A Rhetorical Analysis of Selected Ante-Bellum Speeches by Randell Hunt.

Jerry L. Tarver

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ANTE-BELLUM SPEECHES BY RANDELL HUNT

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

Jerry L. Tarver
B.A., Louisiana State University, 1957
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May, 1964
The writer is indebted to his major professor, Dr. Owen Peterson, for guidance and assistance, and to his wife, Sara, for help and patience.
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ABSTRACT

Randell Hunt was a frequent public speaker in South Carolina during the nullification crisis and in Louisiana from 1834 until the Civil War. As a lawyer, a professor of law and a state legislator, Hunt achieved great regional fame for his oratory in behalf of the Union. In evaluating the significance of Hunt's public speaking, this study treats a selected range of his addresses on political topics from 1830 through 1860.

As a background for the analysis of Hunt's speeches, the factors which contributed to his effectiveness are isolated. His education is shown to have helped develop Hunt's speaking ability by providing him with a broad liberal education, by giving him access to classical rhetorical theories, and by presenting him with many opportunities for practical experience. As a student Hunt is seen to have acquired habits of scholarship which were later apparent in the preparation of his arguments. His delivery of speeches was characterized by extensive preparation although he seldom wrote out his remarks in full. Hunt gained little advantage in delivery from physical factors.
since his voice and appearance were not especially remarkable. His rhetoric appears to be the result of conscious application of theory rather than the product of natural, untutored skill.

Hunt's oratory is seen to have been closely related to four separate movements during the ante-bellum period. First, from 1830 to 1833, he was an active orator for the Union cause during the nullification struggle in South Carolina. After 1833 he moved to Louisiana where he became a major spokesman for the Whig party until its collapse after 1852. Hunt then became the leading orator of the Know Nothing party in Louisiana before finally championing the cause of the Constitutional Union organization in the 1860 presidential campaign.

In analyzing each of the above four periods, the historical background is briefly described and the details of the specific speaking occasions are given. Then the logical, ethical, and emotional proof employed in the arguments is evaluated, and, finally, the speaker's effectiveness is described.

The situations which Hunt faced were consistently marked by great public excitement and intense interest in the oratorical battle over the issues involved. Speaking to audiences of varied individual characteristics during...
these times, Hunt was heard with universal respect and attention. He developed arguments in which the logical proof employed, with the exception of some points during the Know Nothing period, was technically sound. His logical argument was characterized by his frequent failure to develop certain implied basic premises and by his dependence on examples as a major form of evidence. Ethical appeals were common in Hunt's speeches. He stressed his good character, his sagacity, and his good will with remarks carefully designed to suit his audiences. In his use of emotional proof Hunt most frequently appealed to nationalism and pride.

Randell Hunt is shown to have been a significant speaker on the state and local level during the antebellum period. His greatest failures came in his frequent inability to attract enough support to carry a particular election or pass a certain bill. The responses of the audiences gathered to hear his speeches, however, was always strongly favorable. Also, Hunt was successful in understanding the ultimate direction of public policy. His pleas for stronger government, although frequently unheeded on a particular issue, represented the true drift of the future. Hunt's most important contribution to his times was his success in assuring extensive public discussion of vital
issues. Although frequently representing a minority point of view, Hunt's fame as an orator drew crowds to hear discussions on major issues of the day.
INTRODUCTION

During the controversy over nullification in South Carolina, a young Charleston lawyer, Randell Hunt, made several forceful speeches favoring the Union. With this introduction to politics, Hunt began a public career in which his ability as an orator was widely hailed by his contemporaries. Most of Hunt's speeches were delivered in Louisiana where he moved after the nullification question was settled. As a leading member of the Louisiana bar, as professor of law, dean of law, and college president at the University of Louisiana (Tulane), and as an inveterate speaker on the stump and in state legislative assemblies, his speaking ability continued to be a valuable asset which he frequently employed.

The extent of Hunt's participation in public speaking was remarkable. In addition to his legal addresses and his university lectures, Hunt established a record of activity in political oratory which was not exceeded by any of his fellow politicians. He made political speeches in every major campaign in Louisiana from 1836 until 1860. Although Hunt found time for speaking tours to other towns
and other states, he concentrated his efforts in New Orleans. A political meeting in the city without Hunt, commented one observer, would be like a book without a title page.¹

Hunt did not rise to prominence as an orator because of an absence of competition. He held his own in political contests with, among others, Judah P. Benjamin, Pierre Soulé, and John Slidell. Hunt and this trio of men who are today better known are recognized by some authorities as the four major figures of ante-bellum politics in Louisiana.²

Hunt's role in public affairs, however, has been given little individual attention. Elected to public office only a few times, Hunt's fame rested to a large degree on his many extemporaneous speeches. The transitory nature of Hunt's role in politics has been further complicated by the inaccessibility of written records of his activity. A nephew, Judge William Henry Hunt, contributed a valuable work in compiling a collection of Hunt's speeches and writings, to which he appended a brief biography of some

¹Baton Rouge Gazette, October 23, 1852.

seventy-five pages. Judge Hunt reports many significant bits of family information and also quotes from letters and other records which have unfortunately disappeared. The biography suffers from its subjectivity and general vagueness, but it is most helpful in preserving material which would otherwise be lost.

The remainder of the information available for a study of Randell Hunt's oratory can best be described as scattered. A few letters remain in manuscript collections of other figures, such as Henry Clay, Salmon P. Chase, and Joel Poinsett, but the most valuable sources of material are newspapers and pamphlets. Hunt's importance in public affairs during his lifetime is strikingly apparent in contemporary accounts, and the excellent press of New Orleans makes a substantial contribution toward establishing the facts needed for a satisfactory study.

The lack of previous research into Hunt's life poses a dilemma. A rhetorical analysis would benefit from the labors of a separate historical study, but since Hunt's chief significance was based on his speaking, the impetus

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4Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 389.
for such a study arises more appropriately from rhetorical than from historical research. Hunt appears to be a representative example of the "local orator" whose public speaking constitutes an unrecognized contribution to his times. On this basis, a study of Hunt's speaking appears justified.

While it is imperative that the scope of a study of Hunt's oratory be held within reasonable limits, restriction of the analysis to a single campaign or a lone controversy would prove barren. Hunt had no dramatic effect on major issues at any given point; the significance of his public speaking on his times was cumulative. Throughout the period from nullification until the Civil War, Hunt forcefully articulated, in the face of growing sectional differences, a defense of southern nationalism. This was the essence of his function as a public speaker.

Two major limitations on the scope of this study can be appropriately employed. First, only those speeches which deal directly with important political issues will be treated. This removes from consideration most, although

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not all, of Hunt's legal speeches as well as a number of lectures on law at the University of Louisiana and some occasional addresses.

Second, the time period is limited in two ways. Speeches are considered only if delivered between the beginning of the controversies over nullification and the completion of the final presidential election before the Civil War. Although this thirty year span presents some problems because of its length, the period has a distinct unity because of the developing crisis over the nature of the federal union. The time span is further restricted by considering speeches separately within each of four sub-periods.

This study deals, then, with Hunt's speeches on important political issues from 1830 through 1860. The analysis of these speeches is preceded by a chapter discussing the speaker's training, delivery, and concept of rhetoric. In the discussion of Hunt's training, the importance of his family, his preparatory schooling, his college education, and his law studies on his speaking is treated. The section on his delivery includes an analysis of physical factors, voice, mode of delivery, and methods of preparation. Finally, Hunt's concept of rhetorical theory, as revealed in his lectures and speeches, is briefly described.
In the next four chapters, Hunt's speaking during four periods of his career is considered. The basis for grouping speeches together in each case is Hunt's affiliation with a major political party or cause. The periods are, first, Nullification, from 1830 to 1833; second, the period of the Whig party in Louisiana, from 1833 to 1854; third, the period of the Know Nothing party, from 1854 to 1859; and, finally, the period of the Constitutional Union party in 1860.

A final chapter is devoted to summary and appraisal in which the overall significance of Hunt's public speaking during the ante-bellum period is evaluated.

The method employed in each of the chapters of analysis of a set of speeches consists of three operations. First, the speaking situation is described. Both historical background and detailed information about specific speaking occasions involved are included. Second, the arguments are analyzed. Under the heading of logical, emotional, and ethical appeals Hunt's arguments are classified and described. The appropriateness of these arguments is discussed and the validity of the evidence and reasoning in the logical arguments is tested. Finally, the speaker's effectiveness is considered. The responses to Hunt's appeals are considered in terms of the surface response at
the time of the speeches, the immediate results after the speeches and the long range effects which can be attributed to the speaker's arguments. Effectiveness also is treated on the basis of the technical perfection of the speeches as revealed in their content. The effectiveness of the speaker is discussed, lastly, in terms of how well he was able to foresee the trends of the future.

The method of analysis described above is based so extensively on lengthy sections of *Speech Criticism* by Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird that proper credit is all but impossible to give in the body of the text. For that reason special acknowledgement is hereby expressed, especially for Thonssen and Baird's discussion in Chapters Ten through Thirteen and Chapter Seventeen.6

The sources of Hunt's speeches present special problems which should be explained. Reports of speeches exist in three forms. First, alleged verbatim texts were printed after some speeches. Next, third person summaries of some of his speeches were reported and were often presented in great detail. Finally, some reports contained combinations of summaries and quoted excerpts. The authorities for the printed reports were always either newspapers or, in the case of pamphlets, political parties.

The reliability of the reports was strengthened in almost every case by the availability of several accounts from different sources. At times as many as five newspaper descriptions were available. Political bias in reporting was occasionally evident, but this factor was mitigated by the presence of observations by opposition as well as friendly parties.

The extent to which this study depends on summaries and extracts has contributed to the omission of a consideration of the speaker's style. The absence of exact wording in every case, however, does not lessen the reliability of the sources in accurately reporting the substance of arguments. In most cases several reports were available, and in all instances the argument was found to be consistent with Hunt's political philosophy as expressed extensively in other speeches and writings.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate rather than merely to describe. Recognizing that some conclusions may have to be qualified or conditional, the aim of the study is always to attempt to discover any relationship between Hunt's speaking and his impact on the issues of his time. Historical detail is limited as severely as possible while still allowing an adequate picture of the events and trends which were pertinent to the speeches. At the same time the
object of the analysis is to avoid an excess of technical interpretation which might obscure the fact that Hunt spoke on vital issues in crucial times to concerned listeners. This study seeks to find, in short, how well he spoke and to what effect.
CHAPTER I

THE SPEAKER

Randell Hunt\(^1\) gained a reputation as an outstanding public speaker during the thirty years preceding the American Civil War. The brief comment about Hunt in a

\(^1\)Randell Hunt was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on December 31, 1806. He studied under private tutors in Charleston, attended Bishop John England's Classical and Philosophical Seminary, and was graduated from the College of South Carolina in 1825. He studied law in the office of William Lance in Charleston and was admitted to the bar of the state in 1828. He was a candidate for the state legislature in 1832 as a member of the Union and States Rights party but was not elected. In 1833 Hunt left South Carolina for New Orleans. In 1840 and again in 1842 he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives where he served until 1844. He was a member of the Whig party until its collapse. He joined the Know Nothing party and in 1855 was its candidate for the office of state Attorney General but was not elected. After the break-up of the Know Nothings, Hunt became a member of the Constitutional Union party and was an active spokesman for John Bell in the 1860 campaign. In that same year he was elected to the Louisiana Senate. During his political career Hunt was considered by both Fillmore and Lincoln for a cabinet post. His career as an educator began in 1847 when he became a professor of law in the newly organized University of Louisiana (later Tulane). Later he was appointed Dean of the law school, and in 1866 he received the first degree of Doctor of Laws awarded by the University. He became president of the University of Louisiana on the following year. When the Civil War began Hunt supported the Confederacy but was not active in politics. After the war, in 1866, he was elected to the United States Senate. None of the
biographical volume of *The South in the Building of the Nation* begins by summarily designating him as "lawyer and orator."² The significance of the entry is the fact that Randell Hunt's ability as a speaker was given special recognition. The editor applied the term orator sparingly and as a mark of distinction. A random sample of prominent Southerners reveals that Patrick Henry, William L. Yancey, and S. S. Prentiss were called orators while Judah P. Benjamin, Robert B. Rhett, and Christian Roselius were not. Recognition as an orator was also accorded Hunt in contemporary newspaper accounts. Hunt and others were often singled out as orators in contrast to many individuals who as lawyers, politicians, or editors simply engaged in public speaking.

Southern representatives were seated, however, because of the opposition of the Radical Republican majority in Congress. In the latter part of his life Hunt was concerned primarily with his law practice. Always a prominent attorney, he was engaged in some of the most important cases of the time. For example, his argument was accepted over that of John Campbell by the State Supreme Court in the Slaughter House Case. He was made Dean Emeritus of the law school in 1884, he retired as a professor in 1888, and he died on March 22, 1892.

In the eyes of his contemporaries, then, Randell Hunt had an identity and reputation as an orator which was distinct from, although not unrelated to, his identity as a lawyer, an educator and a politician. This chapter will focus on those aspects of his education, his speech delivery, and his concept of oratory which contributed significantly in making Randell Hunt outstanding as a speaker.

I. EARLY TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE IN SPEAKING

Training in public speaking was considered a necessary part of the education of a young ante-bellum South Carolina gentleman. Indispensable in the popular profession of law, speaking ability was also a vital prerequisite for the extensive political activity in which the educated class engaged. Public speaking was the primary means of influencing public opinion, although printed media such as newspapers and pamphlets were in use to some degree in mass communication. The need for the ability to speak, then, was clear. As one of Hunt's contemporaries explained, "Whatever the test in other lands, here a man must speak and speak well if he expects to acquire and maintain a permanent influence in society."  

wrote Rosser H. Taylor in reference to this period, "prized men of elegant address, men facile in conversation."#4

Hunt's education was divided into several stages following a pattern which was typical for the sons of the planter class of the time.5 He began his studies at home with a tutor, then attended a local academy, went on to the state college, and, finally, studied law in the office of an established attorney. Each contributed to Hunt's training as a speaker.

Influences of Early Family Life

The influence which combined to make Randell Hunt a prominent orator were many and diverse, and their effects cannot always be traced as directly and easily as a critic might wish. Numerous aspects of Hunt's speaking, for example, must be explained partly in terms of the influences of his early family life.

Unquestionably the political and economic ideas which Hunt expounded as a speaker had their roots deep in the

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aristocratic background of his childhood. His father, Thomas Hunt, who emigrated to Charleston from Nassau at the age of twenty-one, studied law and soon was established in the social and economic life of the city. Randell's mother, Louisa Gaillard, was a member of a prominent Charleston family. One of her brothers was a United States Senator for many years and the other was a judge. The Gaillard family was of old Huguenot stock and had originally settled in the city in 1687.6

The social and economic standing of the Hunt family is indicated by the fact that, in addition to a house in Charleston, they owned a summer cottage on the seashore and two plantation homes on rivers outside the city. They followed "the peculiar fashion of Charlestonians of that day of spending the winters on their plantations and the summers in the city or on the beach of Sullivan's Island."7 Some of the most important men of the city, "Mr. Rutledge, Mr. Legare, Mr. Huger, Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Horry, Mr. Pringle, Mr. Pickney, Mr. Gaillard... Mr. Issard [sic]" were frequently entertained in the city house at 283 Meeting Street.8

8Ibid., p. 6.
Hunt's ideas as a speaker were always to reflect the interests of the wealthy class to which he belonged. In addition to ideas, Hunt also acquired certain personal traits from Charleston society. Some critics of his speaking were later to consider him "aristocratic." The origins of this impression are found in the suggestion by a member of the Hunt family that as a result of their exposure to Charleston social life, "in manners and refinement they [the young Hunts of Randell's generations] were stamped as distinctly aristocratic Charlestonians."

No records remain of the exact nature of the formal instruction which Randell Hunt received at home. Hunt's biographer, a nephew, reported that his pre-academy days "were passed under the tuition of the best instructors in the city. . . ." It is probable that Hunt was forming the habits of mental discipline and study which characterized him as a student and a speaker. It should be pointed out, however, that the private teachers of the time were, with some exceptions, less capable than those found in the academies and colleges, and led "as a rule, thriftless and itinerant lives."

9Ibid.
11Taylor, op. cit., p. 113.
Reading habits naturally have a direct bearing on a speaker's invention, and the influence of Hunt's family life is clear in this regard. The entire family read avidly both in the classics and in modern works. It was said of Randell that, as a boy,

. . . he devoured every book within his reach, and remembered what he read. . . . He would tramp for miles and miles while looking for game, but when he rested it was his invariable habit to take from his pocket a book and intently read it.\(^\text{12}\)

Hunt continued to read extensively throughout his life. His speeches were frequently laced with literary allusions and quotations.

Hunt's speeches invariably showed evidence of considerable research. No doubt one of his earliest incentives to scholarship came from his father who was actively interested in Randell's education. In July of 1821, Thomas Hunt wrote to a professor at the state college in Columbia to request "a copy of the requisites \(\text{sic}\) and such rules as you may deem essential for the information of a young man who wishes to enter the Junior class."\(^\text{13}\) He decided to send Randell to Bishop England's Seminary for his college

\(^{12}\)William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. viii.

\(^{13}\)Manuscript letter of July 3, 1821, from Thomas Hunt to the Reverend Mr. Wallace in the Charleston Diocesan Archives labeled Item 2D6.
preparation. Interest in Randell's progress is shown by his father's acceptance of the Seminary's invitation to aid in the final Examination... and be at liberty to examine the class in any sections of its business in the way... best calculated to test its progress."\(^\text{14}\)

One incident involving Randell Hunt's father was almost certainly influential in determining Randell's later role as an orator for vested economic interests. Toward the end of Thomas Hunt's life he signed a note for a friend who defaulted, with the result that Hunt lost most of his property.\(^\text{15}\) Randell Hunt was no doubt already determined on a policy of economic expansion coupled with protection for established interest, but he spoke of his father's plight with great feeling:

> Who has not seen a good man struggling with the storms of fate?... I have beheld him as the dark waters of misfortune broke around him and threatened to overwhelm him in irretrievable ruin... and just when the waters began to subside and a speck of azure was seen in the cloudy sky... a merciless wretch gifted by the Law with a giant's strength and tyrant's power, converts his hopes into despair, and depriving him of the means of safety, leaves him to perish.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^\text{14}\)Charleston Courier. October 30, 1823.

