progressive ideas
upon their insistence. The argument relied more upon
emotional than upon logical proof for its appeal.

Ickes' last major premise was that Governor Lan-
don had approved a reactionary platform. To establish
that the platform was reactionary, the speaker cited
testimony from only one source: Dr. Nicholas Murray
Butler, President of Columbia University. Dr. Butler
had called the Republican convention "the most react-
ionary in the party's entire history." The Secretary
made the most of a good authority, noting Butler's
long service as a leader in the Republican party, his nomination for Vice-President in 1912, and his prominent mention as a presidential prospect in 1920. The quotation was not out of context; indeed, more Butler statements could have been used, since the Columbia President had bitterly denounced the work of the entire Republican convention. The statement used by Ickes did not specifically mention the platform, but Dr. Butler had clearly included it in his denunciation in the press. The quotation was a good one. Some question must be raised, however, as to whether a single piece of testimony was sufficient to prove the opponent's platform "reactionary." This is especially questionable since Ickes' previous reaction had been that the platform "looked both ways" and that it was "ambiguous and weasel-worded," not that it was plainly reactionary.

Ickes' logical support for some of his premises was not sufficient to constitute conclusive evidence, and some of his conclusions went beyond both his original premise and his evidence. His rational proofs were, however, probably sufficient for the Republican progressives and independent liberals in whom the speaker


was especially interested. Coupled effectively with emotional appeals, they were likely to prove adequate for creating doubts about Landon in the minds of other voting groups as well.

In this attack upon Landon, as in that on the Republican platform, Ickes' emotional appeals were designed primarily to create attitudes of fear, suspicion, and distrust. The arguments built around the thesis that Landon pretended to be a progressive, but was not, were certain, if given credence, to create fear of Landon's policies among voters progressively inclined. The simple fact that the Kansan pretended to be something he was not, if true, would create suspicion and lack of confidence among voters who were not especially concerned about whether the Governor was progressive or not. The revelation of the Republican candidate's reversal of opinion about the New Deal, coupled with Ickes' insinuation that the change was politically motivated, was likely to create distrust and lack of confidence in some voters of all political points of view. The basic premises of the speech were designed to create attitudes based partly upon emotional responses.

The Secretary also made use of emotional appeals which depended more upon selection of language than upon the ideas themselves. This language was directed, for
the most part, toward creating, or recreating, the fear and distrust many Americans were prone to feel toward big business, organized finance, and wealth in general. Emotionally "loaded" stereotypes, many of which had also been used in the first radio address, dotted the speech. Here are but a few of them: "reactionaries," "economic royalists," "malefactors of great wealth," "concentrated wealth," "the money power of America," and "predatory interests." By the transfer device, the emotional connotations of these terms were applied to the Republican party and to Governor Landon.

Names of people and organizations were also used as a type of "loaded" language. Names associated with the Republican Administration during the crash of 1929 seem to have been used almost solely to get "symbol" responses, such names as Herbert Hoover, Andrew W. Mellon, Winthrop W. Aldrich, and Ogden L. Mills. Symbols of great wealth, such as the duPonds, Wall Street, and the Liberty League were also used for their psychological value.

Another psychological form of persuasion used in this speech was that of repetition. Brembeck and Howell say of this device:

The strength of a suggestion varies with the frequency with which it is met. Repetition serves to clarify and to hold attention to an idea until it becomes a part of us. It may appear in two forms:
Many of Ickes' ideas were repeated as restatement, but the use of repetition which stood out in this speech was the recurring reference to Governor Landon as a "practical progressive." Contained in the title, this irony-tinged reference also appeared thirteen times in the text of the speech. It was most pointed at the conclusion of individual arguments. After supporting his first premise Ickes closed with: "As Governor Landon's friends insist, he is a 'practical' progressive." The next argument closed with: "Governor Landon is indeed a 'practical' progressive." Another argument concluded: "Indubitably Governor Landon is a 'practical' progressive." These references to Landon's "practical" type of progressivism appear in the title, in the first sentence, in the conclusion of most of the arguments, and in the final sentence. They represent the most obvious examples of Ickes' frequent use of persuasion through repetition.

Psychological appeals merely accompanied logical arguments during most of the speech. At the conclusion of those arguments, however, Ickes launched into a

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peroration dealing almost exclusively in the types of appeal just discussed. The following passage is illustrative:

Concentrated wealth, the power of money, still dominates the Republican party. If you doubt this statement, count noses and see in which political camp the great bankers, the monopolistic industrialists and the vested interests that have been built up by Republican favor and which flourish on special privilege have pitched their tents. . . .

It ought not to be necessary to point out that that man is to be avoided who openly or secretly, is being supported by the man who ruthlessly wield the money power of America. These men know what they want and it is seldom that they do not know how to get what they want. Their allegiance in this campaign is known and there has been no denial of that allegiance.

Thus, the appeals to prejudice against wealth and big business and the insinuations of "guilt by association," which had been subordinated to more logical forms of argument throughout most of the speech, were given free rein in the concluding appeal.

The use of humor, which had been one of the strongest appeals in the June 7 address, was also in evidence in this speech. Less gentle and more sardonic than before, it was again used more for argument than for entertainment. In every instance, it ridiculed Landon or his party.

In one instance, Ickes called attention to the fact that Kansas had passed a civil service law, but that Governor Landon had never pushed through an appropriation
to effectuate it. Then he concluded:

It has been another instance of 'Mother, mother may I go out to swim? Oh, yes, my darling daughter. Hang your clothes on a hickory limb, but don't go near the water.'

A few moments later, when he discussed Landon's fears of dictatorship, he engaged in irony at the Kansan's expense:

I do not think that this 'common sense' candidate believes for a moment in this claptrap. But we must make allowances for him. There is a campaign on. Even if he cannot point with pride, we must allow him to view with alarm.

A short time later, when discussing Hearst's printed claims that the Republican platform and candidates were progressive, Ickes again engaged in irony and invective:

Of course, Mr. Hearst has every right to expect his most trifling dictum to be accepted by abject Republicans as a pontifical utterance. And if he says it is progressive, who would be so bold as to question that fact?

In the same editorial he laid down the law to the effect that the candidates for both President and Vice-President are also progressive. Well, who in the whole country, I may ask, has a better right to name the children than their father?

As in the speech analyzed in Chapter IV, Ickes again gave little conscious attention to using or building his own ethos as persuasion in the speech. His emphasis was on reducing the reputation and prestige of Landon and his party, with some effort being made to enhance the standing of the President and the Administration. The entire argument was calculated to undermine confidence in Governor Landon. Both his independence
and his sincerity were questioned, and he was subjected to ridicule. His party was accorded similar treatment.

Three references to the President were made in a way likely to increase the ethos of the Secretary's candidate. The comparison of Landon's record on civil service with that of Roosevelt has already been noted. In addition, Ickes attempted to capitalize upon the denunciation of Landon's "reactionary" supporters in a way which would raise the President's standing. After associating Landon with such men as the dePonts, Hearst, and the membership of the Liberty League, the speaker said:

To my mind it is a real tribute to President Roosevelt that he should have won the bitter enmity of such men as I have referred to. He must have struck some mighty blows in behalf of the people to have called forth the hymns of hate which have been chanted against him by the economic royalists and the malefactors of great wealth, if we may borrow a striking phrase of the late Theodore Roosevelt.

Near the end of the speech, these men were again referred to, this time as "the same crowd through which there was circulated some months ago the slogan: 'Let's gang up on Roosevelt.'" This was but a brief repetition of the same technique used before.

Ickes' use of ethical appeals was directed chiefly toward reducing the reputation and prestige of Governor Landon and enhancing that of President Roosevelt. The
subject matter of this speech gave Ickes unusual oppor-
tunity to capitalize upon his personal position. His
recognized background as a leading progressive and his
position as Administrator of the Oil Code, which figured
prominently in the proof of the speech, gave him oppor-
tunity to inject himself into the speech. He spoke,
instead, as an impersonal representative of the New Deal.

USE OF LANGUAGE

The language of the speech has already been dis-
cussed from the point of view of emotional persuasive-
ness. It should be studied, too, from the point of view
of style, especially regarding the requirements of ef-
fектив oral presentation.

Ickes' choice of language again showed his
awareness of the value of figurative expressions. His
words and phrases often helped to give a striking and
vivid mental image of the idea being presented. For
example, when noting the Landon shift between 1933 and
1936, Ickes pictured him as "A.W.O.L. from the war
against poverty." He also referred to the "realistic
shudder" which Landon simulated when thinking about
Roosevelt's dictatorial aspirations. Later he pictured
the Kansas Governor driving "a four-in-hand made up of
William Randolph Hearst, William Allen White, Gifford
Pinchot and a duPont selected at random." He also
depicted Landon going "down on his knees at the mourners' bench to ask forgiveness for his temporary aberration in 1912," adding that in 1912 the Republican candidate did not dream that "Wall Street and the Liberty League would one day take him to the top of a high mountain and promise him all the kingdoms of the world." In the concluding sentence, Ickes used one last figure of speech on Landon, declaring that "not even a 'practical' progressive ought to be able to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds."

Ickes also used some vivid language when attacking Hearst. Ickes referred to the publisher's "shrill editorials" pronouncing "dictum" which Republicans would accept as "pontifical utterance." In speaking of Hearst's recent ascension as a Republican boss, the Secretary said that "he has not yet warmed the chair that he has usurped" and that "the members of his adopted family are still a little nervous about his table manners" since he "may want more than his fair share of the good things of the board."

Ickes described the compromise platform of the conservative East and more liberal West as a "platform that faces both ways," a description he used often during the campaign. Perhaps his most descriptive language was used in analyzing the change in the Republican party in 1936:
The most that can be said for the Republican party is that it has been to a beauty parlor to have its face lifted. But a face-lifting does not make a new personality: it merely gives temporarily a more pleasing appearance to an old face. There has been no character lifting in the Republican party. It still suffers from soul erosion.

Ickes interspersed his arguments with rhetorical questions which helped to give directness to his style. For example, after disclosing a shift between Landon's 1933 views and those he submitted as a candidate in 1936, Ickes asked: "What caused this change?" When he noted that the Kansan's supporters were mostly conservatives, he asked: "Does this prove him to be a progressive?" Then he pointed to Landon's endorsement of an "ambiguous, tricky platform" written largely by "reactionaries" and again asked: "Was this the act of a progressive?" After listing some of the Republican candidate's leading supporters from business and finance, the speaker asked if these had "suddenly deserted the special interests and gone progressive?" There were ten questions of this sort in the thirty-minute address.

Ickes used fewer unnecessarily long or infrequently-used words in this speech than he had employed in his first major radio address. One such word did appear and received half-facetious, half-serious comment from the hostile Chicago Daily Tribune. The Tribune wondered how
James A. Farley, who reportedly thought already that Ickes used too many big words in his speeches, would react to his expression "the verisimilitude of progressivism." 29

The Secretary's sentences were also better-adapted to effective oral style in this address. They were, by actual count, shorter in this speech, averaging about twenty-two words per sentence. Approximately half of them were less than twenty words in length, which, according to the Brigance standards outlined in Chapter IV, would make them easily comprehensible in oral discourse. The use of shorter sentences and less difficult vocabulary simplified the oral style of Ickes' second major campaign speech, but robbed it of none of its vividness.

REACTION TO THE SPEECH

Ickes was obviously pleased with the response to the speech. Three days after delivering it he wrote:

I am having a good many letters commenting on my radio speech last Monday night, and very few indeed are critical. I note that the approving ones are more enthusiastic and complimentary than I have ever received on a speech. There are many requests for copies for personal use and for distribution, and I am writing today to Charley Michelson to ask him whether it is the purpose of the Democratic National

29Chicago Daily Tribune, August 5, 1936.
Committee to print this speech.\footnote{30}

Among the enthusiastic wires, letters, and personal notes were very congratulatory messages from Attorney General Homer Cummings, Ambassador Josephus Daniels, Senator Joseph Guffey, Governor Herbert Lehman, and publisher J. David Stern.\footnote{31} Still more important was a wire from the President which read: "That was a great philippic last night."\footnote{32} The President spoke to Ickes by telephone three days later to tell him the speech was "grand." He congratulated his Secretary of the Interior again two days later when he conferred with him at the White House.\footnote{33}

Ickes also found the reaction of Republican leaders gratifying. Of their comments he said:

Republican politicians and headquarters attaches have met the speech in a complaining tone of voice. . . . they do not meet me on the issues. All of which means to me that my speech really hurt.\footnote{34}


\footnote{31}{Notes from Cummings and Daniels, letters from Lehman and Stern, and a wire from Guffey are in the \textit{Ickes Papers}, Container 248.}

\footnote{32}{\textit{Ickes, Secret Diary}, Vol. I, p. 654.}

\footnote{33}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 659.}

\footnote{34}{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 665.}
That there was much truth in the Secretary's analysis of opponents' reaction is illustrated by some of their comments. Congressman Joseph Martin, Republican campaign manager in the East, appeared to have evaded and misconstrued the issues raised:

From a Republican standpoint the speech was most encouraging. It indicates how desperate the Democrats are. Like Chairman Farley, Mr. Ickes, pseudo-Republican, is whistling as he approaches the political cemetery where the New Deal is to be interred. Mr. Ickes, with ill grace for a man who was himself a so-called progressive, has attacked Governor Landon because of what he considers to be progressive tendencies.35

This statement missed the point, of course, since Ickes was charging that the Governor had taken political departure from his former progressivism, not that he had retained it. Another reaction came from Harrison E. Spangler, speaking for the Republican National Committee; he simply dismissed the speech as an attempt to "smear Landon." The same news column carried Ickes' retort: "Mayn't we say anything about their man? . . . I thought they invited careful scrutiny of his record."36 The Secretary's belief that Republican spokesmen failed to reply on the issues of his speech appears to have been justified.

The speech was given good newspaper publicity. The neutral New York Times and the hostile Washington Post carried both news reports and complete texts on August 4. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Chicago Daily Tribune, and the New York Herald Tribune reprinted portions of the text, and most of the country's other daily newspapers appear to have given the speech some kind of news or editorial notice.37

Editorial reaction was, of course, largely divided along partisan lines. However, those publications which supported the President were unusually enthusiastic, and many of those in the hostile group mixed disagreement with praise or made only complaining retorts.

Among the favorable editorial reactions was that of the Philadelphia Record, which said, regarding whether or not Landon was a progressive: "No man is better fitted to answer that question than Iokes. And he answered it brilliantly Monday night...."38 The Beaumont Enterprise labeled the speech "one of the most effective since the campaign started" and said Iokes showed "a

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37Container 239 of the Iokes Papers has several pages of clippings from newspapers representing all sections of the country.

38Philadelphia Record, August 5, 1936.
caustic tongue, a sense of humor, and plenty of ammunition."\textsuperscript{39} The Sedalia (Missouri) Times, said he "made a case that will be difficult to answer."\textsuperscript{40} Heywood Broun, in his "It Seems to Me" column, said that "Ickes scored strongly" and then added: "The reaction of Republican spokesmen to the address gives strong support to the charges which Mr. Ickes made."\textsuperscript{41} These are typical of the many favorable editorial reactions included in the Ickes scrapbooks.\textsuperscript{42}

Many of the papers supporting Landon roundly denounced the speech. The Boston Transcript called Ickes' charges "so vicious as to be utterly unworthy of a Cabinet officer";\textsuperscript{43} the Indianapolis Star said it was "a radio tirade of 3,700 words" in which there was "no room for logic";\textsuperscript{44} the Yakima Herald called Ickes a "popgun"

\begin{footnotes}
\item[39] Beaumont Enterprise, August 17, 1936.
\item[40] Sedalia Times, August 7, 1936.
\item[41] Washington News, August 24, 1936.
\item[42] The Nation of August 8, 1936 called the speech "shrewd, acid, and devastating." Still others which expressed praise were the Newark Ledger, the Brooklyn Citizen, the Miami News, the Louisville Courier-Journal, the Decatur Daily, the Wichita Publicity, the Camden Post, the Las Vegas Review Journal, the Pittsburgh Pilot, and the Mobile Register. Ickes Papers, Container 339.
\item[43] Boston Transcript, August 5, 1936.
\item[44] Indianapolis Star, August 4, 1936.
\end{footnotes}
who had fired "only BB shots"; and the New London Day, the Washington Herald, and the Kansas City Times, all of August 4, said that the speaker "tried to smear" Governor Landon.

None of the opposition papers mentioned so far, however, made a serious attempt to reply to the charges made by their New Deal opponent. The San Diego Tribune and the Portland Oregonian, both of August 5, did reply. Their answer was to cite the changes in President Roosevelt's ideas and program since 1933. The Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman of August 5 replied that no one had changed his mind in his political career more than Secretary Ickes.

Several smaller newspapers supporting Landon disagreed with the speech itself but had grudging words of praise for the speaker. An upstate New York editorial accused him of over-stating his case but labeled him "a forceful speaker and campaigner"; a hostile New England paper said that he brought into effective play "the full force of personalities which he, as an inveterate reformer, possesses"; and a paper in Landon's home state

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45 Yakima Herald, August 5, 1936.

46 Watertown Times, August 5, 1936.

47 Providence Bulletin, August 6, 1936.
denounced Ickes but called his speech "one of the most effective speeches against Governor Landon yet made by the quaking Democrats," adding that the speaker "deserves and will get credit from the Roosevelt Administration."^48

The New York Times remained uncommitted in the presidential contest at this time, and the opinions of Arthur Krock, one of its leading political commentators, were still non-partisan. Krock's reaction to the speech was a mixed one. He said that "reviewing some of Mr. Landon's less recent activities, Secretary Ickes made against him, and easily proved, charges of inconsistency"; but he added that the speech "probably did not have any great effect on those groups of voters who are still undetermined." Krock believed Ickes had not gone far enough in proving that Landon had changed his views purely for political opportunism. He concluded, however, that "the burden of proof is on Mr. Landon that he did not do the latter."^49

In general, the enthusiastic reception of it by partisans and the evasive or mixed response to it by opponents gave Ickes reason to be pleased with reactions to his speech.

^48Hutchinson Herald, August 5, 1936.

SUMMARY EVALUATION

Judged both by internal conformity to rhetorical standards and by the test of public reaction, the initial attack on Landon was a more effective speech than the one directed against the Republican platform. The August 3 speech went into the very essence of Ickes' special task in the campaign, that of reducing the stature of Landon as a candidate. The Administration's hatchet-man was under way in his efforts to weaken the Republican candidate in the eyes of progressives and liberals in both parties and to undermine public confidence in that candidate's sincerity. His chief weapons were the words of Governor Landon himself and of his supporters.

The strength of the speech lay primarily in its effective blending of logical and emotional appeals. Examples and testimony were used as rational supports, but they were clothed in highly psychological language. Vivid imagery and sardonic humor were effectively intermingled with logical supports. Some stylistic weaknesses present in the first radio address were not noted in this speech.

The reactions to the speech pleased both Ickes and Roosevelt. Democrats were highly enthusiastic about it; it was well publicized; and the replies of Republican leaders and publications were relatively ineffectual.
Democratic strategists had reason to feel that Ickes' attack had damaged the prestige and standing of Roosevelt's opponent and, at the same time, had weakened Republican charges of platform violations against the President.
CHAPTER VI

"HEARST OVER TOPEKA"

On August 27, at 9:45 P.M. (E.S.T.), Secretary Ickes made his third major radio address of the campaign. This thirty-minute speech, sponsored by the Democratic National Committee, was broadcast over a Columbia Broadcasting System network. It was entitled "Hearst Over Topeka."

BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF THE SPEECH

Between August 3 and August 27, Ickes made no speeches. He was not, however, entirely out of the news during that time. On August 18, several newspapers carried reports of the Secretary's verbal blast against the Winchester, Massachusetts policeman who had arrested Robert Ickes, the Secretary's foster son, on a charge of driving while under the influence of liquor. The arresting officer was accused of playing politics "through a young lad who is an innocent bystander." The New York Times carried Ickes' charge and also the denial by Police Sergeant Charles J. Harrold.1 Of potentially more serious consequence to Ickes politically was the published

charge that his book Back to Work: The Story of FWA was prepared in large part by government personnel and at government expense. This charge appeared in Hearst publications on August 24, and was made a front-page story by many of them. Ickes' press-conference reply was that he had simply availed himself of the research services which were supplied, upon request, to any taxpayer, including Hearst correspondents. After this brief exchange, the matter was apparently allowed to drop.

During this period between Ickes' addresses, Governor Landon began his expected Eastern tour. On August 21, at West Middlesex, Pennsylvania, he called for a return to "the American way of life"; on August 24, at Chautauqua Lake, New York, he discussed education, declaring against the Hearst-supported teacher loyalty oaths and favoring keeping education "free of all control by the Federal Government"; and on August 26, at Buffalo, he hit "reckless spending" and promised repeal

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3This conclusion is based on the absence of editorial or further news comment in the New York Times, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Chicago Tribune, the Washington Post, and the newspaper clippings (usually very thoroughly collected) in the Ickes Papers.


of the Surplus Tax Bill. A statement released by the Democratic National Committee indicated that Secretary Ickes' August 27 address would "discuss some of the questions raised in Governor Landon's talks at Chautauqua Lake and in Buffalo."

Although the Ickes' speech dealt with those questions very briefly and only indirectly, this announcement probably served to stimulate the desired interest.

Much closer to the actual content of the speech was a later announcement by the Democratic National Committee. It promised that the Ickes speech would disclose "hitherto secret documents revealing how orders went from William Randolph Hearst to Alfred Landon." This was a speech Ickes had been eager to make for a long time. He had urged upon Michelson, Farley, High, and the President the delivery of an attack linking Hearst and Landon before Landon's acceptance speech. According to Ickes, everybody approved the idea except the President, who preferred waiting until after the Kansan's speech of acceptance. The President expressed the fear that Landon might then disavow the politically

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8 New York Times, August 27, 1936, p. 11.
risky Hearst, a fear which his Secretary of the Interior regarded as "downright silly."  

Ickes did win approval for making minor attacks on Hearst in his June 7 and August 3 speeches. After the latter attack, according to Ickes, Roosevelt seemed more enthusiastic about "going after" Hearst:

He /Roosevelt/ said he had heard that Hearst didn't like the attacks that were being made upon him and that there were indications of a willingness on his part to compromise. He added that it might be necessary to go after him once more to bring him to time.  

On August 19, Charles Michelson called the Secretary to tell him that the President had decided to schedule the speech on Hearst and Landon for the evening of August 27. Ickes polished up the partially-prepared speech that weekend while a guest of his friend, and Hearst's publisher of the Washington Herald, Mrs. Eleanor Patterson.  

At an August 24 private luncheon with the President, final approval of the speech was received:

He /Roosevelt/ told me that Charley Michelson had said to him that my speech for Thursday night was fine. I handed a copy of it to him and he read it. He liked it and did not suggest a single

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10 Ibid., p. 639.
11 Ibid., p. 657.
12 Ickes diary relates this interesting event with obvious pleasure. Ibid., p. 665.
correction. He did suggest one or two things that might be added, and these I put in later in the day, to the improvement of the speech.\textsuperscript{13}

PURPOSE AND THESIS OF THE SPEECH

An original purpose of the attack on Hearst, that of embarrassing Landon just prior to his acceptance speech by linking him closely with Hearst, was gone; others, however, remained.

Hearst publications were in vigorous opposition to the Roosevelt Administration; therefore, any attack which undermined the influence of the publisher, or his newspapers, periodicals, and other news outlets, was sound political strategy. Governor Landon, however, and not Hearst, was the chief target of the assault. As Hugh Johnson was to point out after the speech: "Mr. Hearst is not the candidate. Landon is the name."\textsuperscript{14} Ickes and the President undoubtedly realized this, but they further realized that a candidate must often carry the weight of those supporters with whom he is closely associated in the public mind. Ickes was attacking Landon through Hearst. This is about what Landon-supporter William Hard said in a rather subjective way

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 666.

\textsuperscript{14}Newsweek, VIII (September 5, 1936), 12.
when he accused the Secretary of trying "to blacken the character of Governor Landon by blackening the character of Mr. Hearst."

Some evidence undeniably pointed to the conclusion that Hearst was not regarded favorably by the voters whose favor Landon sought to capture. In the election year of 1936 he was placed under especially persistent attack. In that year, two new Hearst biographies, both unsympathetic to their subject, appeared. In an editorial entitled "The King is Dead," New Republic said that these books threw Hearst under "a lurid spotlight" and then quoted in part from Charles A. Beard's introduction to one of them:

Hearst, despite all the uproar he has made and all the power he wields, is a colossal failure. . . . He will depart loved by few and respected by none whose respect is worthy of respect.

Just a few months prior to publication of these two biographies, Hearst had figured prominently in Raymond Gram Swing's Forerunners of American Fascism. In his chapter on Hearst, Swing wrote:

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17 New Republic, LXXXVII (September 5, 1936), 35.
Waging war on professors, contemptuous of academic freedom and of the rights of free speech, hostile to the 'alien' ideas of labor (particularly to the Newspaper Guild in his own offices), apologetic for big business, admiring of the fascists of Europe for having suppressed communism, and sensing in his very bones the decadence of the democracy he once served, that is Hearst today.18

In July of 1936, the Fortune poll took up the subject of Hearst. Their results showed widespread apathy or indecision but also revealed that many considered Hearst publications a bad influence on American politics. When asked the question "Do you think the influence of the Hearst papers upon national politics is good or bad?" over 10 per cent replied "good," almost 28 per cent thought it "bad," and the majority had no opinion. In the areas where Hearst papers were published, 10 per cent thought their influence good and those considering it bad rose to over 43 per cent.19

On August 21, a resolution by the American Federation of Teachers, convened in Philadelphia, labeled Hearst an "enemy of academic freedom," the "chief proponent of fascism" and the "outstanding jingoist" of the country. They also quoted Senator Norris' statement that Hearst publications were "the sewer system of American

journalism," and their resolution to boycott these publications passed unanimously.  

Much of the American public quite obviously did not approve of Hearst or his publications. If Ickes succeeded in associating Landon closely with Hearst, this might seriously hamper the Governor's bid for public favor. This purpose was accompanied by the further aim of striking at one of the most persistent and bitter critics of the Administration.

The thesis of the speech went beyond the simple association of candidate Landon with supporter Hearst. It developed the theme of a "boss-candidate" relationship. The subject was the Landon-Hearst relationship; the proposition which eventually emerged was that publisher Hearst strongly influenced or even controlled Governor Landon. The subject was announced in the opening sentence of the speech: "What of Governor Landon and William Randolph Hearst?"; the proposition was plainly implied in the closing sentences:

Hearst over Topeka! Do the American people want it to be Hearst over the White House? This is one of the most important issues, if not in fact the transcendent issue of this campaign.

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LINES OF ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION

The broad organization of this speech was clear. The speaker posed a question in the introduction, gave his answer to it in the body of the speech, and drew his conclusions in the closing sentences. The internal organization in the body of the speech conformed less to any logical pattern. The arguments, in order, were these:

(1) Landon owes his nomination to the support and direction of Hearst.
(2) Landon does not intend to discard Hearst after the election.
(3) Landon's present relationship with Hearst is a very close one.
(4) The "Old Guard" has not been removed from power in the Republican party.
(5) Hearst dominates most of the American press.
(6) Landon is conducting an evasive campaign.

It will be seen that these last three arguments do not directly support the main thesis of the speech, nor is there any obvious pattern to their arrangement. The tendency already noted in Ike's speeches to strike out on all fronts to discredit candidate, supporters, or party is much in evidence in this speech. The speech
maintains a semblance of unity, but only by the constant injection of references to the Hearst-Landon relationship and by the persistent attitude of attack.

FORMS OF SUPPORT

As in previous speeches, some of Ickes' premises were supported primarily by assertion and psychological appeals, almost not at all by logical proof. His first premise, for example, was supported by no logical proof at all. In contending that Landon owed his nomination to Hearst's support and direction, the speaker used assumption, assertion, and slanted narrative, but no logical proof. He began by saying:

Everyone knows that it was the result of a carefully planned Hearst build-up that made it possible for the pleasant gentleman who is Governor of Kansas to appear upon the national stage in the character of a Presidential candidate.

If boiled down to its purely factual content, this assertion was perhaps justified. As noted in Chapter V, the belief that Hearst support was very instrumental in securing the necessary publicity and backing for Landon's nomination was rather generally held. The narrative which followed next, however, went beyond the bounds of general agreement. Throughout his exposition, Ickes wove in assertions and implications of a highly controversial nature. His narrative, stripped
of all slanted description and implication, told of Hearst's break with the Administration, his decision to support the Kansas Governor, the publicity campaign which followed, and the eventual nomination of Landon and approval of a platform. While delivering this narrative, however, Ickes worked in unsupported assertions or implications (1) that Hearst's break with Roosevelt was solely because the Administration "denied certain special privileges" to him in regard to tax procedures; (2) that Landon balanced the budget so he would not "render himself liable to impeachment," and that he did so by cutting expenses "at the cost of the schools and other public welfare institutions"; (3) that Landon, at the direction of Hearst, "gradually discarded every conviction that would link him with the Progressive movement of the country or the New Deal of President Roosevelt"; and (4) that the Republican platform was "weasel-worded."

The paragraph describing the results of the Republican convention illustrates the nature of the Ickes' narrative:

In due course the Republicans assembled in a national convention at Cleveland, where they adopted a weasel-worded platform that was enthusiastically approved by Mr. Hearst and formally ratified candidates for President and Vice President who had been selected by him. The greatest build-up in the political history of America thus far had been successful. A well-meaning, pleasant
but inexperienced Governor in the make-up of a man of transcendent abilities and of truly heroic mold had been nominated for President by the major minority party.

The easy assertions and clever but unsupported implications in this paragraph are typical of those found in the first third of the Secretary's speech, the portion devoted to what "every one knows" about the nomination of Landon.

The second argument rejected the idea that Landon might, after election, drop Hearst. It did so by psychological suggestion tinged with a trace of irony. The argument was brief:

People of generous minds are loath to believe that these gentlemen [Landon and Knox] are willing to accept the support of Mr. Hearst and at the same time, by their silence, refuse to acknowledge their obligation to him. Least of all do they wish to credit the story that is going the rounds to the effect that Governor Landon will accept the support of Mr. Hearst until after the election and then repudiate him, win or lose. No one wants to have such an opinion as that of the Republican candidate.

Embodied here also was the suggestion of a dilemma: either Landon welcomed and would show appreciation for Hearst's aid, or he would prove ungrateful and treacherous. Ickes rejected the latter alternative in favor of the more "generous" one which, of course, supported the thesis of his speech.

The third argument dealt with the most advertised portion of the speech: the charge that sworn testimony
before an Illinois court furnished documentary proof of the Hearst influence on Landon. The testimony occurred in a case involving George F. Harding, Republican National Committeeman from Illinois. Harding had wanted, for reasons upon which Ickes speculated, to see Hearst. Through Frank Knox, he secured an appointment with Hearst and flew to California during the last week in June, 1936. After that conference, Hearst sent to Harding a memorandum, from which the speaker quoted in part:

Memorandum for Mr. Harding from Mr. Hearst: I was very much impressed by what you had to say about Governor Landon not making too many speeches. If you will write me to that effect, expressing your views as frankly as you did when we were talking, I will, with your permission, send the letter to Governor Landon. It cooperates with and supports what I have already told the Governor, and I feel that such views coming from an important man as yourself would have a great and valuable influence. I think the Governor naturally feels this himself, but the average politician around him is continually urging him to get out and talk. Talk is the method of the average politician, but as you very truly said this is a campaign in which speech-making might do more harm than good. At present the Democrats have nothing to criticize Governor Landon about. You can see that in their attempts to criticize him. Too many speeches might give the Democrats their eagerly wanted opportunity. Others try to combat or at least try to offset the influence of those politicians who are continually demanding more speeches.

This was the documentary evidence upon which the speaker based his premise that Hearst was exercising powerful influence over Landon. A simple reading of the memorandum does not offer convincing proof that it documents the charge. It seemed almost as though Hearst needed help in
putting across a suggestion to the Republican candidate. It expressed some Hearst points of view which were not likely to endear him to the public, and it did not reflect favorably upon his supporters' private views of Landon as a candidate; the memorandum did not, however, prove that Landon was under the domination of Hearst. It was good campaign material, but it does not appear to have proved the speaker's premise.

Ickes made the most of his document and of the circumstances leading to its writing. He inferred that Harding went to see Hearst because he was "practical" and therefore "wished to go to the highest source of power and authority in the Republican party," that he visited Hearst instead of Landon because "he wanted to get to the man at the top," and that if you want to get to Landon "the surest way is through Mr. Hearst." Such inferences appear to have been the result of partisan speculation; they were not warranted by the evidence.

The Secretary also quoted from the memorandum to prove that Hearst had silenced Landon on the issues of the campaign. Regarding Harding's suggesting that Landon say very little, Hearst had said "It cooperates with and supports what I have already told the Governor." This statement proved, according to the speaker, that Hearst was responsible for silencing Landon:
Mr. Hearst early in the game had cautioned him against talking too much, and a word of caution from that source was all that Governor Landon needed. . . . Has any aspirant for the high office of Chief Executive ever said so little that is worth listening to?

From the point of view of evidence and reasoning, the speaker's conclusion simply over-reached his proof.

The next argument was that the Republican party, far from ridding itself of the "Old Guard," was still a party of loose ethical standards. The evidence was drawn from a statement of Harding in the same case previously cited. This statement, as quoted and interpreted, did not paint a very savory picture of Harding's concept of political honesty. Again, however, the evidence was hardly adequate. A questionable, or even valid, charge of poor political ethics against one Republican, while it may be psychologically telling, is not logically sufficient to indict an entire party.

Ickes next argued that Hearst exerted control of a large section of the American press. The argument is brief enough to be quoted in its entirety:

Another significant aspect of the campaign, in addition to the pregnant taciturnity of Governor Landon and Colonel Knox upon this important Hearst issue, is the almost equally impenetrable silence of a certain part of the American press with reference to it.

It would almost seem that to some the cherished right of freedom of the press, about which Mr. Hearst and Colonel McCormick can become so excited when there is no occasion for it, is often merely freedom to distort news and to suppress news. It might not be
unreasonable to affirm that a section of the American press, to the degree to which it wears blinders upon this and other issues involving Mr. Hearst, regards him not only as its political but as its intellectual and ethical leader.