\(^\text{15}\)Thomas Hunt, op. cit., p. 13.

\(^\text{16}\)Charleston Courier. September 25, 1832. Quoted from an essay on imprisonment for debt.
During most of his formative years, however, Randell Hunt enjoyed comfortable economic circumstances. His family had the leisure time to read widely and thus as a young boy Hunt was exposed to the search for ideas in books which he continued as a speaker. His family's wealth also allowed Hunt to begin his education with a private tutor and to form early habits of study. In a more general way, his ideas on the economic positions which he was to advocate as an orator were strongly influenced by his social surroundings and the financial success and reverses of his father.

No mention has been made thus far of the effect of slavery on Hunt's ideas. As a political speaker, Hunt accepted slavery as part of the Southern economic system and had little to say about it. It seems almost certain that in his formative years Hunt was exposed to none of the harsher aspects of slavery. His family spent only a little time on their plantations, and their own slaves appear to have been well treated. One of Randell's sisters recalled that when he left the plantation for the city to attend Bishop England's Seminary in April of 1822, he travelled in a boat rowed by "six stalwart negroes" who,
impressed by Hunt's coming adventure, sang as they went, "Massa Randell is going to a big man's school. . . ."17

Bishop England's Seminary

At Bishop John England's Catholic Seminary the emphasis on study which was to be significant in Hunt's speaking career was continued. England, the first Bishop of Charleston, declared that his purpose in forming the school was "to create for the South a literary and classical institution of a higher grade than any which it has yet possessed."18 He opened the Philosophical and Classical Seminary of Charleston with a staff of seven in January, 1822, and by April, drawing on both Catholics and Protestants,19 he "had enrolled thirty scholars from the best families of Charleston."20

Bishop England's stress on high scholarship is revealed by his disappointment in the ability of some of

17William Henry Hunt, _op. cit._, p. vii.


19Ibid., p. 28.

his early teachers.\textsuperscript{21} He also regretted that he found himself forced to teach mathematics, a subject in which he admitted his "knowledge was never extraordinary."\textsuperscript{22} The educational achievements of the school were nevertheless outstanding. England's high standards were recognized by the president of the state college who congratulated him for the excellent job he did in preparing students for college work.\textsuperscript{23} Hugh Swinton Legare, editor of the \textit{Southern Review}, recognized the role of the "lower schools" in improving scholarship and wrote "it is nothing but justice to state that these improvements received their first impulse from the Rt. Rev. Bishop England."\textsuperscript{24}

In addition to the stress on scholarship, several other effects on Hunt as a speaker emerge from a study of his attendance at Bishop England's Seminary. Perhaps most noteworthy was the broad liberal education offered at the school which in part supplied Hunt with the vast range of ideas which he later expressed in his speeches. To illustrate, the Seminary advertised the following offerings and tuition:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21}Ibid., pp. 486-87.
\item \textsuperscript{22}O'Brien, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{23}Guilday, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 497.
\item \textsuperscript{24}O'Brien, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 29.
\end{itemize}
For the English course, 5 dolls. entrance, and 12 dolls. per quarter. For the Belles Lettres, Classics, Mathematics and Philosophical course, or any part thereof, 5 dolls. entrance, and 20 dolls. per quarter. 25

Facilities were made available at the Seminary for any student who wished to hire his own teachers in French, Spanish, and drawing.

Social influences, which had been important in Hunt’s family life, were not entirely absent at the school. Each student was required to sign a pledge "to observe the rules of the Seminary and to conduct himself therein in a gentlemanlike way." 26

Within the curriculum, one subject was of particular importance in relation to Hunt’s training as a speaker. A sound education in the classics was significant in his rhetorical training for two reasons. First, it gave Hunt direct access to the principles of rhetoric in classical writing, and, second, it supplied him with additional historical and literary materials which he employed in his speeches. Hugh Legare, who was a classical scholar of note, argued effectively that Greek and Roman works should have a prominent role in the school system. This

25 Charleston Courier, January 8, 1822. The Seminary records have been destroyed by fire. Some details are to be found only in newspapers of the period.

26 Ibid.
point of view was so commonly accepted that "no South Carolina gentleman of parts considered his intellectual armory complete unless stored with the weapons of ancient oratory and mythology." 27

In June of 1823 the curriculum of the Seminary was supplemented by a series of twenty lectures on logic delivered in the evenings. The series was free for those pupils "whose mental progress would render their attendance useful" and was available to the general public for a fee of seven dollars. 28 There is no question that Hunt later received considerable training in logic at college, but is quite likely that because of his high standing in his class he also attended these lectures. At any rate his knowledge of logic was extensive. He employed evidence and reasoning effectively in his speeches and occasionally in debate revealed his understanding of the formal rules on the subject.

Hunt's speech training was probably influenced also by example and by practical experience. First there was the example set by Bishop England. No record remains of Hunt's impressions of England's oratory although as a


28Charleston Courier, June 9, 1823.
student he heard the Bishop speak on many occasions, and at
least he was exposed to an excellent model. Well
known as a speaker, England was once elected as orator of
the Literary and Philosophical Society in Charleston, and
in 1821 he became the first Catholic priest in history to
be invited to speak to Congress.\textsuperscript{29} He was also active as
a speaker in the course of his duties in the city and
surrounding area.

Further, oral performance by students was stressed.
In 1823, the Seminary advertised that in St. Finnbar's
Church on the afternoon of the Fourth of July, "the young
gentlemen of this Establishment will celebrate the
Anniversary of American Independence." The Declaration
of Independence and other selected pieces were to be
presented by the students. Randell Hunt, standing first
in his class, was to give the featured oration.\textsuperscript{30}

Following the custom of the day, final examinations
were also both public and oral. When Hunt graduated from
the seminary in November of 1823, the examinations lasted
for five days and were conducted by the faculty assisted

\textsuperscript{29}S. G. Messmer (ed.) \textit{The Works of John England}
(Cleveland: A. H. Clark, 1908), VI, 1, 336.

\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Charleston Courier}, July 3, 1823.
by a committee of townspeople. Premiums and certificates were granted to the pupils in a number of subjects including declamation.\textsuperscript{31}

The teachers at the school had been impressed with the hard work and great love of reading which Randell Hunt demonstrated as a student.\textsuperscript{32} They ranked him at the head of his class and cited him as being distinguished in "Homer, Terence, Metre of Odes of Horace, Geometry, Trigonometry and excellent conduct."\textsuperscript{33}

In summary, Bishop England's Seminary stressed scholarship and offered a broad liberal education with emphasis on the classics. These aspects of Hunt's education affected his speech training primarily in terms of invention. He was exposed to a great range of ideas and encouraged to study. Further, he probably gained specific skills in formal logic. He also received practical experience in speaking.

\textbf{South Carolina College}

When Randell Hunt began to attend classes at South Carolina College in December, 1823, he was exposed to new

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., November 23, 24, 1823.

\textsuperscript{32}William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. viii.

\textsuperscript{33}Charleston Courier, November 24, 1823.
subjects although his training in the classics and his practical experience in speaking were continued. The college was under the direction of Dr. Thomas Cooper, a dogmatic and controversial figure, who raised the standards of the school to the highest level in its history. Hunt declared that he found it necessary to spend many hours of hard work on his studies.34

One of Cooper's earliest acts as president had been to make the entrance requirements of the college more difficult. Significant among the stricter requirements was increased stress on the classical languages. When Randell Hunt applied for admission to the junior class, the college required demonstrated ability in the translation of Greek and Latin.

The junior and senior classes studied Tacitus, Cicero, Xenophon, and Homer. Cicero's De Oratore was among the Latin works to be read. The students were also required to recite twice a week alternately in Latin and Greek,35 and, in addition to his regular duties as president, Dr. Cooper demanded written compositions from the

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35 Hollis, op. cit., pp. 31, 46, 48, 82.
senior class every other week alternately in English and Latin. Randell Hunt's familiarity with Cicero's rhetorical concepts was later demonstrated in his speeches, and many of the classical allusions which he used can no doubt be traced to his extensive study of the classics in college.

At college Hunt continued on a grander scale the course of study which was vital in filling his intellectual reservoir as a speaker. The college had in 1823 through 1825 a faculty of six professors whose scholarship in their respective fields was widely recognized. Each professor had the "chair" or department listed below:

- Thomas Cooper: Chemistry, Political Economy, Belles Lettres
- Thomas Park: Languages
- Robert Henry: Moral Philosophy, Metaphysics, Logic
- James Wallace: Mathematics
- Lardner Vanuxem: Geology and Mineralogy
- Henry Nott: Elements of Criticism, Philosophy of Languages (Belles Lettres)

36 Minutes of the Board of Trustees, South Carolina College, December 1, 1823.

37 In 1824 Cooper taught Belles Lettres for the last time.

38 Professor Nott taught only during and after the 1825 term.
There was also a tutor for languages and one for mathematics. 39

From the above departments the regular classes in the junior year, in addition to languages, included logic, moral philosophy, and mathematics. In the senior year these courses were replaced by metaphysics, chemistry, geology and mineralogy, and political economy. 40

Several of Hunt's courses were of particular importance in his speech training. Under Professor Henry, who was reportedly the "first man to give logic its proper place in South Carolina College," Hunt was taught the rules of syllogistic and inductive reasoning which he later employed in debate. Hunt was also exposed in Henry's classes to controversial and challenging ideas. Henry presented the writings of numerous philosophers, including Aristotle and Bacon, and encouraged his classes not to


40 Green, op. cit., pp. 180-84.
accept ideas without analysis. From Henry, then, Hunt learned logic and analysis which he could later apply to the preparation and delivery of his speeches.

Few public issues in Hunt's career could be completely separated from economic considerations. Hunt later declared with some pride that he had studied economics extensively. In his training in Dr. Cooper's political economy class, MALTHUS'S Conversations on Political Economy was used as a textbook. Hunt's learning was further increased by additional recommended readings in the works of Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, and John Stuart Mill. Later Cooper's lectures for the course were published as a textbook in a field that was just beginning to be taught in American colleges.

Some of the ideas which Cooper advocated were important in themselves because of political positions which Hunt


42New Orleans Bee, March 23, 1843. The remark was made in a legislative debate over a state banking bill. "Mr. Hunt observed that political economy, banking and finance were subjects which the well educated youth of the country were invariably taught, and it had constituted no inconsiderable portion of the instruction bestowed on him."

later took. When Hunt studied under him, Dr. Cooper opposed the legality of both the United States Bank and the tariff.⁴⁴ Hunt readily granted the right of Congress to act in both these areas, and he supported these measures throughout most of his career.

One subject which brought Hunt into conflict with his professor soon after his graduation was the relationship of the state to the national government. Cooper became known as the "schoolmaster of states' rights" and was credited for phrasing the statement, "It is time to calculate the value of the Union."⁴⁵ The effect that he had on his students is cited by one historian of the college:

The states' rights principles with which Thomas Cooper indoctrinated the minds of his charges were of lasting effect. It was largely from Cooper, rather than Calhoun, Hayne, or McDuffie, that young Langdon Cheves and a host of other youthful Carolinians derived their doctrines. . . . There were, of course, occasional unionists such as William Aiken and Randell Hunt, who left the college as nationalists in spite of Cooper, but they became increasingly rare. . . .⁴⁶

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⁴⁵Hollis, op. cit., p. 95; Green, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴⁶Hollis, op. cit., p. 266.
Dr. Cooper also introduced a number of ideas about rhetoric into his lectures on other subjects. Some of these ideas Hunt rejected, and some he accepted in part. For example, Hunt did not agree with Cooper's doubts about the efficacy and significance of public speaking as a social force. Cooper argued that,

"... in the infancy and the ignorance of all communities the great objects of intellects in peace are poetry and oratory; as nations advance in knowledge, science gains a rightful ascendancy." 47

In the same vein of depreciation Cooper insisted in one of his lectures that orators "made mankind the worse," and maintained that they were of benefit in only a very few instances, "and even these few, it would be difficult to enumerate and substantiate." 48

Cooper criticized the speaking of Pitt and Fox on the subject of British economic policy because they were "profoundly ignorant of the true interests of their country. ..." He went on to say,

"It is not eloquence that can teach a legislator, or enable him to inform others. ... In that country and in this, eloquence has long usurped the place of knowledge." 49

47 Malone, op. cit., p. 255.
48 Cooper, op. cit., p. 182.
49 Ibid., p. 21.
The exact extent of Cooper's influence on Randell Hunt as a speaker cannot be determined. Hunt's later speeches and writings make it clear that he accepted little of Cooper's philosophy. The only major point on which the two men agreed was their common objection to "mere eloquence without matter," and even on this point, Cooper cannot definitely be established as a major influence in forming Hunt's belief.

Hunt, however, did not find eloquence and knowledge to be incompatible. He did not believe as Cooper did that the teaching of speech was necessarily "calculated to make mannerists, declaimers, and orators without ideas." Hunt's rejection of this position is revealed in his own efforts to obtain speech training and in his advice to his law student in Louisiana to equip themselves with both information and speaking ability.

Cooper's ideas on rhetoric also affected the practical speech training which Hunt received. Because of Cooper's attitude, public speaking was not taught at the college. The Board of Trustees disagreed with him strongly on this


51 Minutes of the Board, op. cit., December 8, 1823.
point and passed a resolution demanding exercises in elocution. Cooper replied,

As to elocution--From the time of my coming to this institution to the present time, no such exercises have been exacted from the students... I never heard of them, as a necessary part of our collegiate course.  

The president admitted the right of the board to establish the exercises, but he managed to evade the question and never added elocution to the curriculum although the board submitted an elaborate plan for conducting declamations and forensic disputes.

As a result, Hunt and his classmates received their practical speech training in the halls of the college debating societies.

The college provided two anvils upon which prospective orators were hammered into shape. Innumerable fluent tongues were cultivated, and many a prominent career in state and national politics had its origins within the walls of those noteworthy organizations, the Clariosophic and Euphradian Societies.

Such organizations were thriving throughout the nation in institutions of higher learning as "substitutes for inadequate contemporary curricula" and even in some

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52 Ibid., December 1, 1823.

53 Hollis, op. cit., p. 230.
cases as "by far the most important part of the educational system."\textsuperscript{54}

In South Carolina College choice of membership was traditionally based on the district in which the student lived. Charleston students ordinarily joined the Clariosophic Society, and Randell Hunt was initiated into that group on December 6, 1823.\textsuperscript{55}

The societies met weekly on Saturdays unless additional sessions were called for some special purpose. Members could be fined for missing a meeting, and attendance was high. The records indicate that Randell Hunt was present at all but six meetings during his stay at college.\textsuperscript{56}

The meetings were long, and they were filled with activity. The Clariosophic meetings began with a roll call which was followed by the speech of the "first orator." Two or perhaps three debates were held next, and then a "second orator" concluded the prepared speaking events. Criticism by the members followed most of the speaking events.


\textsuperscript{55}Clariosophic Society Record of Members, 1806-1892, p. 126.

\textsuperscript{56}Minutes of the Clariosophic Society of the South Carolina College, 1823-1825.
events, and routine business occupied the remainder of the
time in the meetings. On occasion, anniversary orations,
senior valedictory orations, presidential inaugural
addresses, and monthly orations were included in the
speaking portion of the program. Randell Hunt participated
at least once in every kind of speaking event which the
society sponsored.

Some members failed to prepare to speak and conse­
quently were fined. The records of the treasurer show
that Randell Hunt paid fines for a variety of offenses
including speaking without rising and speaking out of
order, but he never failed to present a scheduled speech
or debate.57

Formal debate occupied much of the society's time,
and Hunt was active as a debater. The propositions were
always phrased as questions. Sometimes alternatives
were suggested with the second choice being called the
"negative." A team of two men spoke on each side of the
question, and the members rendered decisions apparently
on the merits of the question. The debates in which Hunt
took part, the sides he supported, and the results are
below:

57Ibid.
Should the judges have the privilege of interpreting the law? (Affirmative, won)

Ought our president's salary to be increased? (Negative, won)

Is a private or public education preferable? (Negative, won)

Does learning promote the progress of Christianity? (Negative, lost)

Ought duelling to be tolerated? (Affirmative, lost)

Should beauty and personal attainments have greater influence in the choice of a wife than riches? (Affirmative, won)

Is a man more happy in a civilized or savage state? (Affirmative, won)\textsuperscript{58}

The regular officers of the Clariosophic Society were elected for only one-quarter of the term in order to give more members an opportunity to serve. The first position which Hunt held was that of monthly orator. Later he was elected as the eighty-first president and the seventy-seventh critic of the Clariosophics. He also was elected seventeenth anniversary orator, a position which "came to be one of the highest honors the organizations could bestow" and one which was eagerly contested for in keen competition.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{59}Hollis, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 234.
In addition to being a frequent participant in the formal speaking and debating programs of the Clariosophic Society, Randell Hunt gained further experience in speaking through his activity during the business sessions of the group. He held several appointive chairmanships and engaged often in debate on society policy. He was a key figure in a prolonged and heated investigation in the case of a student who withdrew from Clariosophic membership to join the rival Euphradian Society. As chairman of the committee on the subject, he gathered testimony and presented his findings in society meetings.

An election by the society on February 14, 1824, is particularly interesting in view of Hunt's later political stand. On that date John C. Calhoun was chosen as an honorary member. There is no indication of opposition in the minutes of the meeting.