Be the explanation what it may, it is noteworthy that what in other circumstances would be regarded as important news cannot break into the columns of some newspapers which today, like the Republican party, have surrendered their judgment and their conscience to William Randolph Hearst.

Little in this argument would meet the tests of sound evidence. The conclusion was based upon an assertion of fact—that many newspapers were ignoring the New Deal side of the news, especially on the Hearst issue—and a causal inference from that assertion—that they had accepted completely the leadership of Hearst. The opinion that many pro-Landon newspapers carefully selected and even distorted political news was widely expressed by Democrats. Numerous letters in the Ickes' files expressed such an opinion, as did President Roosevelt and Charles Michelson. It is difficult to say whether undecided voters accepted it as general knowledge. If they did not, the entire argument rested on unsupported assertion of a dubious "fact."

That Hearst was the acknowledged leader of the Republican press was an inference not clearly indicated

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by the previous assertion and probably not a statement of generally accepted fact. Only one printed opinion which supported that stated by the Secretary has been found. Heywood Broun, pro-Roosevelt columnist wrote:

For more than a year Hearst has set the pace and defined the issues for practically all the attacks made upon the Roosevelt Administration. Even such bitter newspaper rivals of Mr. Hearst as the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and the New York Herald Tribune, have taken their tone from San Simeon. 22

Ickes' final argument was that Landon was a vague and evasive candidate, one about whom the voters actually knew little in regard to vital issues. He said, in part:

The farm question, the labor question, the question of social security, taxation, relief, peace and many other burning issues may be all right in their way, but the Republican candidate has a more important matter to discuss. He wants the country to conform to 'the American way of life'. Well, who doesn't? He reiterates this phrase as if he meant something by it, but in his mouth it is only a catch-phrase, a bit of empty rhetoric, a tinsel object designed to attract the attention of the unthinking.

I haven't attempted to count the number of times that the Republican candidate and his running mate have used this expression—which also is a favorite one of the Hearst press—but when Governor Landon, in particular, reaches a point in a speech where hope runs high that he is at last going to say something about the real issues of the campaign he can always be depended upon to wind up with some inanity.

Here, ignoring for the moment the subjective language, Ickes was upon more solid logical ground. Landon had been more general than specific, and he had frequently

22 Nation, GXLII (June 17, 1936), 779.
called for a return to "the American way of life." This expression had been especially in evidence in Landon's addresses at Omaha, Nebraska, on August 20 and at West Middlesex, Pennsylvania, on August 22. Arthur Krook, who had treated the Landon candidacy rather favorably, noted Landon's failure to spell out his stand on the issues:

We must begin to detail and amplify the vague promises and professions of the platform and his own speech of acceptance or run the extreme risk of being set down as having no amplifications to impart.

On his Eastern tour, Landon began to be somewhat more specific. At Chautauqua Lake he announced his opposition to teacher loyalty oaths, and at Buffalo he promised to repeal the Surplus Tax Bill and to reduce federal spending. However, a New York Times editorial observed on the day of Ickes' speech that Landon "remains vague regarding just where he would apply the knife." The charges which Ickes made regarding the Republican candidate's vagueness on many important issues were well-grounded in fact. However, in concluding the argument, the speaker said:

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24 New York Times, August 23, 1936, Sec. 4, p. 3.
There isn't a responsible person in the United States, unless it be William Randolph Hearst, who, at this moment, would underwrite what Governor Landon, if elected President, would do in any given set of circumstances.

Ickes simply let his conclusion go somewhat beyond what his basically valid proof justified.

As in the case of the speech on the Republican platform, Ickes relied much more upon emotional appeals than upon logical proofs. This was true despite the great emphasis placed, especially where publicity was concerned, upon the documentary aspect of the speech. The documentary proof actually had limited value as evidence; the persuasion of the speech rested in the psychological use which the speaker made of the document presented. He used inconclusive evidence, from which he drew questionable inferences, upon which he built emotional appeals.

Most of the psychological support in the speech was built upon "guilt by association." For Ickes' purpose, it was not really necessary that he prove Landon to be under Hearst domination. It was sufficient that he get Landon closely associated with Hearst, even though vaguely, in the voters' minds. This strategy would create an impression upon "the unthinking" to whom Ickes had said Landon appealed with his "American way of Life." The antipathy which many felt toward Hearst might then extend to the Kansan as well. Too, the charge of Hearst
domination, while never proved, was likely to arouse some suspicion and distrust simply by suggestion and by dent of constant repetition. The speaker did not really have to prove anything to his listeners to damage the Landon candidacy; he needed only to arouse their suspicions. While his evidence was inadequate as logical proof, Ickes did cleverly suggest that Landon was dominated by Hearst, that he was a political opportunist without firm convictions, and that he was being deliberately vague and evasive; he did suggest, further, that the Republican party was led by corrupt men and that Hearst dominated an unfair hostile press. If these suggestions took firm root, they were, strictly from the point of getting political results, just as effective as the most valid logical proof. This ignores, for the moment, the ethical consideration involved.

The two psychological devices Ickes used most were emotionally suggestive language and repetition. Some emotionally suggestive or loaded language from previous speeches reappeared in this one. "Reactionary Wall Street," "Old Guard," "weasel-worded," and "practical," for example, were back. A new approach to reducing the stature of Governor Landon by the language applied to him appeared also. Ickes sought to create a picture of a mediocre, second-rate man by referring to Landon as "a well-meaning, pleasant but inexperienced
"Governor" and as "the pleasant gentleman who is Governor of Kansas." In context, the word "pleasant" took on a suggestion definitely apart from its denotative meaning. As an example of the speaker's use of repetition to implant a suggestion, this word "pleasant" appeared three separate times to describe the Republican candidate. The word "boss," in reference to Hearst, was also repeated several times. As noted previously, many key words used in other speeches were repeated in this one. The main ideas of the previous two radio addresses were also repeated in very condensed form.

Less use of humor as a persuasive device appeared in this speech than in previous ones. The general tone was more business-like, and a light note was less frequently sounded when ridicule was being employed. Some humorous references, however, did appear. The irony of the following passage, dealing with Hearst's "discovery" of Landon is illustrative:

Mr. Hearst looked upon Governor Landon and found him good. Wherupon Mr. Hearst let it be known to the world that he had discovered a veritable political prodigy, a nugget of great value, a simple but rugged soul, whom he proceeded to offer, with his approval, to the Republican party as its candidate for President.

The same type of humor appeared in the discussion of Landon's discarding all previous progressive ideas:

To some people it might have appeared to be a large order to dig a hole in the back yard large
enough for the interment of so many vigorous ideas on governmental policy, but the 'strong' and now silenced man of Topeka, with a Presidential nomination dangling before his eyes, undertook the task.

Another illustration of Ickes' effective use of irony occurred when he referred to George Harding's concept of political morality as expressed through his opinion of an Illinois politician named Van Meter. The Secretary epitomized a Harding quotation this way:

Van Meter was appointed because he was honest and could be depended upon to split the swag equitably among the politicians. And he was honest 'because he was born on father's farm.'

Ridicule and sarcasm were used a great deal in this speech, but most of it was more deadly serious than humorous in aspect.

An extended analysis of the ethical proof in "Hearst Over Topeka" is hardly necessary. The discussions of lines of argument and of persuasive techniques illustrate clearly that again in this address, as before, the Secretary concentrated on a negative approach to the ethos of the opposition rather than upon a positive one toward his own. All of his arguments were directed toward diminishing the stature of Landon, Hearst, the opposition press, and the Republican leadership. No effort was made to capitalize on his own reputation or position and apparently very little to win the favor of listeners by the personal virtues and attitudes reflected
in the speech. After this speech, Newsweek noted that Iokes undoubtedly had been given the job of "Chief De-
nouncer" and assigned the "pummeling of the opposition."\(^{26}\) He stuck close to that task in "Hearst Over Topeka."

Two brief references were made which might have been intended to help support Iokes' attack by using the prestige of the President he represented. One was a statement that the Hearst press was "venomously misrep­ resenting the hard-working, able and statesmanlike President of the United States." This assertion not only capitalized upon the President's office but also referred very subtly to Roosevelt's "non-political" functioning in it while Landon was campaigning. Later, in asserting that Landon, not Roosevelt, was the "pig in a poke," the speaker referred to "President Roosevelt, whose policies have been frankly disclosed to the country as they have been developed." These were half-hearted attempts to utilize ethical proof as a persuasive factor when compared with the larger efforts to destroy the standing of the opposition's candidate and of his leading supporters.

**USE OF LANGUAGE**

The language in "Hearst Over Topeka" had the same

\(^{26}\)Newsweek, VIII (September 5, 1936), p. 12.
vivid and striking quality noted in previous speeches. This has been apparent in sections of the speech already quoted for other purposes, especially those illustrating the speaker's use of irony. The language is noted for its expressively figurative quality, from the title itself to the final threat of "Hearst over the White House."

For example, Ickes said that Landon became "uncommunicative as the sphinx," that he became a "strong but silenced man," that making him a presidential candidate was like "making bricks without straw," and that no one before had "pussyfooted his way into the White House." He also referred to Landon's "oracular utterances" and his "autobiographical phrase 'pig in a poke'," and he noted Hearst's "styptic effect upon the vocal organs." The Republican party he called "the major minority party."

Such figures were not only slantedly descriptive but gave life and vigor to the speech.

The speaker's oral style was given force by frequent use of short, blunt sentences and by rhetorical questions. Illustrative of the injection of an occasional concise, blunt statement was this paragraph:

But notwithstanding his hurry, apparently he did not think it worth while to stop at Topeka to confer with Governor Landon as he flew over that city on his way to San Simeon. No, he wanted to get to the man at the top. Mr. Harding is a realist.

Several questions, mostly rhetorical, lent added force and
directness to the speaker's style. His opening sentence asked: "What of Governor Landon and William Randolph Hearst?" This question was posed again, rephrased, only a few seconds later. At one point, a series of questions was used:

While there is no written evidence to prove that Mr. Hearst also has told Governor Landon that he should say as little as possible, and then only in unctious inanities on those occasions when he could not avoid making speeches, who can doubt that he has done so? How otherwise explain the Republican's elocutionary efforts? Has any aspirant for the high office of Chief Executive ever said so little that is worth listening to?

Four other direct questions were posed, culminating in his final "Do the American people want it to be Hearst over the White House?" Ickes employed language that was vividly descriptive and psychologically persuasive, and he usually structured it in a direct, forceful manner.

REACTION TO THE SPEECH

Ickes was pleased with the news space given his speech by the press. Of this press coverage he wrote:

I got a big newspaper play on my Thursday night speech. The New York Daily News, which has the largest circulation in the country, printed it in full, beginning on the front page, and carried some sections of the photostatic copy of the record in the Harding v. Harding case. It is very unusual for a tabloid newspaper to print so much of any one story. The New York Times carried it in full with a front-page story, while even such papers as the Baltimore Sun and the New York Herald Tribune gave it large space.

. . . the Hearst papers gave a reasonable
amount of space to my Thursday night speech. They all carried the Associated Press story, I am told.  

Less pleasing were some of the negative reactions to the speech. One reaction occurred, oddly enough, an hour before the Ickes speech was delivered; at that time William Hard "replied" on behalf of the Republican party. The Secretary, though misinformed as to its time of delivery, frankly admitted the effectiveness of the reply:

The Republicans did one clever thing last night. Although I had withheld all copies of my speech until one o'clock yesterday afternoon, except a few that were sent by mail that would not reach newspaper offices until about the same hour, the Republicans managed to get one for William Hard, who is on the radio every night. Usually he is on early in the evening, but last night, although it must have cost them a lot of money, they put him on following my speech and he replied to it. It was well done and cleverly done. I must admit that.

Hard's speech ridiculed the charge of Hearst control on three counts: (1) that Hearst had supported a willing Roosevelt in 1932 but obviously had not dominated him thereafter; (2) that Charles Michelson did not apparently think Hearst so insidious, having worked for him for many years; and (3) that Elliot Roosevelt was under Hearst employ at the very moment, managing Texas and

Oklahoma radio stations for him. This speech also was widely reported in the press. The Chicago Tribune, the Washington Post, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and the New York Times all carried Hard's speech on the same page as that of Ickes.

Governor Landon made no reply himself, but James Hagerty, newsman traveling with his party during the campaign, reported the consensus in the Republican inner camp. It was that Landon's Chautauqua opposition to teacher loyalty oaths, a stand directly opposing that of Hearst, had already refuted Ickes before he spoke. This was the position taken too, by some nominally independent newspapers. The Cleveland Plain Dealer and the New York Times, both of August 29, took such a position editorially. The latter said, in part:

This address had the appearance of being prepared a week or ten days earlier and, although intervening events had taken the heart out of it, Mr. Ickes proceeded grimly to read it to the bitter end.

... the whole attempt to represent Mr. Hearst as the political creator and controller of Governor Landon was from the first artificial and now has become little short of ridiculous.

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30 These arguments were summarized in Time, XXVIII (September 7, 1936), 9.


Newsweek noted that: "Even Democratic writers called the speech effective campaign ammunition—had it come a week earlier." It was true that several pro-Roosevelt newspapers had failed to respond favorably to the charge of Hearst control. The Richmond News Leader of August 28 said that Hearst was only a political "weather vane"; the Tupelo Journal (Mississippi) of August 29 expressed disappointment in Landon but put no stock in the Ickes charge of Hearst domination; the Montgomery Advertiser of September 1, called the charges "balderdash"; and Hugh Johnson's column, "One Man's Opinion," while still supporting Roosevelt, termed the Ickes' attack "an unfortunate error."

The usual partisan reaction, however, came from many Democratic papers. The Brooklyn Citizen of August 28 called the speech "devastating"; the Nashville Tennessean of August 29 thought it "perfectly timed"; the Paducah Sun of August 30 said it could not "be laughed off and ignored"; and further editorial support came from the Chicago Times of August 30, the Beaumont Journal of September 5, and the Glasgow News of September 10.

33 Newsweek, VIII (September 7, 1936), p. 12.
34 Washington News, August 28, 1936.
From several Republican leaders emanated hostile statements in which lay little actual reply. Melvin C. Eaton, New York Republican Chairman, called Ickes only "a ventriloquist's dummy" and struck out at the President:

Comrade Harold L. Ickes, Overlord of the Interior and Commissar of PWA, has apparently again heard his master's voice and, rushing to the radio, has attempted to divert to himself the Republican attacks on President Roosevelt. This, of course, is an old New Deal custom: Whenever the going gets too tough for the celebrity himself, a Cabinet member invariably steps into the conflict and takes on the general aspect of an administration decoy or bell cow.35

In Chicago, George F. Harding said he could not "immediately" recall the conversation with Hearst and then added: "However, I do not care to dignify the charges with an answer. It seems that this is the only way they can attack Governor Landon."36 Chairman John Hamilton brushed the speech aside with the comment "Why answer the popguns?" Congressman Joseph Martin replied more extensively:

Secretary Ickes apparently has been glad to come to the front as the chief mudslinger in the present campaign. ... But when a fighter hits below the belt he generally pays the penalty. Mr. Ickes has not helped Mr. Roosevelt by his unfair and unjust attack.37

Had the Secretary's attack "helped Mr. Roosevelt"?

Ickes himself was not sure. Three days after the speech, he wrote:

The editorials on this last speech that I have seen generally take the position that the Hearst issue is an old one that fills the editorial writers with ennui.

This leads me to the conclusion either that the Hearst issue is not as important as I had thought it would be or that the newspapers are unwilling to cheer on an attack against the greatest publisher, in point of newspapers, in the country. Both may be true. However, I believe that there is more widespread anti-Hearst feeling among the people than there has been for a great many years, if ever. . . . On the other hand, there is a good deal to what the newspapers say, but not to the extent to which they would like to have it appear.\(^3^8\)

While much of the editorial comment of the press could be discounted, the composite reaction was not very favorable. Landon's break with Hearst on the issue of loyalty oaths and the effect of Hard's reminder that Hearst had once supported Roosevelt were both factors which dulled the sharpness of the Secretary's attack. The reaction of independent newspapers and writers, and also of some Democratic organs, indicated that "Hearst Over Topeka" would probably produce less influence upon undecided voters than Ickes' two previous attacks.

SUMMARY EVALUATION

This speech had two primary purposes: (1) to attack William Randolph Hearst and the Hearst press and

(2) to weaken the Landon candidacy by closely associating the Kansas Governor with Hearst. The Hearst-Landon association was the more important of the two. The speech was based upon the well-founded belief that publisher Hearst was an unpopular and distrusted public figure.

From a logical point of view, the speech was relatively weak. The proposition that Landon was controlled by Hearst was not amply demonstrated by the evidence presented. It was this proposition that most of the press refused to credit and upon which those Republicans who replied at all based their answers. From a psychological point of view, a more successful effort resulted. Through techniques of suggestion, the speaker enforced the association of Hearst with Landon and brought the Hearst issue into full public view. The association not only was not denied, but the very act of refuting Ickes' claims of actual Hearst control publicized the undeniable elements of that relationship. Republicans were able to refute the speaker’s rather weak logical proofs, but it was more difficult to reply to the suspicions and prejudices implanted by suggestion and supported by emotional appeals. In these lay the effectiveness of the speech.