No critical comment relative to any of Hunt's speeches is recorded in the minutes. It appears, however, that he had already formed the habit of speaking extemporaneously. A resolution was passed appointing a committee to obtain a copy of one of his orations which had been delivered before the group. The committee later reported that Mr. Hunt had not complied with their request,
and the reason seems to have been that the speech had not been written out. 60

The emphasis in the society was clearly on public speaking during the period of Hunt's membership. Only in a limited sense was the Clariosophic Society a social organization, and the literary emphasis which was typical in such groups did not begin until the 1830's. 61 Practically the entire student body was enrolled in one or the other of the organizations, and an early student who later became a professor and president of the college said of the societies:

In estimating the facilities which are afforded here for a liberal education, they are too important to be overlooked. The brotherly spirit in which they originated has never been forgotten, and they present the high example of a noble and generous rivalry. There can be no doubt that they have accomplished a vast amount of good; and it has been an unmixed good. They have stimulated the mental energies in a certain direction far more than is done in the collegiate course of instruction; and that without interfering in any way with the proper demands made upon the students by the Faculty. It is, perhaps, not saying too much to add, that in our educational system they are the nursery of eloquence. . . . 62

60 Minutes of the Clariosophic Society, February 5, 12, 1825.

61 Hollis, op. cit., p. 252.

Thirty-two seniors graduated with Hunt in 1825. They were described as the most brilliant class to matriculate during Thomas Cooper's term as president:

From this array of talent William Aiken rose to become governor and United States representative. James Henry Hammond became governor, United States Senator, and expounder of two controversial theories: "cotton is king," and the "mud sill" thesis. Thomas N. Dawkins and Thomas J. Withers ascended to the bench of the State, Stephen Elliott became Episcopal Bishop of Georgia, and Randell Hunt moved out to Louisiana where he became one of the outstanding lawyers in the nation.63

At the graduation exercise in December Hunt was Salutatorian, which by action of the Board had been made the first honor, not the second.64 In explaining the basis of selection, Dr. Cooper wrote to Thomas Hunt that rather than awarding the highest honor on the basis of average grades, it had been determined to report the students' standing and scholarship in each department separately. As a result, Randell Hunt was found to be in first place in every one of his studies.65

Thus for the second time Randell Hunt graduated at the head of his class. He had developed habits of

63 Hollis, op. cit., p. 95.
64 Green, op. cit., p. 432.
scholarship which were to be significant in his future actions as a lawyer, a politician, and an educator.

As a student of the classics and history, his reading had made him conspicuous for his knowledge and cultivation. His memory had become a prodigious one, nor was he without success already as a public speaker; and his professors sent him back to Charleston to do honor to his Alma Mater in a career predicted to be full of promise.66

Law Student and Young Lawyer

Young men who wanted to be admitted to the bar of South Carolina during the 1820's were expected to graduate from college and then spend three years reading law in the office of an established attorney. After his graduation, Randell Hunt entered the law office of William Lance of Charleston. Lance was an outstanding attorney of recognized ability. In 1812, at the age of twenty-one, he had served in the state legislature, and he was known as a scholar and public speaker.67 He was also a close friend of the Hunt and Gaillaird families and was selected to deliver the eulogy upon the death of Randell Hunt's uncle, Theodore Gaillard.68

66Ibid.


William Lance no doubt exercised some influence upon the political ideas which Randell Hunt was later to express as a political orator. Lance was a frequent writer of political essays and an active politician in the Union cause. He and Hunt participated together in political affairs until the opponents of Unionism gained firm control of South Carolina and the two were forced to leave the state. Since Hunt's father was also of Unionist political sentiments, the effect of William Lance's opinions was primarily to supplement established influences.

Another effect of William Lance on Hunt, which also may be considered as a continuation of past experiences, was his interest in classical scholarship. For example, Lance was the author of a biography of Washington, written in Latin, which was published in Charleston in 1834. Thus the influence of the study of the Greeks and Romans which was found both in Bishop England's Seminary and at South Carolina College was continued. Many of Hunt's speeches and essays contain many quotations in Latin and numerous references to specific instances of classical history, and he maintained his interest in the classics throughout his life.

Hunt was admitted to the bar in 1828. He soon had a reputation as a promising young lawyer.
One additional aspect of his life after his admission to the bar deserves consideration as contributing to his general education and furthering his experience as a speaker. He became a member of the highly respected Literary and Philosophical Society of Charleston. This organization was one of the most important of several clubs in the city "at which current topics were discussed, essays were read, and occasionally subjects of special interest were debated." 69

From May until October the Society held meetings every two weeks. Leading members of the local political world were members, and notable visitors to Charleston were occasionally invited to read papers. The meetings were ordinarily held at the home of the person selected to present an essay, and, in addition to Hunt, such well known figures as Hugh Legare and Joel Poinsett read papers before the group. Hunt's "Essay on Debt" was one of the few presentations which was discussed in the Charleston Courier. 70 It was quoted at length by the editor who urged the club to have it published in full.


70Charleston Courier, September 25, 1832.
In summary, Hunt's education and training had helped
to prepare him for successful public speaking. Some of
his training furnished part of the subject matter of his
speeches, some helped him develop his ability to reason
and analyze, and some gave him practical experience in
speaking and debating. His education was the best avail-
able in the state, and in every phase of his training Hunt
demonstrated superior ability as a student.

II. DELIVERY

Although Hunt's speeches received considerable public
attention, criticism and comment regarding his speaking
rarely touched on the subject of delivery. A typical
newspaper article which discussed Hunt "as a speaker"
enumerated as essential considerations (1) his knowledge
of his subject, (2) his style, (3) his argument, and
(4) his emotional appeal.71 Style and argument were by
far the most commonly mentioned features of Hunt's oratory,
and thus attention was largely focused on the content of
his speeches rather than on the method in which they were
delivered.

Brief biographical "sketches" of Hunt give slightly
more information about his delivery than do newspaper

71 *Natchez Weekly Courier*, September 18, 1855.
reports, but the total amount of information is still highly limited. The available descriptions, however, are generally consistent, and conclusions can be drawn about Hunt's delivery in the following areas: (1) physical factors, (2) voice, (3) mode of delivery, and (4) speech preparation.

**Physical Factors**

Descriptions of Hunt reveal information about his personal appearance, his dress, and the effect of frequent illness on his speaking.

Photographic evidence cannot be used to assist in determining the details of Randell Hunt's personal appearance because he refused his family's repeated requests to have his picture taken.72 Only scattered comments remain to describe him. According to a relative, "He was a portly, stout man of medium height, with a full dark beard, in figure like Dr. Johnston, and in face resembled the pictures of Socrates."73 Another member of the Hunt family recalled:

> With a benevolent and strong face, he was a striking looking man. He wore a full beard, had a large mouth, with a deep, broad forehead, rather large nose, and partially bald head.74

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In his speaking Hunt derived no unusual advantage from his personal appearance although his listeners seem to have agreed that his looks were impressive. Even an unfriendly critic found that "his countenance is frank and open," and conceded that "without being handsome, it is yet prepossessing." A friendly observer was more impressed and decided that Hunt was "leonine in appearance." A law student who had eagerly looked forward to hearing Hunt speak concluded in a letter home that "he is a fine looking man."

Descriptions employing the words "stately" and "dignified" abound in newspaper reports, and, while Hunt's appearance was not especially remarkable, his listeners in general seem to have been at least mildly impressed.

Hunt's choice of clothing undoubtedly added to the impression of dignity and stateliness which his audiences received. Newspapers seldom took notice of such details,

75 John Smith Whitaker, Sketches of Life and Character in Louisiana, the portraits selected principally from the Bench and Bar (New Orleans: Ferguson and Crosby, 1847), p. 28.


77 Letter from E. John Ellis to his mother, November 16, 1860.
but on one occasion when Hunt appeared for a speech
"dressed in a plain black suit, with white gloves," an
editor added in parentheses, "Randell is very careful in
his dress."78

A relative reported that Hunt and his brothers
avoided the "provincial eccentricities" of Southern dress
and that they
did not effect long hair and great drooping
moustaches or wear slouch hats, shoestring cravats,
low-cut waistcoats and long black coats. They
dressed like men of the world.79

Hunt's attention to his clothes was in keeping with
his position as a leading member of New Orleans social and
political circles.

For better or for worse, ante-bellum Louisiana
was ruled by gentlemen, and... Benjamin, Kenner,
and Hunt were all gentlemen--and all members... of the exclusive Boston Club. Men who could mix
a good drink or play a good hand of cards, as well
as direct the political and commercial destinies
of the state, the members included the so-called
"big four"--Slidell, Benjamin, Soule, and Randall
Hunt--who largely dominated Louisiana
politics during that decade.80

Hunt's delivery was sometimes affected by illness.
He was frequently attacked by a recurring malady, perhaps

78 New Orleans Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
80 Meade, op. cit., p. 82.
malaria, which almost invariably was described by the newspapers as "indisposition" or "severe indisposition." Hunt's state of health during a siege of illness was always apparent to his listeners especially in the earlier parts of his speeches. On one campaign tour a listener noted that he "was not only laboring under a cold, but was actually indisposed." The listener hastened to add, "Nevertheless, he was still Randall [sic] Hunt in his intellectual majesty." 81

Hunt's health often delayed legislative and judicial proceedings but only rarely resulted in the cancellation of political speeches. 82 Although he lived until 1892, he was described at the end of the Civil War as a man "in the prime of life though his constitution seems somewhat broken and his nervousness is extreme." 83

In summary, a study of physical factors in Hunt's speaking reveals that he was a speaker of impressive appearance and careful dress who was sometimes visibly affected by illness.

81 New Orleans Daily Crescent, October 24, 1855.
82 New Orleans Bee, October 12, 1840, March 13, 1843.
83 Whitelaw Reid, After the War: A Southern Tour, May 1, 1865, to May 1, 1866 (New York: More, Wilstach, and Baldwin, 1866), p. 263.
Voice

Many of the meetings which Hunt addressed were held in the open and only an orator with excellent vocal quality could expect to be heard and understood. Available reports of Hunt’s voice contain information about his volume, rate, pitch, and quality.

While completely reliable accounts are not always accessible in determining the size of various crowds which Hunt addressed, many of his audiences were unquestionably made up of several thousand persons. The following description of a speech, which was allegedly given before a crowd of ten thousand, illustrates Hunt’s vocal power:

His form seemed to dilate, as his clarion voice rang forth in accents that were audible even to those who occupied the outskirts of the vast throng.84

According to his nephew, Hunt’s voice was soft in conversation but in public speaking it was “of tremendous power.”85 Hunt’s voice maintained its power even during the hectic campaign of 1860 in which the heavy demands on speakers were too great for many of them. The only available accounts which contain any mention of Hunt having difficulty in being heard are found in two isolated

84 *New Orleans Bee*, October 17, 1848.

instances. During one speech a parade arrived at the speaker's stand just as he began to talk, and in the other Hunt could not be heard clearly after "the rostrum became so crowded that a portion of the railing gave way, and the orator was obliged to descend to the ground in order to escape being crushed to death."  

Critics agree that Hunt's rate of speaking was slow although it was somewhat more rapid in a public speech than in conversation. One report states,

In conversation Mr. Hunt speaks slowly and with a measured stress on every word, as though in search of the choicest terms of the king's English. It is the same when speaking in public until he becomes fully engaged, and then his language flows with ease.  

Hunt's nephew also noted his slow speech, especially in conversation, and still another critic in two instances cited Hunt's "slowness of speech" in public. The same implication can be drawn from the opinion of a law

86 New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 2, 1849.

87 Ibid., August 8, 1848, New Orleans Daily Crescent, August 8, 1848.

88 Whitaker, op. cit., p. 28.

89 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. lxxv.

student who commented, "it appears to cost him a great effort to talk." 91

At least one critic found that Hunt's rate of speaking lacked variety. Hunt would be a better orator, the critic concluded, "if he did not hold continually to the monotonous diapason of a crooning witch." 92 Other observations of Hunt's speaking, particularly in debate, suggest that variety was not always absent in his delivery. In fact another critic, generalizing about Hunt's speaking as a whole, found that he "speaks with great fluency and displays a confidence both of assertion and tone which seldom fails to take his hearers' judgement captive." 93

Hunt apparently spoke in public at an average or lower than average pitch. One listener stated that Hunt possessed "great depth of voice," 94 and even his detractors reported no objections to his speech in this regard.

Comments about Hunt's vocal quality were highly subjective. His nephew found Hunt's voice "stern" and

91 Letter from E. John Ellis, op. cit.
92 Colomb, op. cit., p. 226.
93 Whitaker, op. cit., p. 28.
"sonorous." A law student detected a nasal quality. Other reports employed general adjectives such as "powerful" and "eloquent." The specific attributes of vocal quality were generally lost in broad terms of praise which permit only the conclusion that Hunt's vocal quality was apparently satisfactory.

No definite information is available about Hunt's pronunciation. His sisters reportedly made a conscious effort to preserve their characteristic Charlestonian dialect, but, although he might have retained some of his Carolina accent, Hunt's pronunciation elicited no public comment. Information is also missing to describe his articulation. Since his speeches were generally heard with no difficulty, this aspect of his speech may be assumed to have been at least satisfactory.

In conclusion, the available evidence suggests that Hunt spoke with adequate volume and at a rather slow rate. His voice was probably at a low to medium pitch and of generally pleasant quality. No direct information remains to permit conclusions about his pronunciation and articulation although no objectionable features were noted.

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95 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., lxxv.
96 Letter from E. John Ellis to his mother.
Mode of Delivery

Almost without exception Hunt's speeches were delivered extemporaneously. Only his law lectures were written out in detail, and even in these instances Hunt was described as "often throwing aside his lecture-book" when speaking before his classes.97

Evidence of extemporaneous delivery can be seen in the following excerpt from a letter written in 1852. In answering a question about one of the subjects he had discussed in a campaign speech, Hunt wrote,

I am unable, gentlemen, to recollect exactly the expressions used by me in the speech to which you refer, but I remember perfectly the substance and purport of my remarks.98

In another campaign he was described as appearing ready to speak "with his arms full of books and documents."99 An opposition newspaper made the following remark which reveals another instance of extemporaneous delivery:

It is due to Mr. Hunt to say that he lost his entire notes in coming from New Orleans to this place; and that, therefore, he spoke at considerable disadvantage; having to use mostly for his facts such campaign statements as are floating about in the Know Nothing papers.100

97William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. lxii.
98New Orleans Bee, October 6, 1852.
99New Orleans Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
100Baton Rouge Daily Advocate, September 10, 1855.
Reports of Hunt's speeches contain frequent references to his reading from many sources in the course of his delivery, but these sources generally contained statistics, exact quotations, or other types of evidence, and the speeches taken as a whole were presented extemporaneously.

Two features of Hunt's extemporaneous delivery deserve special mention. First he showed considerable ability to reply quickly in debate, and second, his delivery was characterized by great enthusiasm.

Hunt's ability to adapt is seen, for example, in his speech condemning fraudulent voting of a large number of people in Plaquemine parish. During Hunt's speech it was reported that

Mr. Wadsworth rose and disclaimed any participation of his parish in the act.

This was the point, continued Mr. Hunt. These 1,700 persons were not bona fide voters of Plaquemine, but had come from the city of New Orleans.  

Near the end of the Constitutional Convention of 1852, in which Hunt played a leading role, a reporter for the Daily Delta praised Hunt for the "signal ability" he had shown with his frequent "prompt rejoinders" in debate. The reporter continued:

101 New Orleans Bee, January 27, 1844.
Several of his unpremeditated short speeches, both yesterday and today were admirable specimens of both special pleading and eloquence—employing the former in a complimentary sense... 102

Enthusiasm was a noticable characteristic of Hunt's delivery. When compared as a speaker with Judah P. Benjamin, Hunt was said to be "more excited, more passionate, more energetic." 103 These characteristics seemed to emerge much more readily when he was engaged in debate. His exchanges in the legislature were often described as "warm," and on the political circuit he frequently engaged in ridicule and sarcasm. After observing a political speech, one correspondent reported, "I have heard men lashed in debate, but this thrashing of Hunt's was beyond anything my poor imagination dared conceive." 104 On another occasion Hunt was reported to have unmasked every battery and poured forth hot shot, and shell, and canister, and grape in terrific splendor. His rejoinder was wit, ridicule and sarcasm; the sublimated essence of wormwood, and

102 New Orleans Daily Delta, July 25, 1852. Hunt's ready rejoinders in debate might be considered as impromptu rather than extemporaneous by some authorities, but no distinction will be made in this analysis since the speaker was prepared in all cases to speak on the topic under debate.

103Whitaker, op. cit., p. 29.

104 New Orleans Daily Crescent, October 24, 1855.
gall, and satire. We pronounce it with no spirit of triumph when we say, that we never before heard such a scathing, withering, rebuke... 105

The report insisted that the delivery of the speech had been dignified and had exhibited "none of that ridiculous buffoonery... so common to the political arena."

Hunt, then, delivered almost all of his speeches extemporaneously. His delivery was marked by great enthusiasm and the ability to respond promptly during an argument.

Speech Preparation

Hunt's law lectures, which were written out in full, were carefully revised and brought up to date each year.106 His extemporaneous speeches were also prepared with great care whenever possible.

From reports by observers and from internal evidence in the speeches, Hunt's preparation seems to have been of two general types. First, from his broad knowledge and from wide reading he maintained a ready store of speech material and, second, for particular cases and debates he did research to locate specific material.

105 Shreveport Gazette quoted in the New Orleans Bee, October 23, 1855.

Hunt's extensive knowledge of legal and political matters was widely recognized. The editor of the Bee, giving advance notice of a speech, declared, "No one is better posted as to the political history or governmental relations of the country, while his mind is a great storehouse of constitutional law."\(^{107}\) "I never heard him," wrote a Louisiana Supreme Court Justice, "without thinking the excellency of his orations was the result of much study. . . ."\(^{108}\)

The ready supply of ideas which Hunt used in the preparation of his speeches came from several major sources. Legal decisions, for example, were freely used as evidence in his political speeches as well as in his law cases and lectures. For illustrations, he relied to a large extent on both classical and modern writers of literature and history. Current newspapers were another source of a variety of information.

Learning from these sources was a continuous process for Hunt. Family accounts report that he brought home loads of books at night, and one of the servants regularly carried them back to his office every morning, sometimes

\(^{107}\) New Orleans Bee, October 31, 1856.

finding it necessary to use a wheelbarrow. "His love of reading prevented his being remembered as a great talker. ... he generally had a book before him, even at the times when his family were engaged in general conversation."109

A legislative argument in 1843 contained a typical range of references which reveals both the breadth and currency of the fund of knowledge on which Hunt drew as a speaker. He referred in this speech to court decisions of John Marshall, he paraphrased passages from Charles Dickens and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and he used two analogies involving Falstaff and Achilles. The Dickens work mentioned was Martin Chuzzlewit which had only been in print in serialized form for a few weeks.110 Unquestionably Hunt's large supply of information made possible his occasional impromptu replies in situations which precluded special preparation.

From the reservoir of ideas on which Hunt drew in the preparation of his speeches, some arguments and illustrations were repeated from one speech to another. Such materials, which Hunt apparently liked especially

109 *New Orleans Bee*, February 25, 1843.
well, would often simplify his speech preparation as he moved from place to place in a single campaign. Some ideas were used in almost identical ways in different speeches, and some were appropriately changed. In one case, Hunt argued in November of 1860 that secessionists should be hanged if they insisted on unconstitutional overthrow of the government. After both the secessionists and the unionists had lost the presidency to Lincoln, however, an opposition newspaper reported dryly that Hunt's argument was "paraphrased into a much more acceptable proposition to hang Lincoln if he violated the constitution." In another instance an illustration which Hunt used to attack state sovereignty was delivered almost word for word in two speeches approximately twenty years apart.

In addition to the great store of speech material which Hunt maintained, he also frequently did research to obtain specific facts. Evidence of this type of preparation is especially clear in reports of legislative debates. In exchanges which sometimes lasted for days, Hunt's efforts to refute opposition arguments with appropriate authority and figures can be easily traced. For example, when court cases were cited in arguments on legislation Hunt would

111 *New Orleans Daily Delta*, December 14, 1860.
take up the debate at a later day prepared to discuss at length the specific details of the case and to quote numerous other applicable cases. The scope of such material as well as the detail and the accompanying quotations make it plain that the speaker employed specific preparation.

Whether his arguments came from broad knowledge or from specific research, Hunt carried his material before his audiences either in his memory or on notes and in books. While he spoke extemporaneously, he was generally well prepared even in situations where specific research was not possible.

In conclusion, while many exact details about Hunt's delivery of his speeches can never be known, limited conclusions can be drawn in some areas. Hunt presented an impressive, although not outstanding, appearance. His voice was reportedly satisfactory, and he generally spoke extemporaneously although his speeches were carefully prepared.

III. HUNT'S CONCEPT OF RHETORIC

Although Randell Hunt never collected all of his ideas on rhetorical theory into a single essay, numerous references to the subject appear in his speeches and
writings. Strongly influenced by classical precepts, he cited Cicero more frequently than any other source although Greek rhetoricians were also mentioned. Two areas of consideration are found to be of primary importance in Hunt's concept of oratory. First, he believed a content-centered rhetoric should be an integral part of a liberal education, and, second, he devoted considerable attention to the means of changing the beliefs of listeners.

Rhetoric in a Liberal Education

Randell Hunt believed that "the different branches of learning bear an intimate relation to one another." Training in speaking received a prominent place in Hunt's scheme of education, but it was closely related to both general education and the study of communication as a whole.

"By no means neglect the general culture of letters and of the arts and sciences," said Hunt in an address to graduating law students. "The perfect lawyer should be familiar with every study," he stated and then went on to describe, in effect, the Roman "perfect orator" modified

113Ibid., p. 215.
for the time and place. He emphasized the value of a thorough study of the Greek and Roman classics:

Not that their ideas are more just or that their learning is more profound than those of many moderns, but because from their writings you will imbibe the spirit of true genius and liberty, and habituate yourselves to their copiousness and elegance. The speeches of Demosthenes are models of eloquence, and kindle within us the fire of ancient times and of liberty.114

In his conception of speech integrated into a system of communication, Hunt was still on classical grounds. He followed the pattern of the Roman teacher of rhetoric who "was preparing young gentlemen to practice all the arts of discourse. . . ."115 Hunt considered the broad concept of "utterance" or "communion" as basic in human society:

Man cannot be man without communion, utterance, be this by sound or sign, and be this sign transitory (as the sign made by the deaf and dumb) or enduring (by writing); our whole existence as human beings depends on it.116

In his discussion of speech in a liberal education, Hunt is clearly concerned only with invention. There are almost no references in any of his works to style,

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115Donald Lemen Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), p. 64.

organization, or delivery. In fact, in arguing that "the right of utterance is primordial," he directly equated the act of speech with thought itself.117

Further information about the nature of the rhetoric which Hunt urged his students to learn can be found in his speeches. Declamation and disputation were terms which he used to describe rhetoric devoid of substance and lacking in high purpose. In an excerpt from one of his legal arguments which was widely printed as an essay, he attacked "vain display of powers of disputation," and he often echoed the distrust of "mere declamation" expressed by his former teacher, Dr. Cooper.118

Hunt rarely attacked his opponents' method of speaking in debate. On two occasions, however, he found that one lawyer had, in Hunt's opinion, so subordinated the content of his speeches to his method of presentation that he was open for attack on that basis. "That member no doubt thinks when he speaks loudly, he speaks well," stated a newspaper summary of Hunt's rebuttal, but "he had yet to learn that words of wisdom did not find vent in boisterous declamation.119 Attacking the same speaker at another time,

117Ibid.
118Ibid., pp. 1, 23, 66.
119Baton Rouge Gazette, July 24, 1852.
Hunt contrasted the weakness of his argument with his "fine voice, his action and declamation."\textsuperscript{120} In Hunt's concept of oratory, content was clearly more important than delivery.

**The Means of Persuasion**

In Hunt's writings there is a recognizable adaptation of the classical means of persuasion although it is not identified as such. He especially stressed the role of logic and good character in persuasion. Hunt believed strongly in free will and held that there was a proper course of action to follow which man was "enabled by his moral sense and reason to discover." "Man's conduct," he stated, "will in the main be guided by his moral and intellectual conviction." Thus he held that logical and ethical proofs were of the greatest importance in persuasion, and, it followed, then, that "the just estimation of eloquence depends on the virtuous and rational use made of it."\textsuperscript{121}

Hunt wrote out in great detail his explanation of the role of reason in controlling man's action, but he did not discuss specific ways in which the orator should

\textsuperscript{120}William Henry Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{121}*Ibid.*, pp. 144, 149, 224.
use logical proof. He was slightly more specific in the following advice to his law students in regard to ethos:

No splendor of talent, no perfection in art can compensate for the want of moral principle. ... It is almost impossible to separate the impression made by the character of a speaker from the things he says. An opinion of honor and probity in the person who undertakes to persuade adds to the influence of his speech; a contrary opinion detracts from its authority. 122

The equivalent of the classical idea of emotional appeal is found in Hunt's concept of "motives." A motive defined by Hunt was that which, apart from intellectual conviction or moral rules, "moves or tends to move the mind in a particular direction." 123 He enumerated as examples of motives those drives based on instinct, sensuality, expediency, and conscience.

In the passage below, Hunt described the study of appeal to motives when properly used by the perfect lawyer:

He must pry into the secret recesses of the human heart, and explore to their sources the passions and appetites and feelings of mankind. He should watch the motions of the dark and malignant passions as they silently approach the chambers of the soul. ... He must drink in the lessons and the spirit of philosophy, which is conversant with men's business and interests. ... 124

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122 Ibid., p. 224.
123 Ibid., p. 138.
124 Ibid., p. 216.
Hunt pointed out, however, the danger of "popular delusion" and "public passion" triumphing over reason, and he held that appeals based on motives or emotions were less important in forming a judgement than those based on logic. In the peroration of one of his early legal arguments he repeated the warning of an ancient rhetorician:

Isocrates, in one of his orations to the sophists, speaking of the ease with which a false proposition may be supported to the satisfaction of a common auditory, says the reason is that when men find that something can be said in favor of what on its very face appeared indefensible, they grow distrustful of their own reason, and are easily hurried on by the orator to whom they abandon themselves.125

In summary, Hunt advocated a rhetoric of sound content and high purpose. It was to be an integral part of a broad liberal education, and invention would be stressed more than the other canons. He also recognized the basic problem of moving listeners to belief and action, and he adapted the classical methods of persuasion to achieve this purpose.

IV. CONCLUSION

Several factors which contributed to Randell Hunt's success and reputation as an orator have been isolated in this chapter. His training, his delivery, his grasp of

125Ibid., pp. 12-13, 63.
the precepts of rhetoric all reveal that his oratory was an acquired art and not a mere skill which he possessed by chance.

Hunt's training was clearly significant in his development as a speaker. He formed early habits of scholarship which he retained both as a student and as a speaker. His studies provided him with a broad background of knowledge in which literature, philosophy, and the classics were perhaps the most important. Hunt also received extensive practical training in public speaking at all levels of his education.

Hunt's delivery was also important in creating his reputation as an outstanding orator. While he had no remarkable physical attributes, his dress and manner contributed to his impressive appearance on the platform. The most important aspect of his delivery, however, was his prowess as an extemporaneous speaker. Extensive preparation of Hunt's arguments made him a respected debater, and resulted in the focus of public attention on what he said rather than how he delivered his speeches.

Finally, Hunt was fully aware of the importance of the precepts of rhetoric. He recognized the importance of broad knowledge to a speaker, and he accepted the classical division of proof into the logical, emotional, and ethical components.
In the following four chapters Hunt's arguments at several points in his career will be analyzed. Each chapter will treat a distinct period of Hunt's ante-bellum speaking. In each period a brief historical background will be presented and the specific situation in which Hunt spoke will be explained.
CHAPTER II

SPEAKING DURING THE SOUTH CAROLINA PERIOD

Randell Hunt's speaking from 1830 through 1833 can be conveniently and reasonably isolated for study. Obviously the audiences and occasions were substantially different from those that he would face later in Louisiana. The nullification controversy reached its climax at this time and was especially significant in South Carolina. The issues which were raised were never again to be discussed in exactly the same context.

At the same time, Hunt's oratory during the South Carolina period can be fitted into the overall pattern of his speaking. Here some of his basic political ideas began to take shape, and his earliest efforts to translate these beliefs into persuasive oratory were undertaken.

Complete texts of only two of Hunt's South Carolina speeches remain. In the first of these, Hunt argued before a board of military officers on September 3, 1832, that Governor James Hamilton was ineligible for the office of brigadier general in the state militia. In the second speech, presented on April 8, 1833, Hunt contended before
the state court of appeals that an alien, George Granstein, should not be compelled to swear an oath of allegiance to South Carolina in order to obtain his citizenship.

I. THE SPEAKING SITUATION

Both of the cases in which Hunt spoke arose indirectly because of the controversy over the right of a state to oppose federal power. The states' rights element in South Carolina wished in the Granstein case to challenge the right of the federal government to dictate the procedure for naturalization of aliens. In the Hamilton case states' rights supporters were attempting to increase their power in the militia in order to add military support to their position. Almost all political questions in South Carolina were dominated by the federal-state struggle which resolved ultimately around the right of the state to nullify federal laws. So that Hunt's speeches may be seen in their proper relationship to the history of the time, several effects of nullification on the conduct of public affairs will be mentioned.

Historical Background

In the nullification controversy, the following trends can be observed: (1) issues were discussed largely in
theoretical terms, and (2) intense public excitement was generated over political questions, and (3) two active political parties emerged with equally strong hopes of winning the controversy. Each of these factors will be briefly discussed.

First, the political problems of the day were discussed largely in theoretical terms. The tariff of 1824 and other subsequent congressional tariffs were the immediate cause for unrest, but they became involved with more dangerous abstract concepts. While almost no one in South Carolina favored the tariff, the public was divided over the question of the right of the state government to declare the tariff void. Since the arguments of the two political parties centered around a theoretical political question, the tariff was largely ignored as an issue.

There were several theorists who supplied the arguments on the explosive question of the right of a state to defy laws of the federal government. For example, the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson were frequently cited to support the right of nullification. The publication of the Exposition of 1828, secretly authored by John C. Calhoun, set forth the doctrine of nullification in greater detail. The Webster-Hayne debate furnished arguments both for and against the validity of the theory of state sovereignty.
A second feature of the general situation in which speeches of the time were set, was the excitement which the issues raised. The battle over nullification divided families and ruptured business and social ties. There were occasional incidents at public meetings such as one where "Mr. Petigru was 'damed at' and hissed... and another gentleman abused and challenged to fight..."\(^1\)

For a speech he gave in a church building, Randell Hunt "was placarded and threatened to be hanged."\(^2\) The tradition of public discussion and political speaking was strong in South Carolina, however, and numerous speeches were delivered.

Thirdly, both sides in the nullification controversy believed that they had a reasonable expectation of controlling the state's policy. The two parties clashed on every issue and attempted to win public support at frequent rallies and conventions. Although the Nullifiers gradually gained the upper hand, the Union minority remained strong in some areas. In Charleston, for example, Randell Hunt failed to be elected to the state assembly in 1832 by only 120 votes out of the total of 2700 votes cast in his

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\(^1\)Charleston Courier, October 8, 1832.

\(^2\)William Hunt, op. cit., pp. xi-xii.
district. This was about average for the Union ticket in that district which included such well known Unionist candidates as C. G. Memminger, James Petigrue, Joel Poinsett, and William Lance.\(^3\)

In summary, the time in which Hunt spoke was characterized by the intense excitement of a vigorous party struggle over theoretical aspects of political issues.

**Specific Speaking Occasions**

Hunt's speech opposing Governor Hamilton's election as brigadier general and his speech supporting George Granstein's right to citizenship were both preceded by considerable public controversy, and the speeches received great attention. The simple fact that they were published indicates something of their contemporary importance because publication of local speeches during this period was rare.

The controversy preceding Hunt's speech on Hamilton's eligibility began in May, 1832. When the brigadier

\(^3\)Charleston Courier, October 11, 1832. In other districts the Unionists did not do so well; the total vote was 40,000 and they lost by 6,000. Claude G. Bowers, *The Party Battles of the Jackson Period.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922), p. 254.
general of the state militia's Fourth Brigade died, Hamilton was urged by his friends in the Nullification party to run for the office. Hamilton's term of office as governor was soon to expire, and he promptly had himself commissioned as a lieutenant so that he would be technically eligible to run for the general's office.

The governor's candidacy for a nominally non-political office immediately became a party issue. A Union newspaper in Charleston, the Courier, carried numerous letters and editorials attacking the governor's decision while the Charleston Mercury, a nullification paper, defended him. Hamilton was an avowed nullifier and was one of that party's outstanding leaders. According to the Unionists he sought the office of general so that he might "be put over all the offices now in commission, for party purposes." The Unionists were not free from party interests themselves, however, for their candidate, Colonel Issac Walter, was a strong Union supporter.

The practical importance of controlling the militia in the event Federal troops were sent to suppress nullification was recognized by both sides in the Hamilton

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4Charleston Mercury, May 9, 1832.
5Charleston Courier, May 5, 1832.
controversy. "No Submissionist" warned in a letter that if Hamilton attempted to use the militia in a civil war, the Unionists would desert. The Nullifiers replied that the Unionists were disloyal to the state.

Hamilton's victory in the election by a narrow margin on May 21, 1832, only served to intensify the controversy. More letters and editorials appeared demanding a judicial review of the results. The governor was attacked for having appointed himself as a lieutenant in the militia in order to become a candidate, he was declared to be ineligible because he did not live in the district from which he was elected, and he was accused of having received several illegal votes. The Mercury defended the governor and printed counter-charges of vote fraud by the Unionist officers.

The commanding general of the Division in which the election was held decided that the various frauds which had been committed made the election invalid, and he ordered the brigade to vote again. However, the Unionists insisted that Colonel Walter should be declared elected, and they demanded a hearing before a military court. The commanding

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6 Ibid., May 8, 1832.
7 Charleston Mercury, May 21, December 20, 1832.
general agreed, and, on September 3, 1832, Hunt presented the case against Governor Hamilton before a board of officers convened at the court house in the town of Barnwell.

No contemporary reports gave any details of the proceedings, but limited conclusions can be drawn from internal evidence within Hunt's speech, from letters in the press, and from military orders which were printed publically. Neither Hamilton nor Colonel Walter attended the trial which was heard by a board of five officers. Since Hunt's speech was addressed directly to this military board, the five officers were his primary audience.

From the beginning of the preparation for the trial the Unionists were not happy with the membership of the board. The Courier objected editorially to the fact that the board was composed of officers of the rank of colonel and lower. The editor contended that officers of such relatively low rank would possibly be influenced by Hamilton's political power in rendering their decision. The board was also unsatisfactory to the Unionists because of the political affiliation of the members. Hunt insisted

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8 Charleston Courier, August 6, 1832.
in his speech that he had been told by a member of the governor's party that all the members of the board were Nullifiers. 9

No evidence exists in either Hunt's speech or in rival newspaper accounts which revealed any information about any audience which might have gathered to watch the proceedings. In view of the public interest which the election had created, an audience probably was present, but, in addition to Hunt, only the five members of the board and the two attorneys for Hamilton were mentioned specifically in accounts of the hearing.

Since Hunt's speech was printed in the Courier and was also distributed as a pamphlet, the general public of the state may be considered as part of his audience. Public opinion was sharply divided on the question of Governor Hamilton's eligibility for the position of brigadier general. Almost without exception, however, opinions which were expressed in letters to the Charleston newspapers revealed strong party bias. In general, Nullifiers supported Hamilton's election and Unionists opposed it. The two sides appealed strongly for public

9"Argument of Randell Hunt, Esq. on the Ineligibility of Governor Hamilton to the Office of Brigadier General, before the Board of Officers, convened at Barnwell," 1833, p. 1.
approval. While Hunt's arguments were addressed directly to the board, he could hardly have been unaware of the fact that his arguments would be evaluated by the people of the state.

In summary, Hunt's speech against Governor Hamilton was set in a situation which had been preceded by great public excitement. The immediate cause for the case was the eligibility of the governor for an office in the militia, but deeper questions of party bias and political control of the military were at work in bringing the case to trial. Although Hunt's speech was reported to the general public, the immediate audience to which he addressed his remarks was a board of officers which was to decide the question. This board was suspected by the Unionists of having nullification sympathies which would bias its members in hearing the case.

Hunt's "Citizenship and Allegiance" speech in the Grnastein case came after another long period of public conflict. Once again a legal question was entangled with politics. The States' Rights party claimed that the state had the right to require aliens to swear allegiance to the state before being admitted to citizenship. If this power were upheld, the party would gain two victories. Those aliens willing to take the oath honestly would tend
to become citizens who would favor the nullification movement. Also the States' Rights party would win an ideological victory. Allegiance was due to the sovereign power, and if an oath of allegiance to the state was accepted, then the claims of the party that the state rather than the nation had ultimate sovereignty would be strengthened.