The press coverage of the speech was good; the
press reaction was somewhat disappointing. The proposition of the speech was unproved; its purpose was at least partially fulfilled. The speech probably proved less effective than the attack on Landon's progressivism; but it was by no means a complete failure.

While the Democrats had yet to establish that Landon was dominated by Hearst, there was definitely now a Hearst issue. From that issue, the Republicans could not possibly gain. The Democrats might.
CHAPTER VII

"LANDON, COUGHLIN, 'ET AL'"

The tempo of the campaign gradually increased during the month of September. Then, after the President made his first frankly political speech at Syracuse on September 29, the final drive of both parties really began in earnest. The President's Syracuse address to the New York State Democratic Convention replied to the charge of communist support with which the Hearst press had attacked him on September 20. On October 1, the President spoke at Pittsburgh, this time on the deficit and federal spending. On the same night, Frank Knox also spoke in Pittsburgh and Alfred E. Smith endorsed Landon in New York City.1 On October 8, Smith attacked Roosevelt again, this time from Philadelphia. On the same day, while Monseigneur John A. Ryan, in Washington, was defending the President from previous attacks by Father Charles E. Coughlin, the Detroit priest lambasted the President again in Pittsburgh. On October 9, the air waves were really filled with campaign oratory, as Roosevelt spoke in St. Paul, Minnesota,


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Landon in Chicago, the 1920 Democratic presidential nominee, James M. Cox, in Dayton, Ohio, and Harold Ickes in Columbus, Ohio. The Secretary's address, entitled "Landon, Coughlin, 'et Al'," was delivered at a rally of the Good Neighbor League in the Columbus Municipal Auditorium and was broadcast from 8:30 to 9:00 P.M. by N.B.C.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF THE SPEECH

The October 9 speech was Ickes' first major political address since August 27. He had, however, made three non-political addresses: a welcoming speech at the World Power Conference in Washington, a dedication speech at the University of Syracuse, and another speech at the dedication of the New York City Mid-Town Tunnel. He reluctantly declined to speak to a large Negro rally at Madison Square Garden on September 21 because of the very recent death of his step-son, Wilmarth Ickes. This invitation came through Stanley High, who said he found that Ickes had the highest standing in the Administration with Negro leaders.\(^2\)

The Secretary of the Interior also appeared to hold high standing as a speaker with Democratic

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 680.
campaign strategists. On September 18, Thomas G. Corcoran reported to the Secretary that a campaign tour was being planned for him. According to Corcoran, Sam Rayburn, Democratic Congressman from Texas, said that there were more requests for Ickes as a speaker than for anyone else; Corcoran further reported that Farley thought Ickes' speeches "went over big." Although most of the press had expressed boredom or distaste for the August 27 attack on Landon and Hearst, Democratic leaders apparently had not shared such a response.

In early October, the entire Democratic outlook was brighter than it had been at the start of the campaign. On October 8, Krock noted that the only encouraging sign Republicans had was the Literary Digest poll. Other polls showed Roosevelt leading, and Landon's lead was gradually being cut in the Literary Digest sampling. With Roosevelt finally taking the political stump, Democratic prospects were almost certain to improve. Perhaps that was one reason why New York bettors, in the face of extravagant victory claims from Chairman Hamilton and publisher Hearst, were making the October odds on the President's re-election 2-1.

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3 Ibid., p. 682.
5 New York Times, October 6, 1936, p. 22.
As pointed out in Chapter I, some of the obstacles to the re-election of Roosevelt were not Republican obstacles. An opposition third party, Father Coughlin's Union Party, and a dissident Democratic conservative wing, led by Alfred E. Smith, both threatened to capture votes normally Democratic. The Union Party's candidate was William Lemke of North Dakota, while bolting conservative Democrats supported Governor Landon. Having previously concentrated on Landon and Hearst, Ickes turned in "Landon, Coughlin, 'et Al" to two new targets, Coughlin and Smith. Both appeared formidable to some observers. Father Coughlin estimated the Union Party's vote at no less than ten million, and of this estimate Basil Rauch later wrote:

Father Coughlin promised to give up his radio speeches if Lemke polled less than ten million votes. The size of the membership of the Union Party's constituent organizations seemed to make this a fair gamble. Some observers saw the possibility that the Union Party would take away enough votes from the Democratic candidates to ensure a Republican victory.®

While Coughlin forces were capturing some of the New Deal's more radical support, Alfred E. Smith and other conservative bolters wooed Democratic voters of the right wing. According to Joseph W. Martin, Eastern

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manager for Landon, the bolt of Smith alone would take away over three million Democratic votes. For his new rhetorical targets, Ickes had at Columbus not only an N.B.C. microphone but also a partisan Good Neighbor League audience. Thirty thousand invitations were sent to Columbus citizens and the eventual audience was estimated at eight to ten thousand people.

For this speech, Ickes worked on three different drafts. He was assisted by Straus, Taylor, Fairman, Slattery, and Armstrong; Presidential Secretary Early also made at least two suggestions which were reflected in the final draft. On October 7, Ickes showed the final draft to the President. He said that the President "liked it and asked me to send him a copy." After six weeks on the sidelines, the New Deal's "Chief Denouncer" was ready to return to the attack.

PURPOSE AND THESIS OF THE SPEECH

Neither in any of Ickes' papers nor in his diary


9Ibid.

is there a statement revealing the specific goal or goals of this speech. The advance publicity given the speech, as well as press reports following its delivery, indicated that its objective was to show an informal union between Republicans and Father Coughlin. The press release printed by the Baltimore Sun said that the speaker would offer "documentary proof" of such a connection. A later section of this chapter will show that this part of the speech was all that most of the press reported. If establishing a Coughlin-Landon connection had been the speech's only goal, it would have been a valid one. The ten million left-of-center votes which Father Coughlin promised Lemke would draw would almost certainly have come at the expense of the Democrats. If the speaker could convince the voters concerned that a vote for Lemke was actually a vote for Landon, he was likely to weaken the Union Party's potential support.

Another purpose may have been to weaken several Roosevelt foes, especially Coughlin. The Detroit cleric was probably the most vehement of Roosevelt's critics, having called him in various speeches: "betrayer," "soab," "anti-God," "communist," and "liar." Others

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11 Baltimore Sun, October 6, 1936.
strongly attacked by Ickes were Landon, Smith, Knox, Hard, Hoover, and Hearst. One of the Secretary's goals was but a smaller version of his larger campaign goal: to strengthen Roosevelt by weakening public respect for his foes and detractors.

This speech apparently had also a more positive purpose. Almost half of the twenty-seven minutes of delivery time went into a defense of the New Deal, an identification of it with the interests of the common people. At the same time, Ickes pictured all special interests as "ganging up" on Roosevelt. The speech attempted to represent the real issue of the campaign as one of oppressor and privileged against oppressed and underprivileged. The champion of the latter group was, of course, the President. This idea came closer to being the one thesis of the speech than any other, and its establishment in the listener's mind was probably one goal of the speech.

Discovering one paramount goal and a single thesis for "Landon, Coughlin,'et Al" is extremely difficult. The speech was roughly divided into two parts. The first twelve and one-half minutes were devoted to the Coughlin-Republican connection and to added attacks on Hard, Landon, Knox, and Smith; most of the remainder of the time was spent in developing the "Roosevelt for the common man" theme, with attacks on Republican
laiss... philosophy injected occasionally.

Most of the ideas developed by the speech appear to have been directed toward two principal goals: (1) undermining the Union Party by linking Coughlin to Landon, and (2) associating the cause of Roosevelt with that of the common man. The thesis with which Ickes sought to unify a wide variety of ideas was that the issue of the campaign was Roosevelt and the common man against the ganged-up forces of special interest. Perhaps the best, though somewhat diffuse, statement of this thesis occurred as Ickes concluded:

Let Landon and Father Coughlin and Lemke and the Smith Brothers--Alfred E. and Reverend Gerald K.--and their ill-assorted following 'gang up' on President Roosevelt. He has nothing to fear, for back of him are arrayed those who hate war, the idealistic youth of the land, independent business men and the great mass of the people--farmers, workingmen and white collar folks in whose bodies he had kept alive the spark of life during the terrible years of the depression and, more important still, in whose souls he has restored morale and revived faith in the future of America.

LINES OF ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION

The introduction and conclusion of this speech were clearly discernible as functional units. They both adhered to the general thesis just described, thus giving an appearance of unity to the entire effort. Between introduction and conclusion, however, the pattern of organization was much less clear or unified. The listener who tried to organize Ickes' speech by the sequence of
ideas presented would have discovered, with some effort, lines of argument something like this:

(1) Many forces of special privilege are combined in opposition to President Roosevelt.
(2) A "common understanding" exists between Republican leaders and Father Coughlin's party.
(3) The real campaign issue is between "Hooverism" and the New Deal.
(4) The "massed wealth of America" is lined up behind Landon.
(5) Economic security for all should be the object of the American Government.
(6) Even in 1929, "Hoover prosperity" did not provide this security.
(7) Citing these facts is not to "array class against class," but to get something done.
(8) The Roosevelt Administration seeks a real "American standard of living."

It is not entirely clear whether Ickes organized his speeches around a sequence of ideas, or whether he built the speech organization around the various targets for attack. This speech, for example, could almost be outlined like this:

(1) Attack on the whole opposition "team"—two minutes.
(2) Attack on Father Coughlin--six minutes.
(3) Attack on William Hard--thirty seconds.
(4) Attack on Father Coughlin again--thirty seconds.
(5) Attack on Governor Landon--one minute.
(6) Attack on Frank Knox--one minute.
(7) Attacks on the Liberty League and Alfred E. Smith--one minute.
(8) Attack on "Hoover prosperity"--two minutes.
(9) Attack on William Randolph Hearst--two minutes.
(10) Concluding attack on the whole group again--thirty seconds.

Except for the omission of the constructive support of New Deal aims, a ten-minute appeal broken only by a brief diversion toward Hearst, this topical organization would accurately describe the developmental pattern of the speech.

The most effective feature of the arrangement of ideas and subjects in this speech was that Ickes placed his attacks on the opposition first and arranged his more constructive appeals last. The final appeal was devoid of humor and had a ring of earnestness and sincerity not always so apparent in earlier portions of the speech.

Unity and clarity of thought organization were partially sacrificed in this speech, as they had been in
others, to assure that all desired targets for attack were included. The lack of real unity was somewhat camouflaged by a consistency of introduction and conclusion. The broad psychological pattern of the speech was good.

FORMS OF SUPPORT

Although the emphasis was again heaviest upon emotional appeals, Ickes achieved in this speech a fair balance of emotional, ethical, and logical proofs. The logical appeals were more varied in nature than in most of the Secretary's previous addresses, and the forms of inference which he employed were more readily evident than usual.

The first argument, that special interests had teamed up against Roosevelt, actually appeared in the guise of introductory exposition. Since it was supported psychologically, and not by evidence or reasoning, it will be discussed later in more detail.

Ickes' second argument, that "there is a common understanding between the Republican high command on the one hand and Father Coughlin and Lemke on the other," was supported by testimony, example, and varied forms of inference. His first of four supporting arguments was that Father Coughlin and Lemke often echoed the
criticisms of Roosevelt made by the Republican high command. Though this was only asserted, it would have been easy to prove. It is certainly not uncommon for different opponents to voice like criticisms. The crux of the argument lay in the premise upon which the inference of collusion was drawn. Did like criticisms necessarily imply a "common understanding"? If so, Republicans could well have charged that Thomas and Browder were in collusion with the President. These candidates of the Socialist and Communist parties respectively had echoed or preceded many Democratic attacks on Landon.\(^{13}\) By the same token, Father Coughlin could have been considered in collusion with Roosevelt forces. He had charged, as had Ickes, that Landon was a Hearst product.\(^{14}\) The speaker's inference was unsound because his major premise was invalid.

Ickes' second supporting argument for his Landon-Coughlin tie was supported by assertion of a generally accepted premise and by testimony. He said first that "The Detroit cleric is too astute a politician not to

\(^{13}\)For example, on September 8, Thomas had called Lemke "a stooge for Landon and Hearst." New York Times, September 9, 1936, p. 19. On September 20, Browder had restated previous charges that Hearst exercised control over Landon. New York Times, September 21, 1936, p. 2.

know that the next President will be either Roosevelt or Landon. . . ," a statement which Father Coughlin would not have challenged in the face of his own claim for only about ten million Lemke votes. The speaker then quoted an October 6 Coughlin statement, made in an Associated Press interview, that "he would rather be with the Republicans." Though this statement was incomplete as quoted, it did express Father Coughlin's sentiments. His attacks on the President were much more vehement throughout the campaign than those on Landon. For example, Father Coughlin, in a July 16 address to the Union party convention, had called Roosevelt "the great betrayer and liar," asserted that he was communistically inclined, and called for the defeat of any candidate supporting him; of Landon he said only that he was "forced to repudiate him" for his adherence to the gold standard. The statement that the Detroit priest favored Landon over Roosevelt was expected to bring, and brought, no denial.

The heart of the evidence of Landon-Coughlin collusion was in the letter from William Hard, paid Republican broadcaster, to Gardner Jackson, Washington correspondent. This letter, relied upon so heavily in the speech, is quoted here as Ickes read it over the air:

Dear Gardner:

Are you free to take on a little more journalistic work? It would be quite left-wing. Will you let me hear from you?

On second thought, I might as well let you know straight off who the publisher is. It is Father Coughlin. He wants some Washington correspondents for his new magazine. Would you be available? There is not any too much money in it because the magazine goes gratis to the members of the National Union for Social Justice. Still there will be some compensation. And a good deal of activity.

The fact is that Father Coughlin wants three or four Washington correspondents. I am writing to you first. If you are not available, could you suggest some writers in Washington that would be? The number of words that they would have to write each week would be small. The magazine is to be a tabloid of sixteen pages. The articles would not run more than five hundred or seven hundred and fifty words. The writers could use pseudonyms but Father Coughlin insists that they be first-class men. He wants no second-class duds.

In short, will you write me straight off and let me know what you can do about it? The magazine begins coming out in March. It may have a lot of influence on the politics of this year.

A photostatic copy of this letter, together with a letter from Jackson confirming the circumstances involved, is still in the Ickes Papers in the Library of Congress. It certainly was the most striking piece of evidence in this particular speech, but how valid was it as support for the speaker's premise? While not conclusive, it did constitute circumstantial evidence of a common bond between Roosevelt's foes; and it was bound to prove slightly embarrassing to Father Coughlin and to Hard, especially to the latter.

Hard's position as a paid political commentator
for the Republican party was an unconcealed one. His quoted letter made it clear that he was also on familiar political terms with Father Coughlin. To identify that relationship further, Ickes quoted that Hard had further written to Jackson: "I am one of his (Father Coughlin's) closest friends and advisers and, while I am not on his staff officially, he asks me for counsel and advice."

Ickes' evidence showed that Hard, a paid speaker of the Republican party, was also an unofficial agent of Father Coughlin; and it strongly implied that he believed serving one cause also served the other. It did not definitely prove the speaker's contention beyond its application to Hard. It only suggested that others in the Republican camp shared Hard's views. Ickes, however, was more careful than upon some occasions not to extend his premise too far. He made this clear in his argument about Coughlin:

I have not charged him with 'selling out to the Republican party'. I do charge that there is a community of interest, a common objective, between him and the Republican party.

This evidence presented by Ickes did show that Hard and Father Coughlin believed such a community of interest existed.

The fourth piece of evidence used to support the

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alleged Republican-Coughlin connection was very brief:

Further on the friendly cooperation between the Republicans and Father Coughlin, information has come to me that the Republican National Committee spent about a thousand dollars in decorating the Coliseum in Des Moines, Iowa, in which Father Coughlin spoke on the afternoon of September 19.

This information was accurate; it was documented by a notarized statement which is still retained in the Ickes Papers. However, that same information revealed that the Republican National Committee had spent the money in question because of confusion about speaking dates, not through any original intent to finance Father Coughlin's rally. The facts were not distorted, but the speaker's implication constituted a distortion of them.

After brief but very derisive references to both Landon and Knox, Ickes advanced his next line of argument: that the real issue of the campaign was "Hooverism versus the New Deal." The issue was declared, after accusation that Republicans sought to avoid it, in a single paragraph:

The real issue in this campaign is whether we are going back to the laissez faire, Hoover policy of rugged individualism or forward to the establishment of such a social order as the Founding Fathers envisaged when they enunciated the political philosophy of equality of opportunity under the law for every American citizen, regardless of race or creed or color. Two philosophies of Government are at death grips with each other in America today.

17Ickes Papers, Container 250.
The speaker next asserted that "the massed wealth of America, almost without exception, is lined up today behind Governor Landon." The only proof offered was the example of the Liberty League. A less extreme statement would not have been questioned. Leaders of industry and finance and many wealthy people, like the duPonts, were openly supporting Landon. As a New York Times editorial pointed out, however: "There are, in spite of Secretary Ickes, a few rich Democrats left in the land. . . ." That most of the nation's wealthy supported Landon was generally accepted. The Secretary's tendency to overstate his case, sometimes unnecessarily, was in evidence again.

The speaker diverted briefly to imply that Alfred E. Smith, according to Ickes the Liberty League's "foremost spokesman," opposed Roosevelt primarily because of jealousy and envy. Then he advanced his next premise: that assuring economic freedom and security for all was a legitimate function of government. This argument was developed partially by amplification and partially by comparison and contrast:

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18This editorial asserted, without naming him, that the campaign's largest single contribution was made by a wealthy Democrat. It agreed, nevertheless, that most of the wealth lay with Landon supporters. New York Times, October 13, 1936, p. 26.
What is government for if it is not to secure the greatest degree of happiness for the greatest number of its people? We talk about our political freedom and this hardly-won boon is indeed precious to us. But of what avail is political freedom unless we have economic freedom? How many citizens were there during those last terrible years of deepest depression that came upon us after twelve years of Republican misrule who would not have been willing to surrender their right to vote if, by so doing, they had been able to achieve economic security for themselves and their families? It is small comfort to a man whose children are crying for bread and whose wife lacks proper clothing to reflect that in a few months it will be his privilege to help decide who shall be the mayor in his town.

Most of the appeal in this excerpt from the argument was directed toward the emotions, and the speaker's language in such expressions as "Republican misrule" assumed a great deal. Ickes' use of example, however, in which he used the depression years for his comparison of political and economic freedoms, was well-chosen; and the premises in his enthymeme were generally accepted by the groups to whom he wished most to appeal.

More controversial was his next argument: that the so-called "American standard of living" of the Hoover era was a fraud. The speaker noted Republican claims of comfort and luxury during that period and then launched into one of the most forceful passages in the address:

Misrepresentations! Frauds! Misstatements of fact! The truth is, and those Republicans who promise us a Utopia if we will only retrace our steps to Hooverism know it full well, that the picture intended to be conjured up by the expression 'American standard of living' constitutes a cruel hoax so far as the majority of our people is concerned.
In this great and rich land of ours there is a small percentage of the people who own or control the overwhelming mass of the wealth of the country. From this limited but very rich group there is a sharp graduation down until we come to the actual majority of the people. According to that non-partisan and conservative fact-finding organization, the Brookings Institution, more than 60% of the people of the United States in that most prosperous of years, 1929, were living at or below the margin of a decent existence. According to this same reliable authority, 1/10 of 1% of the families at the top of the economic scale receive approximately as much income as 42% of the families at the bottom.

This was valid evidence. The authority was indeed reputable and the statistics were taken from a year which, while hardly typical, was certainly a fair one. While the speaker could not deny that general living standards were higher during the century's second decade than they were in 1936, he could and did illustrate that a large number of Americans had not shared much of the "American standard of living" during that era.

Ickes next took occasion to reply to the common charge that Democrats in 1936 were stirring up class hatreds:

I realize that the mere statement of these facts will lay me open to the accusation by Republican orators and the Republican press of trying to appeal to class prejudice. But is it statesmanlike to close one's eyes to a condition that must be remedied if we are to save our institutions? Does a calm statement of sobering fact make one a rabble rouser? Was

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19 This frequent Republican charge had been strongly stressed by Alfred E. Smith in his October 1 speech at Carnegie Hall. For text, see New York Times, October 2, 1936, p. 4.
the Brookings Institution trying to array class against class when it ascertained these facts and published them? Does one bring on a storm by pointing out that lightning is flashing from dark clouds? Do we meet an epidemic of typhoid fever by refusing to admit that our water supply is being polluted? Is the way to put out a fire to refuse to sound the alarm?

The inferential proof in this series of six rhetorical questions was vividly presented. The first three questions dealt in causal reasoning, clearly implying that Democrats were motivated toward contributing to solutions to class problems, not toward inflaming them.

The last three questions were concisely-put analogies, designed to reduce the Republican charge to an absurdity. They were effectively presented, and, if Ickes' previous analysis of motives was the correct one, the reasoning was valid.

The last main argument of the speech was that the New Deal sought a true "American standard of living," one in which all could share. As support for this contention, the Secretary discussed New Deal policies which, according to him, were examples of the Administration's efforts to produce economic freedom. For the most part, exposition was employed as the means of development. Among policies so presented were those concerning equal opportunities, adequate wages, and social security of various types. In discussing education and principles of taxation, the speaker contrasted New Deal policy.
with views of two of its opponents, Landon and Hearst. The reference to Landon and the frequent charge that education lagged in Kansas was thinly veiled:

The New Deal, which has to its credit the financing of some 10,000 school construction projects in all parts of the country, including the state of Kansas, during the past three and a half years, indignantly rejects the theory that future generations of American citizens should pay in the coin of an inadequate education for the immediate balancing of a set of books.

When postulating the theory that "the cost of government should be assessed on the ability to pay," Ickes contrasted this New Deal viewpoint with his own construction of the view of Hearst. He asserted that "the principal reason" for Hearst opposition to Roosevelt was that the latter had denied him special privileges in filing tax returns. This exercise in effect-to-cause reasoning was given no support beyond assertion. As a matter of fact, Rauch's *The History of the New Deal* inclines toward the view that the President's foreign policy was a more likely cause for Hearst opposition. 20

Although weak in spots, Ickes' logical support in the October 9 speech was, generally speaking, better than that in "What Shall the Republican Platform Be?" and "Hearst Over Topeka," and on a par with "Governor Landon--Practical Progressive." The strongest appeals,

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however, were again more psychological than logical.

Most of the speech's attacks were supported by appeals directed toward feelings of class prejudice and of fear and insecurity. The constructive arguments were most often based on appeal to security, patriotism, and the desire for freedom. The appeals to economic class prejudice ran throughout the speech. The association of the Republican party with the wealthy interests of the nation, strong in power, but a distinct and often resented minority in numbers, pervaded the speech. One of the lines of argument previously cited was that "massed wealth" was lined up behind Governor Landon. But the appeals to class prejudice were embedded most effectively in the connotative, loaded, and often question-begging language employed. Making repeated appearance were such expressions as "special privilege," "massed wealth of America," "ruthless, rugged individualists," "this array of pomp and power," and "men and women out of whose labor the wealth that again seeks to exploit them has been built up."

The appeals to fear recalled vividly the conditions prevalent when Roosevelt took office in 1933. The speaker referred to "these last terrible years of deepest depression," to children "crying for bread," and to "the gnawing pangs of hunger, the bite of cold and the loss of morale." And he kept the suggestion that Republicans
wanted "to return to the Hoover era" constantly before his audience. He also raised the specter of fascism by referring to Father Coughlin as "the Detroit Fascist" and to his ideas as "the Fascist ideals of that gentleman."

On the positive side, Ickes visualized for his listeners the coupling of real freedom with security guaranteed by a continuation of the New Deal program. One passage, built largely upon this theme of freedom and security for all, is illustrative:

As I understand the purpose of the New Deal, it is to bring about a condition that will at least approximate what we have been boasting of as the 'American standard of living'. The New Deal believes in equality of opportunity under the law for every man, woman and child, regardless of race or creed or color. It has as an objective the employment of every man or woman ready and willing to work, at a task commensurate with his ability, for a wage that will sustain life in comfort. The New Deal believes that labor has a right to organize according to its own free choice. It stands for the principle of security—security for the workman during periods of involuntary unemployment, security against the casualties of our industrial system, security for mothers during periods of childbirth, security for men and women after they have reached the age when they can no longer hope to be employed gainfully.

Another positive appeal was to patriotism and, as a corollary to it, the prejudice toward our own democratic institutions. Such expressions appear as "every American who loves liberty and justice," "our Democratic institutions," "the Founding Fathers," "equality of opportunity," "regardless of race or color"
or creed," and "faith in the future of America." This patriotic type of appeal had not appeared in previous Ickes' attacks but was very evident in the more constructive portion of this one.

To the four basic appeals just enumerated should be added certain question-begging appeals which asserted through language what was not necessarily proved by the argument itself. Such terms included reference to Lemke as a "Father Coughlin-Landon stooge," to "twelve years of Republican misrule," and to "discredited Hooverism."

Humor was also used as indirect persuasion. The opening minute of this speech resembled the attack on the Republican platform in its use of a figurative but pointed introduction. Where previously Ickes had used the "birth of a baby" theme, this time he pictured a football team:

An interesting game of political football is in progress. Trying to stop the victorious march of the team that is lined up under the captaincy of President Roosevelt is an incongruous and ill-assorted a combination as could well be imagined. In the backfield we see Governor Landon, light and inexperienced, but withal a clever dodger, who is hard to pin down; Herbert Hoover, back on the gridiron after an enforced stay on the bench for four years; Father Coughlin, the great triple threat, who does the kicking for the team; and Al Smith, one time 'All American', now turned professional. The ends are Frank Knox and John Hamilton. From tackle to tackle crouch the well-known duPont brothers—Pierce, Lamont, A. Felix, Irene, and Henry. William Randolph Hearst, as coach, through a megaphone, calls signals from the sidelines. The string of substitutes contains some notable names—Mellon, Mills,
Rockefeller, Aldrich, Grundy, Dr. Townsend, Pinchot, Lemke, as well as an assortment of Liberty Leaguers of high and low degree. The Republican voice of the air, William Hard, occupies the dual role of water boy and jeer leader.

Here was Ickes at his best, combining a flair for language with a biting sense of humor. Beneath the humor lay ridicule of men who wished to be taken very seriously and a suggestion of a combination which had vague but unwholesome intentions.

The same acid humor was later turned on Governor Landon when the speaker accused him of evading the real campaign issues:

He /Landon/ would much prefer to tell where he buys his maple syrup, to talk about what he calls the 'American way of life', to confide the marvelous news that wherever he goes in America he finds Americans, to disclose the hitherto unknown fact that elderberry pie is his favorite, to announce impressively that the way to destroy monopoly is to destroy monopoly. But it simply will not work. Governor Landon will not be able to nibble around the edges of the issue indefinitely. Sooner or later he will have to bite into it, bitter as the taste may be.

Two humorous sallies in the direction of Alfred E. Smith subjected that Roosevelt foe to ridicule. After asserting that Smith's desertion was caused by envy and jealousy, Ickes quoted two lines of poetry in reference to him:

"Just for a handful of silver he left us, Just for a riband to stick in his coat."

These lines from Browning's "The Lost Leader" were suggested to the Secretary by Stephen Early especially for
Smith. Near the end of the speech, reference was made to "the Smith Brothers—Alfred E. and the Reverend Gerald K.," a reference which probably did not amuse the former Governor of New York.

Through humor, loaded language, and appeals to basic motives, Ickes blended strong psychological appeals with his more rational forms of argumentative support. Ethical appeals, too, were given close attention in this speech. In addition to the reduction of opposition by the varied attacks which had keyed all previously reported speeches, the New Deal's hatchet-man built upon a more constructive type of ethical proof. He associated the aims and record of the President and the New Deal with almost every humanitarian motive; he contrasted the New Deal's social consciousness with the selfishness and callousness he attributed to the Hoover Administration; and he pictured the New Deal as hated by selfish and unscrupulous economic groups, but beloved by the common people of America. Contrary to his usual habit, Ickes even inserted a personal note which attributed praiseworthy motives to himself:

To say that it is the aspiration of the New Deal to make possible for the average American a richer and fuller life is to subject oneself to the jests

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21 Ickes Papers, Container 250.
and sneers of many of the supporters of Governor Landon. For one, I willingly proclaim that I am interested in the New Deal for the precise reason that its ambition is to improve the lot of the common man.

The ethical appeal in this speech was more balanced between its destructive and constructive parts and was, for that reason, probably more effective than usual.

USE OF LANGUAGE

In addition to being selected for its persuasive value, the language employed by Ickes was clear enough to be easily comprehensible and vivid and direct enough to hold listener attention. Both of these qualities of the speaker's style have, perhaps, been amply demonstrated by the liberal quotations from the speech text. The sentences were not unusually long or difficult, and only two words which might not be familiar to most of his listeners were drawn from Ickes' extensive vocabulary. These infrequently-used words occurred when the speaker referred to William Hard as "the friend, the associate and the political coadjutor of the man who, in the habiliments of the National Union for Social Justice. . . ." The relatively-unfamiliar words were, of course, "coadjutor" and "habiliments."

Most of the time, Ickes' language was strikingly expressive without indulging in infrequently-used words.
For example, he labeled Hard his party's "jeer leader," called Lemke a Father Coughlin-Landon "stooge," and referred to Smith's "intellectual nakedness." He played upon a familiar phrase in striking manner when he accused Republicans of believing in "a government of the dollar, by the dollar, and for the dollar." This expressive, and often figurative, language showed itself, not just in single phrases, but in the vivid expression of a whole idea. For example, the speaker epitomized his version of the "joint" but "undercover" efforts of the President's opponents this way:

Thus when Landon, with Hard cheering him on, tries, on a delayed pass to Hoover, to get around the right end, Father Coughlin, in a different uniform and with a ball hidden under his sweater, attempts to skirt the left end of the Democratic team.

Even upon those who missed the subtler connotations of some of the wording, the broad meaning could not have been lost.

One of Ickes' most commonly-used stylistic devices for achieving directness with his audience, the rhetorical question, has been noted in the three preceding chapters. Thirteen such questions were posed in the October 9 speech. Two of them occurred immediately at the conclusion of the two-minutes required to read William Hard's letter. Ickes ended the quotation by asking: "Could language be plainer? Could intent have
a clearer meaning?" Then he interpreted the language and the meaning. Another question was used to introduce his denunciation of Hard, when he asked: "Just who is William Hard?" and proceeded to identify him in most unsympathetic terms. The other ten questions occurred in series of four and six each. The first series developed the function the New Deal thought government should have. It did so by leading the listeners through a series of rhetorical questions which embodied the "yes response" technique. The last series of six questions, quoted earlier in this chapter, posed analogies through rhetorical questions.\textsuperscript{22} The thirteen questions, while varied in purpose, all appear to have been effective in producing directness and force in the presentation of ideas.

Ickes' language was, as usual, one of the most effective features of his speech. It was, generally speaking, simple, vivid, and direct.

REACTION TO THE SPEECH

This speech is noteworthy partly because of the absence of widespread or heated reaction. Press coverage, for example, was less than that of previous major addresses. The \textit{St. Louis Post-Dispatch} failed to mention

\textsuperscript{22}See pages 195-96.
the speech at all; the Chicago Tribune reported it very briefly on page five; the Washington Post gave the speech almost a full column, but relegated it to page six; and the New York Times reported it on page four. Of the leading newspapers, apparently only the Democratic Philadelphia Record carried the complete text. The Record reported the speech very favorably on October 10 and reprinted the text, together with a photostatic copy of the Hard letter, on October 11. If other leading newspapers gave space to the speech, Ickes did not include their comment in his scrapbooks, which would be somewhat unusual.23

There was, likewise, little editorial reaction. Most leading dailies had none; the New York Times had two rather casual references to the speech. On October 13, a previously-cited editorial on campaign expenses took passing issue with Ickes' assertion that wealth was solidly behind Landon.24 Previously, on October 11, a cartoon had appeared on editorial pages which might have been construed as belittling the Ickes speech. It showed Chairman Hamilton and Secretary Ickes as little boys in short pants scribbling on opposite sides of a

23For clippings covering pertinent dates, see Ickes Papers, Container 341.

fence. Hamilton wrote "Roosevelt loves Browder," and Ickes wrote "Landon loves Coughlin." The two ideas appeared to be equated and neither taken very seriously.

Republicans took little heed of the Ickes address. The day before the speech was delivered, Congressman Joseph Martin issued brief denial of the expected thesis, calling it "absurd." He said that "the only possible similarity or connection between us [Republican and Union party adherents] is that we are both against the re-election of President Roosevelt." Hamilton, usually quick to reply, and Landon, who seldom did, made no comment on the speech. Nor, indeed, did Father Coughlin. Ten days after the attack, the priest's weekly publication, Social Justice, mildly depreciated the implications of the Hard letter. Father Coughlin, however, made no direct reply.

Administration adherents who expressed views to Ickes were enthusiastic about the speech, but fewer than usual did so. The President expressed approval of the manuscript before the speech was delivered. Later,


Daniel C. Roper, Secretary of Commerce, and Josephus Daniels, Ambassador to Mexico, sent very congratulatory notes, Daniels calling the speech as good as any he had heard "since 1884." Several of the usually numerous partisan letters were received. One of the favorable ones said: "Your voice came over the air in very clear and effective fashion." This was, characteristically enough, countered by a very hostile letter which accused the Secretary of "stuttering and mispronouncing." Why was there comparatively little reaction to this Ickes attack? One answer is undoubtedly that the President was, by this time, dominating the Democratic campaign scene. It was only natural that during Roosevelt's whirlwind final month, after his previous abstinence from strictly political speaking, other Democratic speakers would recede into the background. Too, Ickes' "Landon, Coughlin, 'et Al'" was delivered on the same day as addresses by Roosevelt, Landon, and former-Governor Cox of Ohio. This served to decrease the press attention and public interest given to his speech.