The case arose in the Court of Common Pleas on October 6, 1832. Randell Hunt was busy in his campaign for the state legislature and another attorney presented a petition for citizenship for one George Granstein. The presiding judge found Granstein qualified under federal law to be admitted to citizenship but insisted that he take a "customary" oath of allegiance to South Carolina. When Granstein declined to take the oath, the judge refused even to allow his attorney to refer to the constitution or congressional laws in the ensuing argument. The case was the basis for a public controversy during the six months in which it was being carried to a higher court on appeal. The Nullifiers used the case to support their conclusion that "there is no such thing as a citizen of the United States," and the Unionists claimed

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10 *Charleston Courier*, October 8, 1832.
that the decision was in error but contended that it caused the Union movement to lose many votes by giving legal sanction to an extreme states' rights position.

Shortly before Hunt spoke in defense of Granstein's right to citizenship, the climax of the nullification drama was reached. A state convention met, drafted the Ordinance of Nullification, and the legislature convened to put its provisions into law. Then President Jackson moved swiftly to demonstrate that he would back federal laws with force, and the Nullifiers had to accept a compromise tariff while backing hastily away from any practical application of nullification.

The issue, however, was still very much alive as a theory. Nullifiers were still convinced that their stand was correct, and they soon had a great majority of South Carolina citizens unified under the leadership of John C. Calhoun.11

The extent of the right of a state to compete with congressional legislation in the area of naturalization was not all settled when Hunt appeared before the state Court of Appeals to argue for Granstein's citizenship.

Since the legal question was not settled, the political attitude of the judges in the case was of crucial importance. Two Union judges and one Nullifier sat on the appeals court. The lone Nullifier, however, was a man of influence. He was William Harper who only four months earlier had written the Ordinance of Nullification.\(^\text{12}\)

Once again press reports do not reveal any information about an audience at the hearing. Hunt referred in his speech, however, to two audiences.\(^\text{13}\) First, he frequently made specific comments to the judges, and, second, he referred to the importance of presenting the argument on the nature of citizenship and allegiance to the general public. The second audience was reached in part by the printed version of Hunt's speech which was carried in the Courier. In spite of the fact that President Jackson had crushed any practical effect of nullification, public sentiment in the state was strongly in favor of states' rights. Hunt's larger audience, which he was expressly attempting to influence, was generally opposed to his nationalistic views.


\(^\text{13}\)William Henry Hunt, op. cit., pp. 40, 44.
In summary, Hunt's citizenship speech, like his speech against Hamilton, arose from a situation which created great public excitement. The immediate case was once again involved with deeper political questions. In contrast to the Hamilton case, Hunt had in his argument for Granstein a court which was apparently predisposed in his favor while the general public was largely opposed to him.

II. THE ARGUMENTS

The speeches which Hunt presented in the Granstein and Hamilton cases contained arguments which can be readily classified according to the three means of persuasion laid down by Aristotle. This division of proof according to its logical, ethical, and emotional content provides a set of standards by which the speaker's arguments may be judged. Within each of the divisions the speaker's arguments will be evaluated by measurements which have evolved from approximately twenty-five centuries of rhetorical criticism.

Logical Proof

Logical proof or appeals based on rationality will be considered first. The speaker's invention, the intellectual process by which he arrived at the conclusions he developed, will be examined briefly. Then the formal correctness of both the reasoning and supporting evidence found in the speeches will be analyzed. The aim of the analysis will be to determine if the speaker's arguments were true and, if true, to determine how their validity was demonstrated to his audiences.

Intellectual Resources of the Speaker. More than a year before he gave the first of the two speeches being analyzed in this chapter, Hunt presented the following toast at a Union political meeting:

The Federal Union: The source of our national existence, of our prosperity, our strength, and our glory--the best security for State independence and individual freedom.¹⁵

This statement could well be called Hunt's lifelong political creed. The sovereignty of the federal government was the premise on which almost all of his political opinions were based. No doubt largely an intellectual

inheritance from his father, this credo withstood with equal success the teachings of Thomas Cooper and the arguments of John C. Calhoun.

Hunt's Unionist philosophy had its intellectual foundation in his study of history, law, and economics. The set of beliefs which he gradually developed allied him firmly with the supporters of Henry Clay in the Whig party. During the nullification crisis, however, Hunt's political philosophy, like the Whig party itself, was in a formative stage. Devotion to the Union, which Hunt declared to be based on "inclination, as well as duty," was the only precept in his political philosophy which had fully emerged.16

Although the sources of some of his specific arguments will be considered in more detail when discussed in relation to evidence, their significance in assessing the intellectual stock of the speaker is of some importance. Throughout his life Hunt was an avid student of classical, English, and American history, and in his later years even wrote an unfinished essay, "An Historical Discourse upon the United States."17

16Randell Hunt, "To the Union Party of South Carolina," January 21, 1833, p. 5.

abound in all his speeches and writings, and incidents from history furnished a large measure of support for his early ideas on the sovereignty of the Union. From arguments by Madison and Hamilton at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, Hunt accepted the contention that the federal government under the Articles of Confederation was too weak to function effectively. He believed that the adoption of the Constitution conferred sovereignty on the national government leaving the states power only "to legislate concerning matters of an internal or local nature" which did not "interfere with the power of the general government."¹⁸

Hunt also derived his concept of allegiance partly from history. He found that from feudal times allegiance had been extended only to the king, and fealty was designated as the proper term for loyalty owed to lesser powers.¹⁹ Thus he reasoned that if the national government was sovereign under the Constitution, allegiance could not be owed to a state. Hunt drew on British history to support in part his belief that naturalization was a national power not to be entrusted to a lesser authority.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 53.

In Hunt's study of law, he gave greatest attention to Chief Justice John Marshall in areas involving constitutional interpretation. Marshall, who believed strongly in the supremacy of federal law in any area where the national government was constitutionally permitted to act, furnished many decisions which supported Hunt's belief. Hunt studied law intensively even after his admission to the bar, and he mentioned that as a young lawyer he spent many nights at his books until "long after midnight."  

Hunt frequently cited other early Federalist judges who supported his position on the relationship of the nation to the states. He relied also on the generally conservative legal works of William Blackstone, Edward Coke, and James Kent to bolster his arguments.

Economic considerations also influenced Hunt's ideas, although his fully developed expressions on this subject did not come until he left South Carolina. Significantly, however, he was influenced during his early life by a dread of lack of financial resources. His father's problems with debt had impressed Hunt deeply, and he suffered from some degree of financial misfortune himself as a beginning lawyer. He claimed to have "drunk deep of

the bitter cup of poverty" and maintained that there were actually times when he was unable to provide food for his mother and sisters.\textsuperscript{21}

Perhaps because he observed the opposition of many of the wealthy class to sectional policies, Hunt believed that a strong national government was best for prosperity. He arrived at this conclusion in spite of the \textit{laissez faire} indoctrination he had received from Thomas Cooper. Certainly a greater influence had been exerted by his father's opinions and later by the economic philosophy of Henry Clay who became Hunt's political idol. Although Hunt did not develop detailed arguments on national economic policy as a young man, his basic ideas in favor of such programs as the United States Bank and the tariff were already formed before he left South Carolina.

Hunt was influenced, then, by history, law, and economics in forming his basic belief that the federal government was sovereign over the states. Although both of Hunt's speeches were in a technical sense legal arguments, neither of them can be isolated from their political significance. For example, the underlying cause for the

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 32-33.
Hamilton case was the contest for the control of the militia which was in turn a pawn in the nullification struggle. Hunt believed that if federal law were challenged the loyal citizens of the state would be required to act as an "arm of federal force." While the case against increased control of the militia by the Nullifiers had to be argued on legal grounds, its intellectual basis is found in Hunt's ideas about national sovereignty and the resulting duty of citizenship. These questions were faced directly in the second speech under consideration in this chapter, Hunt's defense of George Granstein before the Court of Appeals. In this case, the doctrine which Hunt supported had been openly flouted by a judge of a lower South Carolina court.

**Argumentative Development.** Hunt's argumentative development in both of his speeches is readily seen to be a careful combination of evidence and reasoning. This was a division which the speaker himself clearly recognized. Hunt declared that "the weight of authority as well as reason" supported his interpretation of the law in the

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citizenship case, and he began his summary of the Hamilton argument by saying that his conclusions were drawn from the "authorities, facts, and arguments" which he had used. 24

Although the two speeches were much alike in argumentative development, the analysis can be made more pertinent if each speech is considered separately. The major contentions in Hunt's Hamilton speech will be isolated and the supporting reasoning and evidence will be examined.

As the proposition of his speech, Hunt stated that Governor Hamilton was ineligible for the office of brigadier general. He then developed two main contentions supporting the proposition. The first main contention was phrased by Hunt in the form of an enthymeme:

Being Commander-in-Chief, he [Governor Hamilton] was, I contend, while he held that office, incapable of becoming an officer of inferior rank. 25

Cast in strict logical form for the purpose of closer analysis, Hunt's enthymeme is seen to be essentially the major premise of the following hypothetical syllogism which is technically valid:

24 Randell Hunt, "Hamilton," \textit{op. cit.}, p. 5.

Major Premise: If Governor Hamilton holds the rank of Commander-in-Chief, he cannot at the same time hold an inferior rank.

Minor Premise: Governor Hamilton holds the rank of Commander-in-Chief.

Conclusion: Therefore, Governor Hamilton cannot hold an inferior rank.

Since the minor premise in Hunt's reasoning was a known fact, only the major premise of the syllogism could not be accepted at face value.

To a large extent Hunt relied on hypothetical illustrations as evidence for the major premise in his first contention. For example, he cited several potential situations in which the governor might find his job as Commander-in-Chief incompatible with an office in the ranks of the militia. In developing one of his illustrations, Hunt asked,

Or, how would Governor Hamilton command the third lieutenant? Would he issue the order on horseback, and then suddenly by a Harlequin caper, throw himself from the head of his column, plump into the saddle of a platoon or section leader?26

Several of Hunt's illustrations involved possible situations in which the governor might have to decide on the legality or propriety of his own acts as a militia officer. In particular Hunt stressed instances involving court martials and military elections where such circumstances might exist.

26Ibid., p. 3.
The validity of Hunt's illustrations in proving that Governor Hamilton could not hold two offices was limited because his examples were entirely hypothetical. Having no past history on which to rely, Hunt simply predicted what might happen. Although Hunt used examples of situations which were probably quite readily understood by the militia officers on the board, the possibility that any of the situations would ever occur was not established in the speech. Some of the illustrations involving Hamilton's difficulties in carrying out troop movements or giving direct orders probably would never have occurred. In general, the illustrations were more suitable for making the speaker's point clear than for establishing its logical validity.

Hunt used authority as a second type of evidence to argue that the offices of governor and general were incompatible. He cited a definition from a collection of legal terms set down by Francis Bacon. Quoting directly, Hunt said,

Offices are said to be incompatible and inconsistent so as to be executed by the same person, when due to the multiplicity of business in them, they cannot be executed with care and ability, or when their being subordinate and interfering with each other, induces a presumption that they cannot be executed with impartiality and honesty.  

27Ibid., p. 2.
Hunt contended that his illustrations had shown the applicability of Bacon's definition.

Hunt also used the state constitution as an authority. The constitution, Hunt declared, allowed a governor to "hold" an office in the militia, but it contained no provision whereby a governor could legally seek an office which he did not have upon being chosen governor. Hunt read the entire section of the constitution which applied to dual office holding in explaining his interpretation.

To further bolster his argument based on constitutional authority, Hunt alleged that the founders of the state constitution had not intended that the governor could be a candidate for a militia office. He invoked the authority of the founders indirectly. Offering no quotations or legal opinions, Hunt based the validity of his evidence on the assertion that the "holding" clause had been included in the constitution so that leading citizens might run for governor without being forced to resign their commissions in the militia.

The sources of Hunt's authorities were excellent. Bacon was a respected legal writer whose name was probably at least familiar to the officers on the board. The state constitution and the opinions of its writers were sources respected by all political factions in the state. The use
of the authorities by the speaker, however, was not altogether conclusive. The statement from Bacon was not shown to have a binding effect on the immediate case. This omission was perhaps particularly damaging since Hunt was not arguing before a panel of judges with legal training who might be expected to apply English custom to the case. The authority of the constitution and its founders was weakened by the necessity for interpretation. Hunt's interpretation was only a possible meaning of the clause on office holding, and his statement of the intention of the founders was not documented. Perhaps the greatest weakness of Hunt's use of authority was the limited number of sources he used. He did not cite any court cases or quote directly from any authorities on the state constitution.

In summary, Hunt's argument that Governor Hamilton could not hold two offices was not fully conclusive. His illustrations were hypothetical and his authorities were limited in number and were not always clearly applicable to the case. While the reasoning process behind his first contention was technically valid, the speaker's evidence was more effective in making his position clear than in establishing it with logic.

The second major argument which Hunt advanced was the contention that Hamilton, apart from any question of
holding the position as general, had not been eligible as a candidate. Reduced to a valid categorical syllogism, the second argument was:

**Major Premise:** Only those who hold valid commissions may legally become candidates.

**Minor Premise:** Hamilton did not hold a valid commission.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, Hamilton could not legally be a candidate.

Hunt briefly established the major premise on which his arguments against Hamilton's candidacy rested by citing the state law which regulated militia elections. Although the board of officers was undoubtedly aware of the regulations, Hunt read the complete law with emphasis on the part which stated that only a "commissioned officer of an Brigade shall be eligible to the office of Brigadier General " in the original printed version."\(^2\)

In support of the minor premise in his chain of reasoning Hunt presented two points. He contended, first, that Hamilton's commission had been invalidated by the governor's failure to actually perform any duties as a lieutenant, and, second, that Hamilton's act in commissioning himself had been improper.

\(^{28}\text{Ibid.}, p. 3.\)
Hunt relied on numerous authorities in establishing his point that the failure of the governor to carry out a lieutenant's duties had made his commission void. First, he cited a definition from Bacon to show that the concept of performance of duty was implicit in the meaning of the term office. Then Hunt referred to the state constitution to show that the oath required on acceptance of a state office included the promise to exercise the powers of the office. He also cited English laws and an English court case to show that such oaths of office were widely required and were considered as legal prerequisites to the actual holding of an office. He cited an 1800 South Carolina law and a subsequent court case which established that in South Carolina also strict adherence to the technicalities of oaths of office were required in order for an office to be legally held.

Hunt summarized the argument which his authorities supported when he said:

The mere election to an office does not constitute a man an officer. Where the law enjoins certain prerequisites, these must be complied with before a man can be said to be an officer.29

Except for authority, Hunt's evidence was limited to only two specific examples to show that Hamilton had

29Ibid.
performed no duties. The governor, Hunt pointed out, had taken part in none of the military parades, and he had not been listed on the official orders of the Brigade. In conclusion, the speaker declared that Hamilton had not performed a single official act as a militia lieutenant.

Hunt's use of evidence in attacking the legality of Hamilton's commission was generally sound. His use of examples in particular gave a brief but accurate account of the governor's complete failure to perform any duties as a lieutenant.

Hunt's use of authority, however, was somewhat weak in that it sometimes lacked obvious and direct application to the immediate case. For example, his citations all relied for their acceptance on the technical point that duties were absolutely necessary for the legality of a commission, but the citations did not explain in detail the specific duties which would be required or the minimum amount of time in which they could be carried out. Also the authorities were drawn in part from English law. While this was a rather common practice in the courts of the time, a board of officers untrained in legal matters might be expected to have difficulty in accepting the application of the English usage to the militia case.

The same objection can be raised to Hunt's authorities.
based on South Carolina law which applied to civil and not military cases. Hunt's use of authority was strong in two respects. First, he cited a large number of opinions in support of his position, and, second, his citations were drawn from reputable legal sources which were well qualified and unbiased. In summary, Hunt's use of authority was technically acceptable, but was not obviously and directly applicable to the Hamilton case.

As evidence for his next point, which was that the governor could not properly commission himself, Hunt used authority and illustrations.

The authorities which Hunt cited were intended to show that a commission in the militia was no different from any other appointive office in the state. This argument was directed against claims by Hamilton's friends that his commission was issued by the "state" and not by the governor as an individual. Hunt used the authority of the state constitution and three separate acts of the state assembly to show that the governor was directly responsible for appointments to militia posts just as he was in the case of other offices.

With this point established through authority, Hunt used several hypothetical illustrations to show that if the power of the governor to commission himself was
granted then he would also have the power to appoint himself to several other lucrative positions. Hunt mentioned several other state jobs which were legally no different from militia offices, but which were never held concurrently with the governor's office. He concluded that to admit the power of the governor to appoint himself to two offices was "to claim for him a right to render himself and his high office ridiculous." In specifically illustrating how ludicrous the governor's action appeared, Hunt used an involved illustration which consisted of a long order from Governor Hamilton to Lieutenant Hamilton. In the order Hamilton's name in his two capacities was frequently repeated in an apparent effort to make the governor's action appear foolish.

Hunt's evidence in attacking the right of the governor to commission himself did not result in a prima facie case against the governor's act. Apparently no state law directly forbade a governor to appoint himself, and Hunt could only show that the governor was responsible for his own appointment and that such an act could be abused. The governor's responsibility for his commission was based on extensive authority from reputable and unbiased

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30 Ibid., p. 5.
sources. The illustrations used to show possible abuses, on the other hand, were again hypothetical and established only the possibility of abuse of the governor's power.

In conclusion, Hunt's argument throughout his speech on Hamilton's eligibility was based on sound reasoning which can be reduced to two technically valid syllogisms. In each syllogism one premise was easily established as valid. In supporting the disputable premises, however, Hunt's evidence did not always completely establish his argument. While his use of authority was generally drawn from excellent sources, it was frequently applicable only indirectly. This weakness was compounded by the fact that the speech was not addressed to judges learned in the law but rather to militia officers. The illustrations which Hunt used were largely hypothetical. Only in a few cases did he cite specific undeniable instances. For the most part he was forced to rely on conjecture in addressing a board which, by his own admission, was sympathetic to the governor. In summary, his reasoning was technically valid, but his evidence probably failed to fully establish the validity of his premises.