A significant conclusion may, perhaps, be drawn about the nature of the news reporting which this speech

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28 *Ickes Papers, Container 250.*
did receive. Although Ickes did not, as he had previously done, devote full time to attacking the opposition, this was the only aspect of the address given real coverage by the press. The approximately ten minutes which the Secretary had devoted to constructive support of New Deal philosophy was almost completely ignored. The only report which heeded the constructive arguments was that of the New York Times. It quoted only one sentence of such argument while making a full column report. It quoted the first two minutes, the football metaphor, in its entirety; and it went into detail regarding the attacks on Coughlin and Smith. Only in the final sentence did it recognize the other portion of the address. It quoted, in closing:

Because President Roosevelt has enlisted on the side of the people and is determined that, in addition to political freedom, they shall have economic fair play, is the reason why every American who loves liberty and justice should enlist under his banner.

The implication of this coverage appears clear. It was the hatchet-man role of Ickes which made news and which would find its way even into enemy papers. The bold attacks, the biting irony--these were what put Ickes into print. Unless the newspapers were mistaken about what the public wanted, these were also the factors which won radio listeners for the New Deal's "Chief Denouncer." The aspect of his oratory which drew
criticism and complaint from the opposition was, apparently, the same aspect which caused the press, largely Republican, to publicize his speeches.

SUMMARY EVALUATION

This speech attempted to show (1) that there was a close association between Father Coughlin and the Union party on one hand and the Republican high command on the other, and (2) that President Roosevelt represented the common people of America. The speech combined the usual denunciation of Republicans and their allies with constructive support for the New Deal program.

Although several unsupported assertions made their usual appearance, the logical proofs of this speech were stronger than in most of Ickes' previous attacks. Ethical appeals were also stronger, for the speaker devoted more attention than usual to the ethos of the President, the New Deal, and himself. Emotional support, however, continued to be the Secretary's main source of persuasion. Persuasive language and purposeful humor were his best psychological weapons, and class prejudice, fear, security, and patriotism were the basic motives to which he most frequently appealed.

Reaction to the speech was, no doubt, disappointing to Ickes. Newspapers gave it less coverage than
most of his major efforts received; there was little editorial comment; and Republican leaders almost ignored the attack. Ickes had been pushed into the background by the emergence of the President as an active campaigner. There was, however, one very interesting feature about the newspaper reaction to the speech: the press virtually ignored the speaker's more constructive efforts and reported only his denunciatory arguments. They were apparently interested in Ickes only as the New Deal's hatchet-man, not as just another speaker.
CHAPTER VIII

"IS LANDON SINCERE?"

The last, and perhaps the sharpest, of Ickes' five major radio attacks was delivered on October 20. Entitled "Is Landon Sincere?", it was broadcast from 10:30 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. by a national C.B.S. network.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING OF THE SPEECH

Between Ickes' October 9 and October 20 radio addresses, President Roosevelt made an extended speaking tour through the West. He covered over 5,000 miles and delivered over sixty speeches within ten days.\(^1\) Included among these was the Chicago speech which he directed primarily toward winning the small businessman, an address which a New York Times editorial called "the most effective and vote-winning thus far."\(^2\) While this tour was in full swing, the ill-fated Literary Digest poll published its first returns based upon samplings in all forty-eight states. These returns showed Landon still leading by a 3-2 margin but registered steady gains for Roosevelt.\(^3\) The day

\(^3\)New York Times, October 16, 1936, p. 20.
before these returns were announced, Washington political newswriters, by a vote of nineteen to one, had selected the President as the probable winner. The consensus of their opinion was that the President would achieve a plurality of over three million votes and would more than double Landon's vote in the electoral college. New York bettors' opinions coincided with the newsmen's, and Roosevelt was made a 12-5 favorite.

After his Western tour, the President rested and worked on future speeches for two days before starting a swing through New England. During these two days, his Secretary of the Interior delivered two important addresses. One was the October 20 attack with which this chapter is primarily concerned; the other was a thirty-minute address at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. This address, entitled "Landon's Angels," was broadcast only by local stations. Its chief targets were Landon, Hoover, Smith, and the duPonts, the latter family being put into the title role. Ickes adapted this speech well to his audience and occasion. He satirically set himself to "review the opera bouffe" which he said Republicans were staging, and the

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5Baltimore Sun, October 17, 1936.
"dramatis personae" received the full benefit of biting humor. In addition to adapting to his immediate physical surroundings, he acknowledged his presence in Pennsylvania by paying his respects to Democratic Senator Guffy and by giving attention to quite another sort to Gifford Pinchot and the Pennsylvania duPonts. Ickes was well-pleased with the size of the audience and with its "enthusiastic" reception of his speech. Michael Straus, who accompanied the Secretary, was also pleased, although he thought the audience missed much of the subtle irony of the attack. Only the Philadelphia Record of October 20 carried the full text of the speech, but the New York Times and Washington Post of the same date reported its lines of argument. The letter files and scrapbooks in the Ickes Papers indicated that this speech received little editorial comment and aroused little public reaction outside Pennsylvania.

The Philadelphia address illustrated Ickes' constant awareness of the value of advertising a speech in advance. In it, after a brief reference to Landon's

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6 For the text of this speech, see the Philadelphia Record, October 20, 1936.
8 Straus interview.
9 Ickes Papers.
record, he said: "Tomorrow night from Washington, over a national radio hookup, I propose to probe further into Governor Landon's record. My subject will be 'Is Landon Sincere?'" The speech for which the Secretary was providing advance publicity had been prepared even before a definite date had been set for it. Straus sent a copy of the speech to Early on September 30 for his suggestions; Early sent word of his approval on October 2:

Bill [Hassett] and I think this is a masterpiece of ironical and logical analysis of the issues of the campaign. Let me know when he goes on the air with this. I don't want to miss it.¹⁰

By October 15, the date for delivery had been set as October 20, and Ickes released an announcement to the press. He said, in part:

Certain pages from Governor Landon's record that will make the American Liberty League sorry it contributed so much money to his Presidential campaign will be presented Tuesday night in a political speech.¹¹

A New York Times editorial of October 17 gave the speech further advance notice. After observing that ex-Senator Reed of Missouri and ex-Governor Smith of New York had "played body-snatchers" with portions of the President's 1932 speeches in order to show inconsistencies, the

¹⁰The September 30 memorandum from Straus to Early and Early's October 2 reply are both on file in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York.

editorial said that Ickes and Hopkins were reportedly preparing to "exhume" some of Governor Landon's earlier utterances. Landon's record, it was noted, would make him vulnerable:

. . . the well-known kindness and charity which Secretary Ickes displays in his political speeches would find a congenial field in gently arraying Candidate Landon against Governor Landon.12

PURPOSE AND THESIS OF THE SPEECH

The purpose and thesis of this speech were both easy for the listener or reader to discover. While the purpose may have required some analysis, the thesis was plainly implied in the title of the speech, in the introduction, and in the conclusion. Ickes indicated that the title was going to be more than just a catchphrase when he began: "The question that I shall discuss briefly tonight is this--Is Governor Landon really sincere in his campaign?" Throughout the body of the speech, Ickes employed numerous summary and transitional statements that Landon was not sincere. Then he concluded: "Is Landon sincere? The case is in the hands of the jury. On the face of the record only one verdict can be brought in: Not guilty of sincerity." No question could exist in the listener's mind about the

thesis of the address; it was stated early, plainly, and often.

The basic intent of the speech was also very clear: the speaker intended to undermine public confidence in the Republican candidate. As a study of lines of argument will demonstrate more clearly, Ickes struck at Landon through every element of his potential support. For the conservatives, he quoted the Kansan's sympathy for government operation of certain utilities; for the liberals, he clearly aligned him with wealthy and ultra-conservative supporters; and for the "middle-of-the-roaders," he pictured a candidate who was opportunistic, insincere, a "changeling." Ickes' purpose was to destroy confidence in Landon, and, in line with that purpose, he used tactics which he often accused the Kansas Governor of using: he offered at least one appeal for everybody.

LINES OF ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION

Unlike some of the Secretary's other political addresses, this speech was clearly organized. The introduction stated the issue concisely, the conclusion was a reassertion of that thesis, and the arguments in the body of the speech were sharply defined. The speech contained three main lines of argument. The first was that Landon's record as Governor was inconsistent with his campaign insistence that business should be kept
relatively free of government regulation and intervention. To this argument, half of the time of the speech was devoted. It was supported by two illustrations, both a matter of record. The first was Landon's recommendation for State telephone systems, and the second was his plan for putting Kansas into the natural gas business.

Upon completion of this first argument, Ickes cited very briefly other areas in which, according to him, Landon had tried to be on both sides of the issue. A passing jab was also made at "reactionary" interests, represented by the Sloans, Rockefellers, Morgans, and duPonts, who supported financially the Governor's efforts to "rededicate" Maine to "good government." These two premises were not built into major arguments. The second major argument was that the Republican candidate, while he contended that Roosevelt was likely to lead the nation into war,¹ three was himself supported by those who had most to gain by armed conflict. The speaker cited the duPonts, interested in munitions and chemicals, the duPonts and Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., interested in automotive sales, the Morgan firm, deeply entrenched in international banking, and other lesser figures in oil and chemical production. Approximately five minutes of

¹See text of Landon's September 12 address at Portland, Maine. New York Times, September 13, 1936, p. 36.
the total of twenty-seven were devoted to this argument.

The speaker's last major argument was briefer than the others. It, too, dealt with the type of backers behind the Republican candidate. Ickes quoted a 1933 Landon statement condemning Insull, Morgan, and Van Sweringen as financial and industrial "racketeers"; then he noted that at least two of these three were, in 1936, avowed Landon supporters.

All three of the major arguments supported the speaker's thesis, and all three were well-adapted to his purpose. The first was directed primarily toward conservatives, the last two primarily toward independent liberals and Republican progressives, and all three toward the "middle-of-the-roader" who wanted an honest, sincere candidate. It is interesting to note that the strongest and most sensational argument was placed at the beginning of the speech and the weakest at the end, a practice Ickes often followed. Since he was addressing an audience, who could simply change a dial or turn a switch, not a relatively "captive" audience, this was probably a sound arrangement. As Brigance puts it:

Remember that your first topic must draw a strong response. Will your least impelling topic get that response? If so you can follow the climactic order of arrangement. If not, one of
The stronger topics must be drawn from the ranks and sent to the front. Ickes' arguments were apparently arranged with the idea of capturing the attention and interest of the radio audience.

FORMS OF SUPPORT

Ickes' strongest appeals were, again, more emotional than logical. Only in the first of the three main arguments were logical proofs dominant. It was in support of that argument that Ickes employed evidence from the PWA files. Before the speech had consumed much over a minute, the speaker was reading the 1935 Landon letter concerning State telephone systems. He quoted it as follows:

Dear Mr. Ickes:

If you do not have the authority under the Public Works Administration to make loans to States for public, State-wide telephone systems, may I suggest that it would be a sound public policy to obtain that authority.

With highest personal regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Alf. M. Landon,
Governor.

This documentary evidence was of a definite nature, but the Secretary, ostensibly to impress its authenticity still further upon his listeners, added with a touch of

sarcasm:

I suspect that the Governor will find a copy of this letter in his own files, but if he wants to inspect the original to satisfy himself of its authenticity, I will be glad to submit it to his most careful scrutiny.

The letter proved Landon's interest in a public telephone system, and, to those who kept abreast of the campaign, its significance in regard to Landon's sincerity was obvious. The Republican platform and the candidate's speeches both called for less government activity in business and industry. To be sure that everybody understood this connection, Ickes said upon completion of the reading of the letter:

Within the week the man whose signature is appended to this letter proclaimed himself the champion of private initiative and attacked the President as merely 'giving lip service to our system of free enterprise'. Is Landon sincere?

Before reading the letter, the Secretary had noted Landon's announced opposition to "regimentation" and his insistence that business "be kept free." The evidence was well used. The speaker made clear the point with which his evidence dealt, gave the evidence, and then pointed up the conclusion from it.

The second piece of documentary evidence was used in much the same way, though the argument depended less upon it than upon simple narration. Ickes told his listeners about the plan for a State-owned natural gas
system in Kansas as it was expressed to him and his PWA assistants by the Governor and by William Allen White. The narrative was detailed enough to be fairly convincing, but the speaker threw in as documentation a direct quotation from the proposed charter of the State corporation. After noting that his office had copies of the charter, Ickes read from it a section on the purpose of the State corporation:

The full nature and character of the business in which said corporation proposes to engage is to purchase, prospect for, obtain and produce natural gas and to operate and control pipe lines, stations and plants for the transportation, distribution, marketing and sale of said natural gas and the by-products and to lease, hold, purchase, sell and convey real estate for the purpose of procuring, producing, transporting, selling, and distributing the said natural gas and the by-products thereof.

This quotation left no doubt that Landon was planning to put his State into the gas business. For the implication, however, that Landon dropped his plan so he would be more available as a candidate for the Republican nomination, the speaker offered no proof. He simply asserted that the plan was dropped about the same time that Landon "first began to be talked of as a possible Republican candidate for President."

The support for the last two main arguments was not primarily logical. Both of these arguments rested on the technique Ickes had often used in previous speeches of implying that whatever was true of Landon's supporters
was true of him. In the second argument, for example, he noted that such Republican supporters as Morgan, Sloan, and the duPonts were engaged in businesses which stood to profit from war. This was, no doubt, quite true. It required more partisan conjecture than logical inference, however, to reach the subsequent conclusion that these men would, therefore, work to involve their nation in war. Ickes made no effort to prove it; he simply implied it, asserted it, and repeated it. The speaker, in closing that argument, did put himself on somewhat stronger inferential ground when he compared Landon and Roosevelt on the war issue:

In trying to force the United States into another war, it goes without saying that war munitions, oil, and international banking would be much more influential with Governor Landon, whom they are unanimously supporting, than with President Roosevelt, whom they are viciously fighting.

If the earlier premise that these interests might encourage war for profit, a premise assumed in this statement, were accepted, the comparison would be a reasonable and effective one.

The final argument, associating Landon with business "racketeers," was not based on sound reasoning or evidence. It was the familiar "guilt by association" idea: that since Insull and Morgan were supporting Landon, who had once termed them "racketeers," the Kansas Governor must have changed his mind about
racketeers. Whatever may have been its psychological value, this argument was not based on a logical foundation. Both candidates, as Ickes knew, undoubtedly had some supporters of whom they did not personally approve.

After the first argument, there was little reliance on evidence and sound reasoning in this speech; psychological appeals were emphasized much more. As just indicated, the last two arguments rested primarily upon suggestion and emotional association. The second one, identifying Landon with so-called "war lords," used scare tactics, and both of the final arguments played upon the prejudice of many against wealthy and powerful men in business, finance, and industry. Names like duPont, Morgan, and Insull were designed to have undesirable emotional connotations for many listeners.

Even in the first argument, despite its support by excellent documentary evidence, Ickes used psychological appeals of this type. In offering to produce the Landon letter from which he had quoted, the Secretary managed to work in the names of a few of his favorite moneyed targets:

If any of the Rockefellers or the duPonts or the Sloans or the Colonel McCormicks or the Pews or the Grundys or the William R. Hearsts or the Andrew W. Mellons, who are so generously pouring their money into Candidate Landon's campaign fund, are curious about it, I will be glad to furnish them with copies.
As usual, Ickes used language, particularly epithets and loaded descriptions, as psychological forms of assertion. For example, he referred to Landon as a "changeling" candidate and as the "friend of the common millionaire"; Knox was referred to as "that windmill-tilting gentleman of grotesque and absurd statements"; and men like the duPonts and Morgans were labeled "war lords."

The persuasive element of humor, present in one or two of the phrases just noted, was another psychological form of support which Ickes employed. He referred, for example, to "the late Al Smith" and to "Governor Landon's little pipe line dream." Of Landon's visit to the PWA Administrator regarding a loan, he said: "We had long since learned that when Governor Landon called the United States Treasury needed extra guards." When discussing Landon's charge that Roosevelt might lead the nation to war, he noted that the Kansan's supporters were the groups which had most to gain from war; then he concluded: "The jam is too apparent on Governor Landon's apparently innocent face to escape detection." As the tone of these examples would indicate, the humor in this speech, while pointed, was lighter and less bitter than in one or two previous addresses.

In all four of the radio addresses previously
analyzed, Ickes bent more effort toward reducing the ethos of his opponents than toward building and capitalizing upon his own. By the very nature of its thesis and purpose, this speech was also devoted more to negative than to positive ethical appeals. However, the speaker did devote more attention to his personal ethos in this than in any previous address. It is significant that the proof Ickes used of Landon's inclination toward State ownership and operation of business was all from the Secretary's own files as PWA Administrator. The quoted letter and the narration of events surrounding both it and the proposed natural gas corporation charter pictured a state official petitioning a superior federal officer. Landon was petitioning Ickes. This subtly underlined relationship boosted the speaker's standing, even as it mitigated Governor Landon's.

The speaker also utilized an opportunity to attribute characteristics of virtue to himself and his New Deal associates, while implying a deficiency of those attributes in the Republican candidate. Discussing the negotiations concerning the loan for a State corporation in Kansas, he said:

The public works administration never presumed to dictate policy to a Sovereign State applying for money to finance a project. Neither was it our habit to conduct official business in secrecy. But at the insistence of the man who now, as a candidate for President, demands that all public business be conducted in the open, we agreed in this instance to
secrecy in the preliminary stages of the negotiation. It was our expectation that in due course a formal application would be made for a PWA loan and grant, at which time full publicity would be given to the proposal and public hearing held if desired. During these confidential conversations with Governor Landon and his agent it was suggested that the Governor secure legislative authority for his plan. This idea was always met with the plea that Governor Landon did not want the people of Kansas to know what he was up to until it was too late to block his plan.

Ickes knew how to use ethical appeals and could, upon occasion, blend positive and negative approaches into a two-edged weapon. His failure to depend more upon constructive ethical appeal should probably be attributed, first, to the nature of his role in the campaign and, second, to his obvious enjoyment of a more destructive approach.

USE OF LANGUAGE

Ickes' language in this speech was, as usual, vivid and imaginative. It gave full play to his affection for figurative expression. For example, he spoke of Landon's willingness to "tear his principles from the shallow soil in which they were rooted," of his "kaleidoscopic" changes, his "quick-silver policies," and his "boxing the compass" on the issues. He spoke, too, of Landon's record which "literally bristles with question marks respecting his own sincerity." In speaking of the change in Landon when he became a possible candidate, he said that "Candidate Landon was about to
burst forth from his State-Socialist chrysalis as a bright and multi-hued conservative butterfly that would delight the Wall Street individualists of the Hoover school."

It has been noted in previous chapters that, with his flair for the figurative, Ickes sometimes failed to resist the temptation of very expressive but not very widely-understood language. Several examples of this failure to adapt his vocabulary to many of his listeners occurred in this attack on Landon. He accused the Kansas Governor, for example, of "Lochinvaring it to Maine." It is doubtful that most of his radio audience was familiar enough with Scott's character in Marmion to immediately appreciate the meaningful allusion. Again, when he spoke of the "Morganatic marriage between the war lords and the Republican party," it is doubtful that the term "Morganatic marriage" was understood by most of his listeners. It was perhaps typical of the paradoxical Secretary of the Interior that he used expressions like this one in the same speech in which the most simple and down-to-earth expressions also appeared. In the latter category would definitely fall the very informal outburst which occurred when the speaker said that the Republicans were "desperately in need of a candidate--Oh Lord, any candidate!" In almost the same category was his statement that he was "tolerable familiar" with Governor Landon's
signature. Nor was there anything very ornate or unusual about the reference to "jam on Governor Landon's face" or his "biting the hand that fed him." Ickes' language, always colorful, was usually strikingly familiar. Occasionally, however, it over-reached the comprehension of the audience and failed in its primary function of clear communication.

To help make his oral style more direct, the Secretary again, as in previous addresses, turned to the use of questions. In several places, including the introduction and the conclusion, he posed the title question: "Is Landon sincere?" He also used the interrogative form to introduce ideas, asking a question and then answering it. For example, he introduced his comment about Insull's support of Landon simply by asking: "But what of Samuel Insull?" Most effective, however, were his rhetorical questions intended as persuasion. He constructed a series of such questions when he was punching home his contention about Landon's reversed policies:

How does it happen that the State Socialist of 1935 is the Republican candidate for President in 1936 on a platform of uncontrolled private initiative? Is it possible that the Governor of Kansas was willing to tear his principles from the shallow soil in which they were rooted because of the lure of the greatest office in the world? And what assurance is there that such a man, who apparently sways easily to every passing political breeze, would remain the advocate of private initiative and of rugged individualism, if by chance he should become the President of the United States?
The interrogative structuring of language for introduction, for repetition, and for argument helped to give to the speech the directness required for an effective oral style.

Ickes' frequent use of exceptionally short and blunt sentences, noted in previous chapters, added a forcefulness to his structuring of language for oral presentation. The first minute of his speech, for example, consisted of seven sentences, only two of which had over twenty words in them; three had fewer than ten words:

The question I shall discuss briefly tonight is this--Is Governor Landon really sincere in his campaign? The burden of his speeches so far has been a demand that we return to what he calls 'the American way of life.' He is for the rugged individualism of Herbert Hoover. He believes in cut-throat competition. He is for the aggrandizement of the few at the expense of the many.

Governor Landon inveighs against what he calls 'regimentation.' Business must be made free and kept free, declares the pleasant gentleman from Kansas in the very severest tones that he is able to marshal.

Such short and simple sentences produce a blunt forcefulness much less easily achieved with longer, complex sentences. Not all of the sentences, to be sure, were short. Many consisted of over thirty words and the longest sentence contained seventy-eight words. At frequent intervals, however, especially when conclusions to an argument were being stated, the series of short, simple sentences appeared. As he concluded
his final argument, for example, Ickes said: "This is the record. Let Governor Landon explain it if he can. Let him deny it if he dare. Let him ignore it if he must."

The language of this attack upon Landon was colorful, usually direct, and often very forcefully phrased. Despite an occasional use of relatively unfamiliar vocabulary, Ickes' choice of language made a definite contribution toward the effectiveness of the speech.

RECEPTION TO THE SPEECH

Considering the fact that Governor Landon, Governor Lehman, Senator Vandenberg, and John W. Davis, former Democratic nominee for President, all delivered campaign addresses on the same day, and that the President commenced his New England tour on that day, news coverage of Ickes' October 20 address should have been gratifying to him. His speech shared the page one headline of the October 21 Washington Star with Landon's Los Angeles address; the Chicago Tribune, which often ignored Ickes' speeches, reported this one briefly and impartially on page nine of its October 21 edition; the New York Times of the same date devoted more than a column on page thirteen to a fairly complete report; and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch made it the subject of an editorial on page one, section C.
Only three leading city dailies commented editorially on the speech. The Post-Dispatch, in the Landon camp politically, noted that Ickes' evidence regarding the Kansas Governor's views on public ownership were designed to "chill conservatives." The editorial said that it might, on the other hand, appeal to liberals who favored government ownership.\textsuperscript{15} This was possible, but, in view of other announced positions of Roosevelt and Landon on business regulation, hardly likely. A very favorable commentary was written by Robert S. Allen and appeared in the pro-Roosevelt Philadelphia Record. Allen called the speech "the most scorching address of the campaign," and said, in part:

Ickes, famed as the New Deal's most acid-tongued and hardest hitting fighter, reached new heights in both tonight. He belabored Landon with devastating irony, sarcasm, direct haymakers and solar plexus blows.'\textsuperscript{16}

The Republican Washington Post, commenting only briefly, said that Ickes was reading so many letters over the air as evidence that future correspondence to him ought to be addressed: "Dear Mr. Secretary and my friends of the radio audience."\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[15]St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 21, 1936, Section C, p. 1.
\item[16]Philadelphia Record, October 21, 1936.
\item[17]Washington Post, October 22, 1936.
\end{footnotes}
Probably the most important reaction came from the Republican candidate himself. Although Landon later said in Tulsa, Oklahoma, that "During this campaign I have made no effort to answer personal attacks that have been made upon me," he replied at some length to this attack by Ickes. This reply, quoted in most cases along with the report of the Secretary's speech, said in part:

Up to date, the administration's spokesmen have been attacking me on the ground I was a puppet of big business. Now they attack me on the ground that I am a Socialist and the enemy of big business. This is typical of the confusion and contradictory policies that have characterized this administration from its beginning. This attack is like the losing team throwing the ball around wildly attempting to score. . . .

I am glad the administration has seen fit to make these negotiations public. They show I was determined to bring lower gas rates to Kansas, even to the extent of resorting to public ownership on a State basis.

I have always been in favor of public ownership of a gun behind the door in the adjustment of proper and fair utility rates. . . .

Naturally I asked Mr. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior to keep our discussion secret. If it had been given publicity the private gas interests would have preempted all the available gas reserves and we would have been out of luck.

But we were finally able to obtain the lower rates, with a large saving to the gas consumers of Kansas, without resorting to the last weapon that should be resorted to--public ownership.\(^\text{19}\)

Landon went on to say that "very much the same situation" was true of his letter regarding a State telephone system.

\(^{18}\text{New York Times}, \ October 24, 1936, p. 1.\)

\(^{19}\text{New York Times}, \ October 21, 1936, p. 13.\)
Then he launched an attack on the New Deal for "getting into business" on a national scale.

This reply was clever, although it missed the point in some respects. Ickes had never really charged Landon with being presently in favor of public ownership; he had, in fact, contrasted Landon's views as Governor with his views as a candidate. Landon accepted his detractor's facts but rejected his implication of motive. He put himself back on record as a friend of business, while picturing himself also as a champion of the consumer. It was not a complete answer, but it probably sufficed for his supporters. From Ickes' point of view, a significant fact was that he had forced Landon into a reply.

No other Republicans replied directly, but an indirect response came from Republican National Committee headquarters. They attacked Ickes' FWA on the ground that its funds from September 8 to October 10 had gone mostly to "so-called doubtful States." The Administrator replied by press conference that "not much" of the available fund had even been allocated and that "if we were playing politics we would be spending it all over the lot like the duPonds are doing in the Republican campaign."

The Republican statistics on actual expenditures were not

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denied. Stripped to its essentials, the Secretary's reply proved only that PWA was not playing politics as much as it could be doing. This exchange probably had little influence on a public already saturated with charges and denials of politics in WPA.

The only unusual feature about the reaction to this speech was that Ickes had finally forced a reply from his principal target. In view of his previous policy of ignoring attacks, Landon's reply would seem to indicate that he feared the effects of this Ickes' address and decided that it could not safely be ignored.

SUMMARY EVALUATION

On August 3, Ickes had ostensibly used candidate Landon's platform and campaign statements to refute the claim, made on the basis of his record in Kansas, that he was a progressive. On October 20, he ostensibly used the Kansan's record as Governor to question the sincerity of some of his 1936 views as a candidate. In reality, he hoped to do the same thing in both addresses: to demonstrate that Landon was opportunistic and insincere. His October 20 speech supported this thesis by three arguments: (1) that Landon, who now urged free enterprise, had favored State ownership of utilities before he was a candidate; (2) that Landon, who charged that Roosevelt might lead the nation to war, was actually supported by those who would gain most from war; and (3) that Landon,
who as Governor had labeled certain financiers "racketeers," was being supported by those very men.

For the first of these arguments, evidence of a documentary nature was the chief form of proof. The second and third were supported almost entirely by psychological appeals to fear and prejudice. In the speech as a whole, Ickes used more constructive ethical appeal than in any previous effort.

The language of the speech was vivid and forceful. It suffered in a few places from use of vocabulary probably unfamiliar to many listeners, but it was, in general, very effective. The use of rhetorical questions and short, simple sentences contributed to the directness and force desirable for oral presentation.

News coverage of the speech was good, and even opposition editorials were only mildly critical. With this speech Ickes managed, for the first time, to goad Landon into a reply. Since that reply was in explanation, and not denial, of some of the facts alleged by Ickes, it can be inferred that the Republican candidate feared the effect which the speech, if ignored, might produce. The speaker assigned the role of keeping the pressure on Landon had succeeded in putting him on the defensive. The retort even helped to publicize the attack. From the Democratic point of view, this speech must be regarded as an effective effort.
CHAPTER IX
CHARACTERISTICS OF IKKES' PERSUASION

The special function of Ickes in the 1936 campaign, as described in Chapter II, was to act as the Administration's hatchet-man, its "chief-denouncer." His job was to keep the pressure on the Republican party and to prevent the rise of Landon to a seriously challenging position. Ten speeches designed to fulfill this assigned task were delivered, five of which have been analyzed in detail in preceding chapters.\(^1\) It is the purpose of this chapter to observe and describe briefly the persuasive methods and techniques which characterized the speaking of Ickes in the campaign.

The speaker's methods and techniques can best be viewed in the light of his basic purpose. Ickes' purpose was to prevent Landon from gaining the confidence of most of the American public. To fulfill his purpose, it was not necessary that he definitely prove anything about

\(^1\)Only seven of these ten speeches have been discussed in this study. The three which followed the speech "Is Landon Sincere?" were as follows: On October 21, in Evanston, Illinois, an attack aimed chiefly at the Chicago press and entitled "Only Thirteen More Days to Save America," on October 27, in Altoona, Pennsylvania, an attack aimed primarily at Gifford Pinchot and entitled "Why Pinchot Ran Out," and on October 28, in New York City's Carnegie Hall, a concerted attack on Landon called "At the Crossroads." None of these addresses were broadcast nationally.
Landon. He needed only to implant by suggestion attitudes of uncertainty, suspicion, and doubt. In this task, Ickes became essentially a propagandist, for his speeches constituted "a systematic attempt . . . to control the attitudes of groups of individuals through the use of suggestion. . . ."²

The tendency toward merely suggesting, rather than proving, is reflected in several facets of Ickes' persuasion. It may be seen, first, in the vagueness of many of the speaker's theses. Discovering in some of Ickes' speeches a definitely stated or clearly implied thesis or proposition is an almost impossible task. This absence of clear thesis has been noted particularly in the speech attacking the Republican platform and in the one devoted partially to Father Coughlin. In the case of other attacks, it has been noted that the stated thesis did not necessarily embody the real intent of the speech. In his attack on Landon's progressivism, for example, Ickes' real purpose was not as much to deny that Landon was progressive as it was to imply that no one could be sure where Landon stood from one moment to the next. When the propagandist aims at creating attitudes, it is

not necessary—it may, in fact, be disadvantageous—to present a real and definite thesis. Ickes' true purpose was not always embodied in a definite or stated thesis.

The nature of the Secretary's purpose apparently influenced his organization in much the same way. As it has been noted in the study of individual speeches, this organization was seldom ordered from a logical point of view. Quite often little or no logical connection existed between the ideas which were developed in sequence. Such loose organization was especially apparent in the speeches devoted to the Republican platform, to the Hearst-Landon connection, and to Father Coughlin's relationship to the Republican party. Since Ickes' primary purpose was neither clear exposition nor logical demonstration, a logical arrangement of ideas was less necessary than it would otherwise have been. Further, well-organized attacks upon Landon would have been easier for Republicans to answer than was the Secretary's loosely-structured campaign of suggestion and innuendo.

The nature of Ickes' proofs showed a greater emphasis upon persuasive techniques embodying suggestion than upon those built upon reasoning and evidence. Ickes used evidence, sometimes excellent evidence, in every speech analyzed in previous chapters. It is significant, however, that his evidence was usually selected for its psychological effect or its sensation or expose value.
His evidence by testimony, for example, was almost always from Landon's own words or from those of a Landon supporter. His documentary evidence was usually from private correspondence or from previously unpublished documents. His examples were selected more for their emotional connotation than for their logical value. Even Ickes' logical proofs were selected and constructed, at least in part, to command attention and to persuade by suggestion.

The real essence of the persuasion in Ickes' speeches, however, lay in his skillful use of those psychological techniques commonly associated with the propagandist. Some of the most common of these techniques have been enumerated and described by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, a non-partisan organization created in 1937 to study propaganda and public opinion. Those listed are "name calling," "glittering generality," "transfer," "testimonial," "plain folks," "card stacking," and "band wagon." These devices, several of which are discussed by speech textbooks under other titles, are applicable in characterizing the persuasive appeals of Ickes. Moreover, they combine other elements of emotional appeal with those

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dependent primarily upon language selection, and no analysis of Ickes would be complete which did not consider his persuasive use of language.

"Name calling" and "glittering generalities" are essentially negative and positive descriptions of the language technique which Brembeck and Howell call "positive loading" and "negative loading." Since he was occupied primarily with the attack upon the President's opponents, it was "name calling," the technique of "giving an idea a bad label...to make us reject and condemn the idea without examining the evidence," which Ickes used most. When he labeled Landon a "practical progressive" and a "strong but silenced man"; when he called the Republican platform "weasel-worded"; when he referred to "Boss Hearst" and to the "liberty-loving duPonds"; and when he labeled Landon supporters as "Old Guard," "massed wealth," "vested interests," "predatory interests," "war lords," "reactionaries," and "Old Dealers"; when he did these things, Ickes was "name-calling." These, of course, represent only a few of the many illustrations of this practice which have been noted in the analysis of individual speeches.


5Lee and Lee, op. cit., p. 23.
The New Deal's most persistent attacker of Landon also made use of the "transfer" device in persuasion. Again it was the negative aspect of the technique which he used most. As subjects, he employed Landon adherents whom he thought to be low in public favor, denouncing them and rhetorically tying them around the neck of the Republican candidate. Thus the opprobrium they bore, enhanced by Ickes' own invective, was to be transferred to Landon. Foremost among those whose presumed lack of public favor he attempted to transfer to the Kansan were the duPONTs, Hearst, Hoover, and the Liberty League.

The negative use of the "testimonial" was also a characteristic of Ickes' persuasion. His attacks indicated the apparent belief that the candidate's virtue, his principles, and his program could be no better than the people who supported him. This was the principle of "guilt by association." By calling attention to the fact that Hearst, Hoover, Insull, Morgan, and the Liberty League had subscribed to the Landon candidacy, Ickes

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6 "'Transfer' carries the authority, sanction, and prestige of something respected and revered over to something else in order to make the latter acceptable; or it carries authority, sanction, and disapproval to cause us to reject or disapprove something the propagandist would have us reject and disapprove." Lee and Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

7 "'Testimonial' consists in having some respected or hated person say that a given idea or program or product or person is good or bad." *Ibid.*, p. 24.
intended to discredit the Kansas Governor in the eyes of laborers, farmers, liberals, progressives, and most of the so-called "common" people.