In his speech on Granstein's citizenship, Hunt's entire argument was directed toward refuting the position of a South Carolina judge who had held that the state could
impose its own requirements on aliens before granting them citizenship. Hunt argued that state courts acted merely as agents of the federal government since they were powerless to change the procedure established by Congress.

Expressed as a formally correct disjunctive syllogism, Hunt's reasoning may be stated as follows:

**Major Premise:** It cannot be that both the state and the federal governments have the power to regulate naturalization.

**Minor Premise:** The federal government has the power to regulate naturalization.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, the state does not have the power to regulate naturalization.

Hunt's support for the major premise of his argument rested largely on authority. First he cited the United States Constitution. It provided in Article 2, Section 8, Hunt pointed out, that Congress had the power "to establish a uniform rule of naturalization." Hunt contended that states could not share this power with the federal government because the passage of naturalization laws by the various states would violate the constitutional provision for a "uniform rule." As a second authority to support this point, Hunt introduced the Congressional Naturalization Act of 1802 which expressly declared that no conditions other than those in the act could be applied in admitting

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aliens to citizenship. Both the United States Constitution and federal law, then, were cited by Hunt to show that naturalization was a matter solely for federal regulation.

The next authority to which Hunt turned was state law. He cited numerous South Carolina statutes dating back to colonial days to show that while the state had passed many laws regulating the conduct of aliens, the state had never before assumed that it shared the power of naturalization with the national government.

While Hunt insisted throughout his speech that the legal aspects of the case were settled by a simple examination of laws on naturalization, he continued to cite additional authorities to support his case. The law was sufficient evidence for the judges, Hunt contended, but the rationale behind the law needed to be explained to the public. For authorities to explain the law and give added weight to a literal interpretation of it Hunt turned to three sources: (1) the writers of the Federalist Papers, (2) Supreme Court justices, and (3) writers of legal commentaries.

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32 Ibid., p. 44.
33 Ibid., pp. 45-47.
34 Ibid.
From the Federalist Papers Hunt quoted both James Madison and Alexander Hamilton. Madison was quoted from the forty-second number of the Federalist in explaining how the disadvantages of conflicting state laws on naturalization led to the need for a single uniform law. Hamilton was quoted from the thirty-second number as referring to naturalization as one of the three types of power which could be exercised only by the federal government. From court decisions, Hunt cited the opinions of Justices Iredell, Washington, and Marshall who held in each case that naturalization was a power vested exclusively in Congress. From legal commentaries Hunt selected the writings of Justice Story and James Kent who held that two levels of government could not share the responsibility for naturalization.

Hunt's use of authority to support his major premise was logically sound. The evidence might be expected to have been especially appropriate for the judges who heard the case. The Constitution and the laws which Hunt cited were clearly excellent legal sources. The Union judges, as

35 Ibid., p. 56.
36 Ibid., p. 57.
37 Ibid., p. 58.
indicated by their political beliefs, accepted the United States Constitution and federal law as supreme over state policy, and they should have readily accepted the validity of the evidence. Even Judge Harper, who favored nullification, could not have objected to the validity of the evidence since the state had not even attempted to nullify the federal law. The remainder of Hunt's authorities were perhaps fully acceptable only to the Union judges. The men whose opinions Hunt quoted were all supporters of a strong central government and might be considered prejudiced by a supporter of nullification. All of the opinions, however, came from men whose first-hand experience with the government and its laws could not be challenged. They were also widely used and recognized in other courts of law throughout the country.

In spite of Hunt's efforts to win support from the public for his position, his authorities were probably less acceptable to the people of the state than to the judges. The Constitution and federal laws were under widespread attack and strong public support for nullification had revealed that many people in South Carolina did not regard the Constitution as supreme.

The reaction to Hunt's quotations from Madison, Hamilton, Marshall, and the other constitutional authorities cannot be measured. It might be assumed that, while
these men were constitutional experts, they might be accepted by the public less readily than by judges.

The support for the minor premise in Hunt's argument was again based primarily on authority. The federal Constitution and the Congressional Act of 1802 were again cited since, in showing that the naturalization power was exclusive, they clearly showed it to be a federal power. In addition to the authority of the Constitution and the laws, Hunt introduced opinions of legal experts to show that naturalization was a federal power because of the sovereign nature of the federal government. He cited statements by De Emmerich Vattel, whose writings had been influential in the formation of the United States Constitution, which declared that naturalization was a sovereign power.38 Hunt also quoted Judge St. George Tucker, Blackstone, and Edward Coke in support of his position.39

Once again the acceptability of the authorities was probably more readily apparent to judges than to the general public. The opinions of the authorities must be considered in any case as qualified, unbiased, and founded on extensive experience with the operation of government.

38Ibid., p. 52.
39Ibid., pp. 48, 50, 52-53.
In summary, both the reasoning and evidence were sound in Hunt's Granstein speech. The underlying logical foundation of the argument can be expressed in a valid disjunctive syllogism. In supporting the premises of his argument, the speaker cited numerous well qualified and largely unbiased authorities who had had extensive experience with the problem under consideration.

In the Granstein case and in the Hamilton case as well, the logic and evidence employed sometimes appeared better suited to a legal rather than a lay audience. The logical arguments, however, did not constitute the whole of the speaker's case. Another form of proof which he used, ethical appeals, will now be considered.

Ethical Proof

Ethical proof, or material which demonstrates the speaker's qualities as a good man, was present in both of Hunt's South Carolina speeches. He developed many points in which his good will, his character, and his sagacity were revealed to his auditors.

The primary audience to which Hunt's ethical proof appeared to be directed was the court in the Granstein case and the military board in the Hamilton case.

In an apparently conscious effort to win good will, Hunt frequently praised the intelligence and character of
the judges who heard his two arguments. He used this
technique in the introduction of both speeches. Hunt's
praise of the Court of Appeals justices began with an
apology for the lack of time he had to prepare his argu-
ment. His regret, he said, emanated "from a sense of
justice to myself as well as the high respect which I
entertain for the court."\footnote{William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 42.}
In the argument opposing Hamilton's election, Hunt began by saying that his client
relied "on the honor, patriotism, and good sense of this
court."\footnote{Randell Hunt, "Hamilton," \textit{op. cit.}, p. 1.}
He reminded the court of the good reputation
"for enlightened liberality in speech and action" which
the military supposedly enjoyed throughout the country,
and complimented the members of the board for being "gentle-
men of enlarged and liberal minds." In particular Hunt
praised the president of the court for long service and
good reputation. He closed his introduction by stating
that he believed that the court would render a "just,
impartial and honorable judgment."\footnote{Ibid.}
Hunt returned to his
theme of praise for his judges with brief comments in the
conclusion of both speeches.\footnote{Ibid., p. 7. William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 63.}
Another type of ethical proof found in Hunt's speeches suggested that the speaker was a man of good sense. For example, Hunt demonstrated his common sense by declaring in the Granstein argument that a simple statement of appropriate laws immediately resolved the legal aspects of the case:

"... I must declare myself embarrassed by the simplicity of the case. If there were anything obscure or involved, I might endeavor to illustrate and explain it; if anything doubtful, I might perhaps prove it by argument. But the case is so clear, so simple, so self evident, that to state it is to argue it; or rather I should say, to state it is to prove it."^{44}

Hunt stressed his own reasonableness even more directly in the Hamilton case. He stated that a "plain man of common sense" would laugh when asked if Hamilton were eligible to become a general in the militia. The governor's position, Hunt declared, could be supported by "no man of common sense" who was "free from party zeal."^{45}

In addition to stressing his common sense, Hunt also suggested his sagacity by pointing out the research he had done in preparing his arguments. In the Granstein case he stated that he had "carefully examined" early state laws.

^{44}Ibid., p. 42.

on oaths of allegiance. In his Hamilton argument Hunt mentioned specifically that, in addition to studying laws applicable to the case, he had gathered information at first hand from principals involved in the case. In both cases his frequent quotations and references gave indirect evidence of his research.

A final type of ethical proof in Hunt's speeches demonstrated the speaker's good character. In the Granstein speech Hunt referred directly to his character only once, when, in his introduction, he mentioned that his self-respect demanded that he present a good case. In the Hamilton argument Hunt made no direct reference to his own character. He appeared, however, to be attempting to indirectly establish himself as a man of probity by arguing that the cause for which he spoke in both cases was virtuous while that of the opposition was not. Governor Hamilton, said Hunt,

... endeavors to snatch from the senior Colonel, a worthy and experienced officer... the laurel to which his services entitle him, and gives to himself a commission, that he may act under color of law.

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46William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 45.
48Ibid., p. 4.
After Hamilton's lawyers presented their first argument, Hunt turned part of his attack on them. One of the lawyers had followed a unique procedure in citing his colleague as an authority. Hunt replied,

In the first place, it is to be borne in mind that the opinion or argument of Mr. Dunkin, is the production of an attorney, a member of the Governor's political party, and not the decision of an impartial and disinterested Judge, sworn to do justice to his country. It must be considered a party paper, a one-sided argument. . . .^49

Hunt continued to discredit the motives of his opposition when he said, "Ask a lawyer interested to receive a fee, or serve a party, and he will tell you, 'he will consider the question of Hamilton's eligibility' and prepare an answer."^50

The same technique of association was used in the Granstein case. Here the opposition was the judge of the lower court and the nullifiers in general. Hunt found the judge to be guilty of making law rather than interpreting it and accused him of referring to laws which did not exist. The arguments by the nullifiers against his case, said Hunt, were "metaphysical disquisitions" which were "not calculated to produce any useful result, and . . .

^49Ibid., p. 6.

^50Ibid.
not entitled to the least respect." Their theory of state sovereignty was declared to be "false" and the doctrine of national sovereignty was exalted as true. The speaker's efforts to discredit his opposition was accompanied by frequent references which associated Granstein's side of the case with the Constitution and the lessons of history. The speaker's good character, then, was revealed primarily by his efforts to convince his judges that the cause for which he spoke was virtuous.

In summary, Hunt's speeches showed that he was a good man. He suggested to his listeners that he possessed good will, good sense, and good character.

**Emotional Proof**

Hunt employed, in addition to logical and ethical proof, some arguments which can be judged as largely emotional in nature. In these arguments the speaker appeared to be aware of certain basic emotional drives which might influence his listeners. Although appeals directed toward these emotions were not frequent, they appear to have been carefully selected to fit the speaking situation and the audience.

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In the Hamilton case, for example, Hunt's appeals to (1) authority, (2) honor, (3) pride, (4) loyalty, (5) fear, and (6) comradeship were made especially relevant for men with military experience. The appeals to authority in his opening remarks could hardly have been lost on a board of field grade officers:

The duties confided to the care of this Court, are of the most delicate nature. The officer in command of the Division at the time of the late election for a Brigadier General of the 4th Brigade, unwilling that the decision of the several questions which sprung from that election, should rest on his individual opinion, has called on you to aid him with your advice. The questions alluded to, involve many important points of military law, and one, touching the Constitution of this State, of the gravest character. 52

Specifically in this passage, appeals to authority are found in the mention of the "delicate nature" of the case which by inference means that only men charged with profound responsibility could decide it. This idea is carried further by the claim that the Brigade General thought the responsibility too great for a single man. The idea of heavy responsibility is further stressed by the statement that points of military and constitutional law were to be decided.

Other appeals to authority were interwoven later in the speech with part of Hunt's logical proof. For example,

at one point where he found it necessary to define the word officer, Hunt emphasized that the term designated a person charged with responsible duties, and that an officer filled a "place of trust." 53

Appeals to military honor constituted the most common form of pathetic appeal in the speech. Here the speaker seemed aware of two opposing forces at work on the members of the board. As suspected political followers of Governor Hamilton, they would naturally be somewhat prejudiced in favor of his election. As officers of the militia, on the other hand, the tradition of military honor demanded that they decide the case on its merits. Hunt did not permit the board to forget this obligation. While some of his remarks have already been quoted because of their relation to ethical proof, they clearly have emotional content as well. "You, Gentlemen," Hunt reminded his listeners in his introduction, "are a Board of Officers, or in other words, a Court of Honor /italics in the original printed version/. 54 Later he stated,

The principle of honor is the very life and soul of all martial law. It is to this principle, this delicate standard of morality, characterized by

53 Ibid., p. 3.
54 Ibid., p. 1.
exquisite sensibility and just and elevated sentiment, that the profession of arms is indebted... for its reputation... .55

I appeal to the sense of honor of the Court,"56 said Hunt at another point in his speech. He obviously attempted to affect the board's decision through emotional appeal when, in refuting one of the arguments advanced in Hamilton's favor, he asked, "And is it by such a miserable quibble that a court of honor is expected to be turned aside from its duty?"57 In an even more direct effort to balance political bias with the counter weight of appeals to honor, Hunt said,

Your judgement, untrammeled by technicalities and unmeaning distinctions, unwayed by great names, and uninfluenced by prejudices of a personal or political nature, should be formed exclusively upon the principles of honorable justice.58

Appeals based on pride were also included in the speech and were applied to the board in general and to the president in particular:

When I call to mind the distinguished reputation which you, Sir, by a long and faithful discharge of public duties, have earned in the Militia of

55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., p. 4.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., p. 1.
this State, I cannot but congratulate myself upon the happy illustration of the principle of fair play now exhibited to me. . . .

Hunt also appealed to the loyalty of the officers to their state and to the militia. In these appeals there was only one statement which brought any suggestion of loyalty to the national government into the speech. Once again Hunt seemed to have tacitly recognized a states' rights bias on the part of his listeners.

Hunt made several appeals based on fear. He pointed out the danger of allowing the governor to be a candidate for military office. In suggesting that Hamilton might use his pardoning power to influence votes, Hunt inquired, "Would not the extension of a pardon. . . operate as a bribe? and would an unprincipled and ambitious Governor hesitate to use it?" To allow Hamilton to hold two powerful offices at the same time, Hunt declared, "would prove dangerous to liberty." If the court gave its consent, he warned,

You put it in his power - nay, you actually tempt him, as I have already urged, to abuse the important trusts confided to him for high public purposes to accomplish his own selfish ends.

59 Ibid.
60 Ibid., p. 2.
61 Ibid., p. 3.
Although he cited no proof of violations in the past, Hunt amply illustrated the potential dangers of Hamilton's dual power with the hypothetical examples which were discussed earlier in this chapter.

A final motive appeal found in the speech was directed toward the feeling of military comradeship. Hunt stressed the fact that Hamilton's opponent had been the "senior colonel" of the brigade. He frequently mentioned the colonel's name and stressed the fact that he had been an officer in the militia for a long time whereas Hamilton had not. Hamilton entered the race unfairly, said Hunt, "At the expense of his own honor, and the equal rights of his fellow-citizens."\(^\text{62}\) By his action, said Hunt, the governor "endeavors to snatch from the senior Colonel, a worthy and experienced officer. . . the laurel to which his services entitle him. . . ."\(^\text{63}\) Hunt charged that the governor was guilty of "a fraud on the rights of the officers of the 4th Brigade,"\(^\text{64}\) and thus the speaker broadened the appeal to comradeship to embrace the officer corps as a whole. At another point he stated, "It was a

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 2.
\(^{63}\) Ibid., p. 4.
\(^{64}\) Ibid., p. 5.
fraud to desecrate a subaltern commission, that he might for party purposes be put over all the officers in commission."^65

In conclusion, Hunt used motive appeals directed toward feelings of authority, honor, pride, loyalty, fear, and comradeship. These appeals appear particularly well chosen for a board of military officers and were used with apparent cognizance of the situation in which the speech was given.

Appeals to the emotions appeared less frequently in Hunt's 'Citizenship and Allegiance' speech before South Carolina's supreme court. Some of Hunt's appeals were directed, by his own admission, to the general public as well as the court. The major motive directly appealed to in each group was pride.

Near the end of his speech, Hunt said that if allegiance were due the state and not the nation, then,

The citizen of this republic, when called upon to designate his national banner, must point to the palmetto-tree, and not to the stars and stripes of that flag which has floated in glory and in triumph over the lakes and at New Orleans."^66

This appeal to national pride was continued with further historical references.

^65 Ibid., p. 4.
^66 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 54.
Later in the speech Hunt added another contrast between state and national symbols. If allegiance is not due to the nation, he warned,

The Union is no longer to be regarded with patriotic pride; all our duties, all our aspirations, must be hemmed in by state lines; we are to be taught that there is no such thing as a citizen of the United States, and that, instead of looking for the emblem of our country to the bird of Liberty, soaring aloft, we must cast our eyes on a venomous reptile, with, "noli me tangere" inscribed on the ground that supports it. 67

Hunt specifically stated that the above arguments were directed to the general public as well as to the judges. His appeals based on pride in the conclusion of his speech, however, were clearly directed to his listeners on the court:

It is our pride, a matter of just pride and gratulation, that we have in this judiciary a tribunal that will not be swayed by popular error or momentary excitement, - a tribunal that will hear patiently and gravely, deliberate carefully and calmly, and decide according to the well settled principles of law and the Constitution of our country. To this tribunal I now submit the case of the appellant. 68

While this passage contains elements of ethical proof in its praise of the court, a strong emotional appeal based on pride is also present.

67 Ibid., p. 60.
68 Ibid., p. 63.
In summary, Hunt's emotional appeals were limited in number but were highly appropriate for the listeners to whom he addressed them. He appealed to the feelings of authority, honor, pride, loyalty, fear and comradeship before the militia board, while in the Granstein case his appeals were based on pride.

III. EFFECTIVENESS

Randell Hunt was only a small figure in the tempestuous drama of South Carolina politics during nullification. More experienced and better known politicians received more attention even within his own city and state. On the national scene political giants such as Webster, Clay, and Calhoun held the stage. Hunt's role was nonetheless significant. The powerful influence upon the people by the great men of the time was reinforced by the efforts of lesser names. As David Franklin Houston warned, the story of nullification cannot be fully told by fixing "attention to an unwarranted extent on the doings of certain conspicuous public men."69 The local orators shared with their better known counterparts the role of persuading the people.

If John C. Calhoun had not participated in the nullification controversy, its nature would have been undoubtedly altered. However, if Randell Hunt and the many other local leaders had remained inactive, no controversy of importance would have existed.

Hunt's effectiveness, then, should properly be measured in terms of what he contributed to the total impact made by the local leaders. His role cannot be discussed in terms of broad effect on public policy, but rather in terms of his influence on local affairs. Restricting the scope of the problem does not, however, make the task of analyzing effectiveness an easy one. Because he was a minor figure, records of Hunt's activity were not carefully kept, and many details are missing. Indeed, the extent to which his effectiveness can be traced is surprising in itself when his relative obscurity in historical accounts is considered.

Immediate Results

No records at all remain of the immediate surface response to Hunt's South Carolina speeches. Courtroom reaction is not indicated in either the body of the speeches or the reports of the newspapers. The first definite result which can be established in regard to either speech is found in the decisions of the judges.
In the Hamilton case the judges ruled directly against Hunt's argument that Hamilton could not legally hold the position as Brigadier General. The board ruled, however, that the election itself was invalid because some of the votes cast were illegal. The decision recommended a new election.\footnote{Charleston Courier, October 8, 1832. The commanding general of the Division had already declared the election to be invalid because of fraud, and, although the point was not discussed in Hunt's speech, the board apparently adopted the general's ruling without a hearing.}

Hunt had greater success with his argument for Grarstein's citizenship. His argument was accepted by all the judges, including the Nullifier, William Harper. The decision, written by Justice O'Neale, adopted Hunt's legal argument completely and even incorporated some of Hunt's evidence into the opinion. Although a Unionist, O'Neale was unwilling to permit any political inferences to be drawn from his acceptance of Hunt's argument:

> In passing upon this question, it may be useful to premise that we have nothing to do with the consequences of the oath required by the Act of Congress. We are only to declare what the law is, not the obligation which the oath imposes.\footnote{Ibid., April 12, 1833. The decision was printed in full.}

The judges seem to have agreed with Hunt that part of his appeal to national pride was directed only to the public mind.
Long Range Effects

The effect of Hunt's two speeches did not end with the vote of the judges. Both speeches were printed and thus gained a wider audience. Although the exact number of newspapers which carried the speeches is not known, they both appeared in the Charleston Courier which was a leading Unionist organ, and the Hamilton speech was also distributed in pamphlet form. Because of the excitement raised by the two cases, the speeches were probably widely read.

Two specific results of the Granstein argument occurred after the case was settled. The Unionists used the decision to refute claims of the Nullifiers that there was legally no such thing as a citizen of the United States. The Nullifiers thus suffered an ideological loss and the political position of the Unionists in the contest for control of the votes of new citizens was strengthened.

Another effect of the speech was less favorable to the Union cause. Indirectly Hunt's success contributed to the downfall of the court of appeals. After the court rendered two more decisions favorable to the Unionists, with Justice Harper dissenting in these cases, the Nullifiers in the legislature removed the threat of further unfavorable
decisions by abolishing the court.\textsuperscript{72}

After the Hamilton decision, the Unionists refused to participate in the new election, and Hamilton retained his position as Brigadier General. As a result of the Unionists' defeat, however, some of them adopted new tactics, and Hunt became a leader of the militant faction of the party which sought to arm special unionist military groups. Although the Hamilton speech was not itself militant in tone, its failure was almost certainly a factor in causing a segment of the Union Party to realize that the Nullifiers would not be stopped by legal arguments. The Unionists were thus forced into a more aggressive position in regard to military force, and for a time the threat of civil war hung over the state.\textsuperscript{73}

\textbf{Speech Content as an Indication of Effectiveness}

Evidence of rhetorical display is almost entirely absent from the texts of Hunt's two speeches. All the speaker's points appear to have been employed to influence his judges on a particular point. Repeatedly the speaker


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{73}Herbert Everett Putnam, \textit{Joel Roberts Poinsett, A Political Biography} (Washington: Mineoform Press, 1935), pp. 143-36.}
emphasized the conclusion he wished to have drawn from an illustration or an authority, and even his most emotional passages were obviously designed to move his listeners to accept the contentions which he supported with logic. In short, almost no material is present in either text which was superfluous to the speaker's purpose.

No indication exists to suggest that the written speeches were prepared for their literary effect. The frequent use of the first person and the repetition of stock phrases such as "may it please the court" rob the speeches of any literary value they might have as essays or political discourses.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the content of the speeches assumes that the texts are reasonably accurate records of what Hunt actually said. From the presence of footnotes in both printed speeches it is clear that Hunt either wrote the speeches out or added notes to a text from court records. However, frequent references to the immediate situation, to the judges, and to the opposition are thoroughly interwoven in the argument. If the speech was written out, the writer must be credited with having done an excellent job of re-creating a court room scene.

In conclusion, the content of the speeches can be judged effective on a technical basis. They appear to be
accurate records of arguments void of both display and attempts at literary effect.

**Effectiveness in Judging Trends of the Future**

Hunt believed that the United States could not survive as a great power if the national government could be thwarted by state action. He achieved his greatest success in his steady devotion to this single political ideal which was finally to be accepted almost universally. Sectionalism and expediency did not blind him, in 1833 or later, to the larger currents of history which were drawing America toward greater national political unity.

Ironically, the extent of Hunt's success in predicting the future was rarely evident during his own lifetime. Late in 1833, the battle in South Carolina appeared hopeless. The Nullifiers had gained firm control of the state and were prepared to continue the battle of ideas. Randell Hunt and other local Union leaders "would have to be driven from the state," wrote one of Calhoun's biographers, "if the Nullifiers were to carry out their plans."^74

Randell Hunt and his brothers decided to move to New Orleans, and Hunt left Charleston in defeat but with unshaken conviction in the ideas for which he spoke.

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CHAPTER III

SPEAKING DURING THE LOUISIANA WHIG PERIOD

When forced to leave South Carolina, Randell Hunt chose to move to New Orleans largely because of the "inevitable litigation" accompanying the rapid commercial development of the city. Legal work for New Orleans businessmen provided Hunt with a lucrative law practice and a vested interest in the commercial growth of the city and the state. He soon became a spokesman for mercantile interests in politics as well as before the courts.

The business interests in New Orleans were aligned politically with the Henry Clay wing of the Whig party, and, during his first twenty years in Louisiana, Hunt's advocacy of Clay's policies became the unifying theme in his public speeches. Clay's support of governmental aid for economic growth became the major issue in Hunt's oratory during the period from 1834 to 1853 in which Whiggery flourished and died in Louisiana.

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1Thomas Hunt, op. cit., p. 70.
During the period of the Whig party's existence in Louisiana, political debates were concerned with issues which proved to be important in the state's history. A brief description of the history of the period, then, and an examination of the specific occasions on which Hunt spoke will serve to make an analysis of his argument more meaningful.

I. THE SPEAKING SITUATION

**Historical Background**

Politics and economics were almost inseparable in public affairs during the life of the Whig party. Economic conditions and the nature of political parties can be regarded as the two most important influences on political debate.

Most of the public issues which were heatedly debated in Louisiana from 1834 to 1853 cannot be fully understood without considering the economic conditions of the time. During the entire period Louisiana grew rapidly although beset occasionally by severe economic setbacks. Each financial panic was followed by renewed expansion. Lands were still opening up in the state, agricultural output was increasing, and New Orleans was struggling to become the major center of commerce for the vast region connected to the city by the Mississippi River.
The tremendous growth during this period is reflected in the increase in population of New Orleans from fifty thousand in 1830 to over one hundred and sixteen thousand in 1850.\(^2\) The city rivaled New York as a port and from 1835 to 1842 exceeded the larger city in banking capital.\(^3\) Questions of tariffs, banking laws, and internal improvements were continuously argued in public and in the state legislature.

In the active two party system which flourished in the state, the Whig and Democratic factions were the rallying points for divergent economic points of view. The Whigs encouraged government support of vested economic interests while the Democrats wanted no government programs which might favor the established rather than the developing capitalist.

Although a Democratic congressman from Louisiana might condescend to vote for a protective tariff to help a neighboring sugar planter, the national programs of the parties were followed closely by state politicians. Clay's support for a national bank, protective tariffs, and broad internal improvements was matched in Louisiana by local Whig demands.


for state supported banks, aid to commercial activity, and improvement of state transportation. The Democrats fought these programs and, proclaiming themselves the champions of the common man, advocated expansion of the suffrage.\(^4\)

Broad generalizations about the membership of the two major parties cannot be completely accurate. As historian Avery Craven points out, "Louisiana politics were... always complex. Planter and merchant, city and country, rich and poor, formed strange combinations in the Whig and Democratic parties..."\(^5\) In general, however, the Whig party may be considered the party of the city merchant and of the planter who held large numbers of slaves.\(^6\) This power structure has been described by one authority as the "urban commercial and banking interests" which also attracted many planters, lawyers, editors, and various others who were dependent on these interests.\(^7\)


\(^7\)Charles Grier Sellers, Jr., "Who were the Southern Whigs?" *American Historical Review*, LIX (1954), 343.
The Democratic party, in general, relied for its support on the city working man in combination with the small farmer and those who shared his economic interests. The party found its greatest strength in the northern part of the state where the farmers moving into the region were already converted to the limited government policies of Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun.

The two parties fought a twenty year battle in which the control of office and policy belonged at times to both. The Whigs, who reached the peak of their power in the early 1840's, elected every governor until 1842, and the Democrats controlled that office consistently thereafter. On only two occasions did the state give a majority vote to a Whig presidential candidate and in both of those elections, 1840 and 1848, the Whig was elected. In the state house and senate both parties maintained powerful representation until the Whig party collapsed.  

The constitutional conventions of 1845 and 1852 also provide an insight into the relative strength of the

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parties. In 1845 the factions were nearly equal while in 1852 the Whigs, although they had been unable to elect a governor for ten years, won a commanding lead.

The shift of the balance of power from one party to another had a direct effect on the economic policy of the government of Louisiana. Three distinct phases emerged during the lifetime of the Whig party. First, when the party came into being in Louisiana in 1834, government aid to private economic projects was widespread.

Unfortunately for the Whigs, however, a national financial panic erupted in 1837 and was followed by another in 1839. The state government was deeply involved in the crises because of its heavy investments in companies chartered to do banking and build railroads, canals, or even hotels. The Whigs had pledged the state's support for vast amounts of stock in private corporations although government reserves did not equal the value of the stocks it backed. For example, before 1840 the state had guaranteed half the banking capital in Louisiana and in 1839 was unable to pay the banks a debt of $75,000. By 1841 the amount had increased to $850,000, and in 1843 the debt was $1,200,000.11

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10 Merl Reed, "Boom or Bust, Louisiana's Economy During the 1830's," *Louisiana History*, IV (Winter, 1963), 48.

11 Greer, *op. cit.*, XII (1929), 401.
When runs on the banks began, supplies of hard currency soon ran low, and banks, with the state unable to put up the money it had promised, suspended specie payment. Two crucial political developments followed. First, the Democrats began to urge passage of a broad legislative banking bill which was enacted in 1842. The bill established a powerful Board of Currency which by law could have as members no bank officers or directors. Given broad powers in spite of angry Whig protests, the Board was authorized "thoroughly to examine the affairs of any bank whenever they deem it expedient to do so. . . ." The 1842 bill also ordered the banks to resume specie payment.

In the second development some Democrats argued that Louisiana should follow the lead of some states by repudiating its debts in order to free itself from the financial tangle. The Whigs, with Hunt as a conspicuous leader, argued that the state should be lenient in enforcing the laws and should not consider repudiating its debt.

After the panic, financial affairs were unstable for several years, and government interference in the economy was regarded with distrust by many in Louisiana. As a result, when the Constitutional Convention of 1845 was called, a second phase of economic policy began. The

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12Caldwell, op. cit., p. 80.
Democrats, with a narrow majority in the convention, pushed through articles which forbade the state to charter banks or buy stocks in any private corporation. Until 1852 these limitations were the source of bitter Whig criticism. The Whigs argued that banking capital and better transportation aided all citizens and that the state should represent the public interest by advancing financial support for these projects. Admitting the need for certain reforms in their earlier free spending programs, the Whigs charged that the Democratic restrictions were unduly harsh and had resulted in a loss of trade and a lack of manufacturing in the state. The voters responded to these arguments, which were coupled with timely Whig support of more liberal suffrage, by sending eighty-nine Whigs and only forty-five Democrats to the Constitutional Convention of 1852.

Although the Whigs enacted their economic philosophy into state law in 1852, the third phase of the states economic policy was marked by the political extinction of the party. Contrary to Judah P. Benjamin's sanguine belief that control of the convention meant future control


14 Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 597.
of the state,\textsuperscript{15} the party was unable to withstand the conflict over slavery which shattered the national organization.

The avenues opened for expanded economic activity were not explored. The state relied too heavily on its natural resources, complained the editor of the \textit{Commercial Bulletin}, and by refusing to build and invest it failed to grow.\textsuperscript{16}

While non-economic issues also attracted the attention of Louisiana's political parties during the period under consideration, the Whigs attempted to minimize all issues which might tend to split the party. The results were not always good for their own long range interests. In 1844 Henry Clay hoped to ignore the Texas annexation question to avoid inter-party fights; but when the Democrats seized the issue, Clay lost the presidency. The results of the party's efforts to avoid the slavery issue were even more disastrous. Differences of opinion between North and South grew rapidly and after the 1852 election the party was no longer able to hold its factions together. Its fall in Louisiana was striking. After a vigorous campaign for


\textsuperscript{\textit{16}}\textit{Commercial Bulletin}, October 4, 1855. All newspapers cited hereafter were published in New Orleans unless otherwise noted.
Scott in 1852, the state elections of 1855 found the Whigs completely replaced by a new party.17

In summary, two powerful political parties faced each other during this period with economic issues dominating party differences. These issues were debated heatedly as the parties vied for public support.

Specific Speaking Occasions

The speeches by Randell Hunt which will be discussed in this chapter fell into two general categories. His most openly partisan speeches were delivered at political rallies before audiences in New Orleans and in other Louisiana towns which he frequently toured. He also supported Whig measures in his deliberative speeches in the Legislature (1841-1844) and in the Constitutional Convention of 1852.18

The importance of political oratory in conducting public affairs of the time can hardly be overemphasized. When the Whigs were active, Louisiana had a thriving two party system which was characterized by full public discussion of political issues.

17Creer, op. cit., XII (1929), 608, XIII (1930), 87.

18Hunt's legal speeches and law lectures will not be discussed in the analysis of his argument although both sources have provided helpful background information. The legal speeches contain numerous technical points, and the only law lectures available were revised after the Civil War.
Party speeches had two general objectives which reveal the importance of oratory in elections. Their first purpose was to keep up party spirit in order to get the regular voters to the polls. The Whigs especially were plagued by party division and stay-at-home voters, and the combined efforts of the orators and the press were required to get out the vote. The second purpose of party oratory was to convert voters. Although large numbers of partisans were present at political rallies, opponents and neutrals also attended, and each party claimed the ability to change voters' minds. The hard core members of both parties were not numerous, and some voters frequently crossed party lines. In the presidential elections of 1840 and 1848, for example, the Whig victories were credited not to an increased vote by party regulars but to Democratic defections to Harrison and Taylor.

Political speeches were not limited to election times as is shown by the following letter to the Picayune calling for a meeting on the bank issue in 1838:

Gentlemen--The votaries of "the powers that be," the Democrats, intend to hold a meeting on Wed. night at the New Exchange, to express their opinions against the Banks. How do you think it would do for the Whigs also to call one, for the same evening, at the Merchants' Exchange in order to express a part of the public voice on the other side of the question?

19Daily Picayune, January 23, 1838.
The editor replied that "it might do very well" and urged the Whigs to "go ahead." The meeting was held and the Whigs passed a series of resolutions supporting a national bank and gave their enthusiastic applause to a speech by Randell Hunt devoted to praise of Henry Clay.

The political rally had several distinguishing features which marked it as a unique speaking occasion. The role of political clubs, the procedure at the meetings, and the length and number of speeches were generally the same at all meetings.

Political clubs were always formed to supplement the regular party machinery during campaigns. Their meetings provided numerous occasions for political speeches, and when larger rallies were held the clubs played an important role. They added spectacle to the occasions with their campaign paraphernalia and also assured large, enthusiastic audiences for the speakers.

Because of the concentration of oratorical talent in New Orleans, the political clubs in the city often provided speakers for the rest of the state during campaigns. Randell Hunt, for example, visited several Louisiana towns in the presidential campaigns of 1844 and 1848. In 1852 he made an extensive tour outside the city, a practice he was to repeat for later elections. The 1852 tour included
speeches at Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Cheneyville, Opelousas, Natchitoches, Many, Shreveport, and Mansfield.\textsuperscript{40}

The procedure in the public meetings for the entire ante-bellum period was almost ritualistic. The meetings began with noisy and colorful parades to the speakers' stand from some distant point in the city. Fireworks, lighted transparencies, distinctive uniforms, and occasional bloodshed added excitement to this stage of the proceedings. The first official act of a rally, at times taking place before the parade arrived at the stand, was the election of officers. A chairman, perhaps a few secretaries, and a large number of vice-chairmen were chosen loudly and unanimously from a previously prepared list of names in the hands of a temporary chairman. Sometimes resolutions were proposed and adopted, with speeches coming both before and after. The presidential campaign of 1840 added perhaps more music to the speaking situation than was usually found, but bands and glee clubs were not uncommon in any election campaign.

Usually gathered around a platform lighted by torches in one of the city squares, the crowds apparently made themselves comfortable as best they could since seats were

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Bee}, October 26, 1852.
provided only for the dignitaries and, at times, for the press. The physical arrangements at a typical political rally at which Hunt spoke are described in part below:

An extensive and spacious platform was erected nearly opposite the junction of Carondelet and Canal Streets, fronting towards the Levee. In the rear of the platform, supported upon a marbled entablature, was a full length transparency of old Rough and Ready in the old brown coat, surmounted by a handsome American Eagle and wreathed with evergreens, while upon each side three American flags were gracefully draped. The top of the entablature was decorated with evergreens and at each extreme was a large star composed of small lamps. Around the platform supported upon posts, were chafing dishes containing some burning substance—these also extended along the neutral ground as far as Camp Street and shed a brilliant light upon the assemblage.21

Speeches on all political occasions were expected to be long and numerous. Randell Hunt almost never spoke for less than two hours and he often shared the platform with two or three other major speakers. Newspaper reports in many instances stated that the length of the speeches made full publication in their columns impractical and urged Hunt to have certain of his speeches published in pamphlet form.