The "plain folks" technique appeared in almost all of Ickes' speeches. Throughout the campaign, he worked to convince his radio audience that the election issue was between wealth and vested interests, on the Republican side, and the common people, who supported the President. Roosevelt and the New Deal would, according to Ickes, benefit the worker, the farmer, the small businessman; Landon would represent wealth and big business. In this way, Ickes used the "plain folks" approach as a double-edged weapon.

The device called "card stacking" by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis is probably used by all campaign speakers in some degree, but Ickes' speeches typified it as a propaganda device. His reasoning, his selection of evidence, and his language all reflected what Brembeck and Howell refer to as "two-valued orientation."10

8"'Plain folks' is the method by which a speaker attempts to convince his audience that his ideas are good because they are 'of the people', the 'plain folks'." Ibid., p. 24.

9"'Card stacking' involves the selection and use of facts or falsehoods, illustrations or distractions, and logical or illogical statements in order to give the best or worst possible case for an idea, program, person, or product." Ibid., p. 24.

Ickes recognized no middle ground; there were only black and white. No action of Landon and his party was not suspect, and the worst possible interpretation was placed upon their motives. The President, on the other hand, had done and could do no wrong. This extremely intentional reasoning ran through the speaker's arguments, and his language and evidence followed the same pattern.

Ickes made only limited use of the "band wagon" technique of persuasion. It would have been difficult to make extensive use of this device in company with his sharp drawing of battle lines in the campaign. He did frequently remind his audience of Roosevelt's smashing victory in 1932, and he indicated that the "common people" all supported Roosevelt and the New Deal. Only in the concluding appeal in his attack on Father Coughlin, however, did he make obvious use of the "get on the band wagon" idea. His role in the campaign was more concerned with preventing Landon support than in making positive appeals for the President.

"Band wagon" has as its theme: Everybody--at least all of 'us'--is doing it. With it, the propagandist attempts to convince us that all members of a group to which we belong are accepting his program and that we must therefore follow our crown and 'jump on the band wagon.'" Lee and Lee, loc. cit.
Another technique of persuasion which characterized the speaking efforts of the New Deal's "chief denouncer" was the use of humor. This aspect of Ickes' speaking has been noted in connection with each of his speeches, and its importance to the successful performance of his campaign task is difficult to overemphasize. The audience might soon weary of attacks on the opposition which were harsh but unimaginative, and criticism and accusation, if unrelieved, could eventually have created sympathy. Ickes' caustic humor refined, relieved, and camouflaged—without softening—the blows he struck at Landon and his leading supporters. The acid humor which had won him the reputation as "the Cabinet wit" was used, not merely to hold attention, but to implement persuasion as well.

One other form of suggestion which Ickes used extensively as a means of persuasion was repetition. The use of repetition in individual speeches has been noted in the analysis in previous chapters. The Secretary also repeated the main ideas of former speeches as supporting ideas in later ones. The recurring references to Landon as a "practical progressive" and to Hearst as the Kansan's "boss" are cases in point.

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In brief summary, Ickes' persuasion was based primarily upon psychological appeals and techniques. Ethical and logical proofs were subordinated to and colored by psychological forms of persuasion. He made frequent use of the techniques of the propagandist; chief among them were "name-calling," "transfer," "testimonial," "plain folks," and "card stacking." He also made extensive use of repetition and humor as psychological forms of persuasion. Most of these techniques depended upon or were greatly enhanced by the speaker's use of vivid and persuasive language.

Harold L. Ickes was the New Deal's hatchet-man. His primary assignment was to reduce the public stature of the President's Republican foe. His appeal to his mass audience was characterized by the psychological techniques of the propagandist, and it was influenced by the reputation, the wit, and the colorfulness of the man himself.
APPRAISAL

In the light of his 1936 campaign efforts, how should Ickes be evaluated as a speaker? The criteria for appraising a speaker are numerous and varied, but Thonssen and Baird list and describe the following tests as "most common in contemporary evaluation": (1) the immediate response to the speeches, (2) the readability of the texts, (3) the technical perfection of the speeches, according to accepted rhetorical principles, (4) the historical test of the speaker's ideas, (5) the delayed response to the speeches, and (6) the ultimate effect of the speeches upon society.¹

Since Ickes is being evaluated as a political orator in a special campaign role, some of these criteria are much less applicable than others. To begin with, the technical perfection of his speeches is less important than those tests dealing with the actual response received. It has already been noted, for example, that the organization of his speeches was often weak from a logical point of view. Since his particular object did not depend to any large degree upon ordered

proof, this technical weakness, while perhaps significant, was not necessarily a limiting factor. The application of the historical test of ideas would also yield little. Most of Ickes' subject matter was based on what could or could not be expected of Landon in the event of his election. Since Landon was not elected, then or later, the Secretary's ideas could not be weighed on the scale of actual performance. Nor would the gain be great from an attempt to evaluate the ultimate effect of Ickes' ideas upon society. His subject matter was of an immediate and temporary nature, and his ideas were particular rather than universal. Unless one were rash enough to ascribe Roosevelt's re-election to Ickes' efforts and then to attempt to evaluate the election's influence upon society, the social impact test could not be used.

The test of readability of speech texts, on the other hand, is especially pertinent to the present study. As Thonssen and Baird have pointed out, opinion is divided on the question of whether or not a good speech reads well in print.\(^2\) The idea that an effective speech will also read well is popularly held, but many rhetorical critics hold that good oral style is so different

\(^{2}\)Ibid., p. 456.
from literary style that a good speech should not read well as printed matter. Ickes' speeches, to satisfy his particular goals, needed to blend oral and literary styles effectively enough that they would sound good over the air and yet read well in the newspapers. For, as noted in Chapter II, the Administration used its Secretary of the Interior at least partially for his news value, and Ickes himself devoted great effort toward securing the widest possible news coverage for his speeches. That his style was, for the most part, well-adapted to oral presentation has been noted in the study of individual speeches. At the same time, Ickes possessed a very creditable literary style. His language was not only colorful; it was almost always meticulously correct. The speeches not only read well in print, but, even more important in this particular case, they made interesting reading. Newspapers, even some hostile ones, were willing to devote space to reprinting Ickes' major speeches entirely, or to quoting liberally from them. This accomplished one of the basic aims of the New Deal's hatchet-man: it gave wide publicity to his attacks on Landon and his party.

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3Straus, Wolfsohn, and Cohen have indicated that Ickes possessed a good literary style, with a slight tendency toward the classical. Interviews.
The immediate response to his speeches cannot be ignored as a criterion for evaluating the speaker. Thonssen and Baird say of this criterion:

The effectiveness of a speech may be judged by the character of the immediate, surface response. If a speaker succeeds in holding the audience's unbroken attention; if he receives a favorable response in the form of applause or cheering; if he does these or other things which relate straightway to the response of the moment, he is presumed to have carried through his communicative attempt competently. This is a superficial, though sometimes accurate, indicator of rhetorical merit.4

Since Ickes' campaign speeches were beamed primarily to the radio audience, several of them being studio broadcasts, this type of analysis is difficult to make. In two speeches previously reported in which delivery was before a live audience, eyewitness and newspaper accounts have indicated that response to Ickes was enthusiastic.5 Joel David Wolfsohn, who heard the Secretary often in 1936, has indicated that the audiences were favorably responsive in each case.6

For reactions to Ickes' network radio addresses, however, the critic must depend upon newspaper and other printed reports. Since newspapers and political commentators cannot be considered as entirely unbiased observers, this type of reaction is also difficult to

4Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 455.
5These were the speeches delivered at Columbus on October 9, and at Philadelphia on October 19.
6Interview.
evaluate. Some suggestions as to Ickes' effectiveness can, however, be gleaned from a review of the reactions of newspapers and of political observers of both parties. For example, the August 3 attack on Landon's progressivism brought forth reluctant admissions of the effectiveness of the speech from several Republican papers, and it received only complaints from Republican leaders. It also received exceptionally favorable and unanimous support from Democratic leaders and newspapers. That speech could be adjudged effective. The August 27 attack on Hearst was much less effective. It received a strong reply from William Hard and from the Republican press. Its charge, on the other hand, failed to receive support from many Democratic editorials. Using this type of appraisal, a study of reaction to the five major radio addresses would indicate that all except the speech charging Hearst control of Landon were largely effective. The most effective were the speeches questioning Landon's progressivism and his sincerity. The latter even drew reply from the Republican candidate, but the reply, though cleverly done, only partially met the issues raised. Though he was enthusiastic about the other four speeches, even the Secretary was dubious, as noted in Chapter VI, about the public reaction to his attack on Hearst.

According to observers, Ickes received a favorable
immediate reaction from his audiences when an audience was present. No definitive conclusion can be reached about the reaction of his radio audience. Some evidence does, however, suggest that at least four of the five major addresses received a favorable response.

Of greater importance than the test of immediate audience reaction is the criteria of the ultimate response of that audience. Comparing these two criteria, Thonssen and Baird say:

Much more significant is the test which measures effectiveness by the substantial responses deriving from possible changes in belief or attitude. . . . Thus, in an extended debate in the House of Commons or in the American Congress, a vote may not be taken for days after the delivery of certain significant speeches. But the fundamental test will be: Did these speeches have an effect upon the subsequent disposition of the question? Did they help to produce the delayed response?7

In the 1936 campaign, an evaluation would, then, be based on whether Ickes' speeches had any effect on the November vote. How is this to be determined? It would be foolish to conclude that since Roosevelt won reelection, Ickes had necessarily been effective in his campaign efforts. Nor is it possible to say that since Landon was prevented from attaining any great measure of public confidence, that having been Ickes' special assignment, this result proved the hatchet-man a

7Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 457.
successful speaker. The cause is too small for the effect, and other factors were operative. Indeed, the Secretary's diary indicates the belief that Landon cost himself many votes by his own unimpressive speeches.\(^8\)

An attempt to survey the results in Columbus, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other cities where Ickes spoke would also prove little or nothing. The analysis of the Secretary's effectiveness must be based upon the opinion of observers.

Editorial comment, some of it from unfriendly sources, suggested that Ickes had been effective in his campaign role. The *Louisville Herald Post* said, as the campaign neared its end, that he had "worn better than all other radio speakers" and mentioned his "unfailing charm."\(^9\) This comment appeared in an article which also praised Herbert Hoover. The *Washington Star* of November 19, speculating upon cabinet changes, was sure that the Secretary of the Interior, under fire before the campaign began, would be reappointed because "He did some heavy line-plunging for Roosevelt in the campaign. . . ."\(^10\)

Probably the most satisfying comment to Ickes, however, came from Hearst's *Chicago-American*. It said: "In

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\(^9\) *Louisville Herald Post*, October 26, 1936.

\(^10\) *Washington Star*, November 19, 1936.
fairness it should be recorded that Harold Ickes proved an Ace among the New Dealers."\(^{11}\) This comment probably was even more rewarding for that New Deal speaker than the post-election credit given him for his part in the victory by Frank Kent in his column in the *Baltimore Sun*.\(^{12}\) Kent had been one of Ickes' persistent critics during the campaign. Still another indication of effectiveness came from John Hamilton, Republican Chairman. He told Ickes on December 21 that he, Ickes, had "hit him harder than anyone else during the campaign."\(^{13}\)

Perhaps the best way to measure Ickes' effectiveness is to discover the estimate placed on his services by the party and the administration which gave him his assignment. There is no doubt that he stood very high in this respect after the election was over. When he offered, as a matter of form, to extend his resignation before the second Roosevelt term began, Miss Marguerite Le Hand, the President's personal secretary, remarked to Thomas Corcoran that "the one man in the Cabinet who had nothing to worry about was the first one to talk about

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\(^{11}\) *Chicago-American*, November 11, 1936.

\(^{12}\) *Baltimore Sun*, November 12, 1936.

sending in his resignation."\(^{14}\) Congressman Maverick went so far in early January as to announce publicly his support for Ickes for President in 1940.\(^{15}\) This was, no doubt, exaggerating the Secretary's political possibilities, but it suggests the favorable attitude held by many Democrats toward their Bull-Moose ally in the campaign. Alsop and Kintner have indicated that Ickes became much closer to the President after the campaign was over. In fact, they list him as one of the three men in the Administration who were closest to Roosevelt after 1936.\(^{16}\)

More pertinent is the New Deal attitude after 1936 toward Ickes specifically as a speaker. Had he not been regarded as effective in the 1936 campaign, he would probably not have been used extensively as a New Deal spokesman in future political struggles. The fact is that he was a leading New Deal speaker in the Supreme Court fight of 1937, the anti-monopoly fight in 1937-38, and the political "purge" of 1938.\(^{17}\) Then, in 1940, the

\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 17.

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 29.

\(^{16}\)The three listed are Ickes, Hopkins, and Corcoran. Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, Men Around the President (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., p. 91.

\(^{17}\)Ibid., pp. 136-39, 183-85.
President, who according to Rosenman "loved to listen to him [Ickes] lay it on," gave his Secretary of the Interior the same task he had been given in 1936. In July of 1940, the President told Henry Wallace, vice-presidential nominee, to "see Harold, who will have to be our spearhead in this campaign." On August 14, the President assigned to Ickes the radio reply to Wendell Willkie's speech of acceptance, and the political hatchet-man was back at work. Nineteen-forty-four was to find him again attacking, this time with Thomas E. Dewey as the Republican target. When asked to comment on whether Ickes was effective as a political hatchet-man in 1936, Paul C. Aiken responded with a definite affirmative and suggested the Secretary's continued use in that role as eloquent proof.

Up to this point, only Ickes' effectiveness as a speaker has been considered. No organized attempt has been made to evaluate his speaking from an ethical point

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20 Ibid., p. 303.
22 Interview.
of view, to determine to what extent he recognized and demonstrated a sense of responsibility to his audience. Gray and Braden say of the speaker's social responsibility:

How one uses his ability in speaking, whether for the good or ill of society, is essentially a matter of the speakers' own sense of ethical and moral values, of his own motives in speaking, of the honesty of his own thinking, and of the genuineness of his concern for human welfare.23

As a public official and as a man, "Honest Harold" Ickes had an excellent and well-deserved reputation for sound ethical values. Interviews with Ickes' associates reveal a deep-rooted conviction of his honesty and integrity. Others, even some who feuded with the Secretary, have generally acknowledged his honesty. Hugh Johnson, who had disagreed bitterly with Ickes upon occasion, said that whatever else might be said of him "nobody had impugned his integrity."24 Rosenman also has emphasized this aspect of the Secretary: "Above all the President felt great comfort and easiness with Ickes as Secretary of the Interior because of his rugged honesty and incorruptibility."25

25Rosenman, op. cit., p. 44.
No serious question seems to arise about the genuineness of Ickes' "concern for human welfare." He was a progressive by conviction and supported many losing and hopeless causes for that conviction. As noted in Chapter III, he was regarded as a champion of minority groups and their rights. Ickes' foes often questioned his methods, but seldom the sincerity of his political beliefs. Nor were the Secretary's general motives for speaking a matter for serious question. There is every indication that he sincerely believed the country would be better served by the re-election of Roosevelt than by the election of Landon. After listening to Roosevelt's acceptance speech, for example, he made this comment in his diary:

I came away from the meeting feeling that, as matters stand, I would have no option except to support the President, no matter what my personal differences might be with him over policies affecting my department. I simply would have no other choice in view of what I have believed in and stood for all my life.26

He later entered comment about Landon which would indicate the sincerity of his expressed fears of the Kansan as President. After describing him as "mediocre" and likening him to Harding, Ickes wrote:

As I say, someone will run him, and if it isn't the big interests I will be very much surprised.

An honest and scrupulous man in the oil business is so rare as to rank as a museum piece. And Landon has been in oil all his life.27

The serious question about the ethics of Ickes arises in regard to the degree of intellectual honesty reflected in his speech techniques. It has been demonstrated that his appeals were primarily emotional rather than logical. Emotional appeals are certainly not of themselves reprehensible, but they should be accompanied by sound reasoning and evidence. As Gray and Braden put it: ". . . you the speaker will inevitably appeal to motives, which are closely related to the emotions. But when you do, put those appeals on a national basis. Back up your emotional appeal by sound reasoning." 28

Ickes' psychological techniques, especially those of "name-calling" and "transfer," were often not backed up by sound reasoning or evidence. It has been noted, too, that some of his arguments placed such an extremely partisan interpretation on events and motives that they tended to distort the truth. An analysis of the Secretary's persuasive techniques suggests that his partisan nature led him into excesses as a political speaker which, despite his basic integrity, did not demonstrate

27Ibid., p. 646.

a keen awareness of the ethical responsibility of the speaker to his society.

Harold L. Ickes will not be recorded as a great American orator. His most noted speeches were directed toward an immediate political goal and were neither timeless nor elevated in theme. He was an intensely partisan political speaker; his speeches will not endure as models of selfless statesmanship. Viewed, however, in terms of performance in an unusual and demanding campaign role, Ickes was an effective political speaker. He was, in 1936, the New Deal's hatchet-man, and he performed his task with apparent success.
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William Scott Nobles was born July 15, 1923, at Paris, Texas. He received his elementary and secondary education in Sulphur, Oklahoma. In 1941, he entered Southeastern State College at Durant, Oklahoma. From 1943 to 1946, he served with the U.S. Navy. Returning to Southeastern State College in 1946, he completed the B. A. degree in 1947. He received the M. A. degree in 1948 from Western Reserve University.

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EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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