At some of the rallies display rather than argument absorbed the attention of one or the other of the parties to an unwarranted extent. In 1851, for example, the

21Daily Picayune, June 25, 1848.
Democrats complained that they had beaten the Whigs two to one in their parades and had nevertheless lost the election. Essentially, however, both the organization and the pageantry of the parties were designed to gather large crowds and put them in a receptive frame of mind for listening to the party orators.

The size, individual characteristics, and the attitudes of the audiences which Hunt faced in his political speeches were obviously important components of the speaking situation. Naturally the audiences were varied in size. Some of the speeches were delivered before audiences small enough to gather in a court house, an exchange building, or even a coffee house. When the weather was favorable, however, the more important political speeches were delivered to large crowds out of doors. Exact estimates are difficult to obtain because of partisan exaggeration in press reports, but some of the larger meetings appear to have had perhaps ten thousand people making an effort to hear. On one occasion the Bee declared that "from seven to ten thousand may be moderately estimated as the number present," and insisted that all listened to Hunt's speech.

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22 Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 587.
23 Bee, June 26, 1848.
In another instance the same newspaper revealed the rationale behind another estimate of an attendance of over 10,000:

The immense area of the Square, which can contain fully thirty thousand persons, was more than half filled, while the space intervening between the Cathedral and the Square, and the adjoining coffee-houses and other public places were densely packed. . . .

The Picayune supported its estimate of a crowd of ten thousand at one rally with the information that fifteen oxen, twenty-five sheep, and twenty-five calves had been slaughtered for the occasion.

Certain indirect evidence also suggests that the crowds were large. For instance, in some cases where the total number of listeners was not reported, the number of dignitaries called to take a place on the speakers' stand frequently was reported to be more than a hundred.

The audiences in the country towns where Hunt spoke were smaller than those in New Orleans. A group in Minden, for example was estimated during a tour in 1852 to number from fifteen hundred to two thousand.

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24 Ibid., October 17, 1848.
25 Daily Picayune, October 26, November 2, 1849.
26 Bee, July 2, 1852, November 2, 1840.
27 Ibid., October 5, 1852.
To put the estimated figures on attendance in proper perspective, the number of people qualified to vote should be cited. Shugh estimates that only seven percent of the white people in New Orleans were registered voters and that in the state as a whole only two-fifths of the adult freemen were enfranchised even after property holding was eliminated as a prerequisite to voting in 1845.\textsuperscript{28} Using the election of 1844 for an example, a crowd of ten thousand at a political rally would have exceeded by about fifteen hundred the total number of votes actually cast for president in the city that year.\textsuperscript{29} Of course, many people in the crowds who heard Hunt speak were disqualified because of nationality or sex. These and other characteristics of the audiences such as economic standing and religion will now be discussed.

New Orleans was a melting pot for many nationalities, and its immigrants attended political rallies. Generally the Whigs fought with one hand to delay or deny voting rights for immigrants while trying with the other to woo their support. At many of the rallies where Hunt spoke, other orators gave their speeches in French, German, and

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Shugh, op. cit.}, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 134.
even Spanish. The French speaking segment of the audiences undoubtedly included, in addition to recent immigrants, many Cajuns and Creoles who were long time residents of the state. Among the immigrants who spoke English the Irish were the most numerous. In short, the audiences showed a considerable variety of rational backgrounds.

In spite of the fact that women could not vote, ladies were frequently in attendance at Hunt's speeches. On one occasion, when Hunt shared the platform with J. S. Frentiss, "the balconies and windows of the adjacent dwellings, were radiant with the presence of hundreds of the fair sex." On one of his tours, during a speech that lasted two and a half hours, "a number of ladies" were reported to be in the audience. At times ladies were given recognition by speakers for preparing banners and flags which were used in political ceremonies.

30 Bee, November 2, 1840, October 17, 1849; Daily Picayune, October 26, 1849.
31 Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 387.
32 Bee, June 26, 1848.
33 Ibid., October 23, 1852.
34 Ibid., October 9, 17, 1844.
Another characteristic of the audiences to which Hunt spoke was a diversity of economic standing. As has already been stated, the Whigs attracted the support of a majority of the mercantile interests of New Orleans. Other elements of the population which did not belong to this group but which depended on the merchants, the bankers, or the planters to some degree, also tended to support the Whig cause. Internal evidence in Hunt's speeches reveals the presence of the lower economic classes in his audiences. For example, he attacked Democratic banking legislation in a speech at a political rally not only because it would hurt the bankers but also because it would "involve the whole community and especially the poorest portion of it in the greatest distress and suffering." 35 The political activity of the workingmen in New Orleans is confirmed by a report that, although a majority of them voted Democratic, "they tried to be nonpartisan, and to support such men as will do justice to the working class of the community." 36

The limited number of references to slavery in Hunt's speeches suggest that he did not believe that slavery was

35Daily Picayune, March 9, 1839.
36Shuff, op. cit., p. 148.
a major economic consideration for most of his listeners. While slaveholders throughout the state did cast over half the total vote, the number of people who owned slaves in New Orleans was small. Although twenty-five per cent of the total population of Louisiana resided in the city, only four per cent of the slaves were found there. 37 While the Hunt family owned slaves who were house servants, this practice was limited to the wealthier families, and the ownership of slaves cannot be considered a major economic characteristic of Hunt's audiences in the city. In the state as a whole the ownership of slaves was limited to less than a third of the population with one-half the owners holding less than five. 38 While sentiment in favor of slavery was overwhelming among the free people in both city and country, it was not rooted directly in slave ownership.

The religious affiliation of a majority of Hunt's listeners varied from place to place. In New Orleans most of the people were Catholic while on the tours of north Louisiana the majority was Protestant. Although religion seems to have no bearing on the specific issues

37 Ibid., p. 315.
38 Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 389.
which Hunt discussed, one authority links the Catholic and conservative traditions which he feels encouraged many to vote for the Whigs. 39

In addition to size and individual characteristics, another important consideration of Hunt's audiences was their attitude toward the speaker and the issues on which he spoke. While, of course, all of Hunt's listeners did not hold exactly the same political views, the attitude of audiences of the time was marked by intense interest in public discussion of political questions. Not a single instance has been located in which the speaker was interrupted by harassment from his audience. Although partisan excitement sometimes erupted into fistfights between individuals, these occurrences were primarily limited to parades and polling places. The crowds showed considerable spirit in their cheers and applause during speeches, but in general they appear to have paid careful attention to the speaker's argument. Their willingness to listen to several hours of oratory and their frequent calls for the continuation of speeches exhibit an attitude of respect for the speaker and concern for the issues.

In summary, the political rallies at which Hunt spoke were generally similar. Carefully and uniformly organized,

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39 Shupp, op. cit., p. 150.
these meetings relied heavily on political clubs to provide both audiences and pageantry for the occasion.
The crowds to which Hunt spoke were at times made up of ten thousand persons and typically were varied in nationality, sex, economic standing, and religion. Their attitude toward Hunt and his arguments was one of respect.

Hunt's deliberative speeches, on the other hand, were given in situations which were considerably less complex. The procedure in these legislative and convention sessions was simple. Also, the audiences were highly homogeneous and their attitudes were sharply and clearly defined.

The procedure during debates in the Louisiana House of Representatives was similar to that in the United States Congress. The speaking was carried out with third person formality under the parliamentary rules of "Jefferson's manual." While personal remarks had to be wrapped in elaborate language, exchanges between opposing members were often warm and party differences were brought into frequent contrast.

While all of the approximately one hundred members were seldom present at every meeting, the size of the immediate audience for legislative debates was often increased by visitors. Several editors of local papers attended regularly and the country press sometimes availed
itself of the services of "correspondents" in the city. The Legislature was also a featured attraction for touring dignitaries such as Henry Clay who once heard Hunt support him as a candidate for the Whig presidential nomination.40

The Constitutional Convention of 1852 presented a situation in Baton Rouge which was quite similar to the operation of the Legislature. The convention differed mainly in that it was larger and more popular with the public. Advance notice of Hunt's plan to speak on an issue sometimes attracted visitors for the specific purpose of listening to his oratory. A reporter indicated that during one of Hunt's speeches "a good many ladies" were in the audience who had come "to the capitol expressly to hear him."41

Hunt's immediate audience for his deliberative speeches was composed of his fellow legislators or delegates. This audience was less diverse in background and in interests than the voting public which had elected the members to office. As one authority concluded,

Louisiana was governed by gentlemen. It made no great difference to the majority of people whether power belonged to Slidell or Benjamin, Democrats

40Daily Picayune, January 26, 1843.
41Daily Delta, July 27, 1852.
or Whigs, the country or the city. . . . Together the planter and the merchant, black belt and city, ruled the state. 42

The audience was sharply divided on party lines during the discussion of many issues, and occasional charges were raised about dictation from Washington. Each party had its own divisions, however, and at times the city and the country or the sugar planter and the cotton planter could not remain together in the same block. In summary, the immediate audiences for Hunt's deliberative speeches were drawn from the higher economic classes and were divided on party lines although special interests sometimes overrode party discipline.

The attitude of Hunt's fellow legislators toward the issues he supported in his deliberative speeches was based largely on party affiliation or special interest. During much of his tenure in the Louisiana House Hunt was in a minority. Sometimes it was a Whig minority and sometimes it was a city minority on questions where party considerations were secondary. In the Constitutional Convention of 1852, on the other hand, Hunt was in a clear Whig majority and found strong support for his arguments from the beginning. Here again, however, the city and country

42 Shupp, op. cit., p. 155.
could not always agree, and on the question of the basis of representation Hunt and a number of the city whigs deserted their party.

The attitude of Hunt's listeners toward his speaking ability was one of universal respect. Both friends and enemies praised his eloquence although the Democratic press implied that he spoke too often and too long.43

In summary, Hunt faced two clearly definable speaking situations in his political and deliberative addresses. The occasion for each type of speech was marked by its own special procedure. The audiences for the political speeches were varied in size and individual characteristics, while the audiences for the deliberative speeches were more homogeneous. The attitude toward the issues on which Hunt spoke was mixed in both situations, but in each case the audiences had great respect for Hunt's ability as a speaker.

II. THE ARGUMENTS

To a large extent, Randell Hunt's Louisiana Whip speeches were concerned with the practical effects of governmental policy on economic questions. State debt,

43Louisiana Courier, April 1, 1844.
banking laws, and internal improvements were subjects which
Hunt frequently discussed.

Logical Proof

Hunt's arguments on economic problems can best be
approached by first explaining the intellectual basis
for his ideas. Then particular issues will be isolated
and the evidence and reasoning with which he supported
his points will be evaluated.

Intellectual Resources of the Speaker. Two basic
ideas which evolved from Randell Hunt's deepest and most
consistent convictions were the intellectual basis for
his arguments or economic policy in Louisiana. First,
Hunt believed that government was properly endowed with
the authority to aid economic growth and development.
Second, he was intensely loyal to the Whig party as the
best means of putting his ideals into practice.

While Hunt had supported a strong national government
in South Carolina, the full extent to which he believed
that government was properly endowed with the authority
to act was not made clear until he began to participate
in Louisiana affairs. 44 In Louisiana, he soon revealed

44 Hunt had made a few very brief notations in South
Carolina in which he indicated his support of a national
tariff. His defense of the tariff, however, could be
characterized as "a matter of right and not of policy."

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his support for the controversial national bank. During the panic of 1837 he wrote to Secretary of War Joel Poinsett:

For my own part, I look for no magical effect from the action of Government. Something may be done for the present, but the great object to be attained is future security, a wise regulation of the currency, & a safe deposit for the public money. I confess I do not see how this can be done without a national bank. To this, the country must resort at last.45

Hunt believed, then, that the federal government should take an active part in supporting the stability of the national economy. Under the national bank plan, one-fifth of the stock would be subscribed by the government and thus the strength of the banking system would be directly tied to the wealth of the nation.

Hunt warned in the Poinsett letter that "once dissolve this Union, & our national strength & prosperity are gone." This relationship between Unionism and prosperity, which Hunt stressed frequently in his speeches, represented the conclusions drawn from a political philosophy which envisioned governmental support for business through internal improvements and protective tariffs as well as a subsidized banking system.

The national bank, perhaps more than any other issue, illustrates the differences between the Henry Clay Whigs'...

policy of a government active in the economy and the
Jacksonian Democrats' policy of restricted government.
The bank question was repeatedly raised by the whigs, and
in his campaign for election to the State Legislature in
1841, Hunt was asked by a number of Whig voters if he
believed "in the constitutionality and expediency of a
National Bank." His answer was published in the Bee:

I reply by repeating what I have invariably
maintained in elaborate public address--I believe
a National Bank not only to be constitutional,
but to be absolutely necessary to the welfare and
prosperity of the country.46

The Democrats as well as the whigs claimed that their
position was supported by the constitution. The Democrats
insisted that the bank idea was illegal since no specific
clause in the constitution authorized it. The whigs, on
the other hand, had no difficulty in justifying under the
implied powers of government not only the bank, but the
protective tariff and internal improvements as well. A
statement by Hunt in a legislative debate reveals the
commercial orientation of his party and also the extent
to which a spirit of mercantilism had pervaded the basic
thinking process of Whiggery. "The constitution," stated
a report of Hunt's speech, "had been framed for commercial

46Bee, September 21, 1841.
purposes, and for the collection of revenue." Control of commerce, the speaker was reported as adding, "was the principle cause that led to the formation of the constitution." 47

Hunt's nationalism, then, is seen to be closely united with his beliefs. While not discounting other more altruistic motivations, the economic basis for Hunt's Unionism was unquestionably significant.

The principle that the government should actively aid the economy applied to Hunt's thinking on state as well as national issues. Since the Congress failed to pass Clay's national bank bill over President Tyler's veto, the Whigs could turn only to the states for favorable bank legislation. In Hunt's opinion, "the general government had failed to perform its duty of regulating the currency," 48 and he led the fight in Louisiana to stabilize banking by government support and to prevent what he considered to be oppressive state laws regulating the banks. Also, in matters such as paying the state debt and promoting internal improvements he waged a local battle for the Whig principle that government was properly endowed with power to aid the economy.

47 Ibid., February 16, 1843.
48 Ibid., January 7, 1842.
This political philosophy was expressed in a political speech in 1851, in which Hunt began by citing the economic advancement of the nation and commenting on the "failure of Louisiana "to keep pace with her sister States in the great march of progress." He then asked,

What is the cause of this? Why is it that New Orleans has been thus arrested in her progress? Why is it that the State of Louisiana, with her fertile soil and great natural resources, has not kept pace with her sister states?

In his answer, Hunt attacked the Constitution of 1845 which denied the state government the power to aid the economy.

The cause may be found in the mal-government of the State. The Constitution of the State is a failure. The Constitution is bad, and the legislation under the Constitution has been bad. For the last five years the government of Louisiana has been a failure.

Apart from his economic orientation, Hunt's affiliation with the Whig party was the next most significant force in directing his thinking. Although he obviously joined the Whig organization because its policies were compatible with his own views, his loyalty to the party nevertheless controlled to some degree the ideas about which he spoke.

40 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 94.

50 Ibid., p. 95.

51 Ibid.
For example, the party as a whole chose the candidates, and Hunt often supported individuals he had not originally favored. He was also required to defend the policies of the national party and specifically to support the party platform in a given election.

The extent to which Hunt was a party man is partly revealed by his answers to two of the questions asked of him in the 1841 legislative campaign.

To the third question—"Will you, if elected, vote for a Whig Senator to Congress, in the event of the resignation of Alexander Mouton?"—I respond; if elected, I will, in the event of Alexander Mouton's resignation, vote for a Whig to supply his place.

To the fourth question—"Will you support Whig measures in general, which may come before the legislature of Louisiana at the ensuing session?"—I answer; I will always faithfully and to the best of my abilities, support the Whig measures which may be submitted to my consideration.52

In 1844 Hunt lost the Whig nomination for Congress and made a speech supporting his former opponent. The editor of the Bee noted this example of party loyalty and concluded that "the observations of Mr. Hunt were doubly creditable to his genuine Whig spirit, and magnanimity of character."53

52 Bee, September 21, 1841.
53 Ibid., June 26, 1844.
An explanation of Hunt's affiliation with the Whig party must include a discussion of his admiration for Henry Clay. While the Whig party was at times vague in setting forth the details of its national program, Clay's policies were well known and can be considered the bedrock of Whig doctrine as it was accepted in Louisiana. Hunt supported Clay consistently, and, no matter who the party candidate for president might be, Clay's policies remained for Hunt the real measure of Whig principles. Hunt's support of Clay is illustrated by the following report of a legislative speech which Hunt gave when Clay was present:

The whips—said the speaker, fixing his eye on Henry Clay, who was sitting within the railing listening to the debate—the whips know their man. Round him they will rally—for he is the faithful advocate of their principles. When the day of battle comes they will hoist his standard and march on to certain victory.

The allegation by Hunt's nephew, Judge William Henry Hunt, that Hunt was on "intimate" terms with Clay is perhaps an overstatement, but the two men were well acquainted. Hunt accepted Clay's invitation to visit his Kentucky plantation, Ashland, and met him on several other occasions.

54 Cole, op. cit., pp. 53-56.
55 Daily Picayune, January 26, 1843.
occasions. No record of any correspondence from Hunt exists in the vast collection of Clay papers, and only one brief but cordial letter from Clay to Hunt remains as a record of their association.\textsuperscript{57}

The significance of Henry Clay's effect on Randell Hunt's political ideas was, however, unquestionably significant. Hunt supported Clay in his earliest political speeches in Louisiana and continued to argue for Clay's program after the Whig leader's death.\textsuperscript{58}

In summary, Randell Hunt's arguments during the period of the Whig party's life in Louisiana rested on two premises. First, he believed in a strong government which would actively support the economy, and, secondly, he believed that the Whig party under the leadership of Henry Clay offered the best chance of implementing this program.

**Argumentative Development.** Hunt's Louisiana speeches reveal the same conscious application of reasoning and evidence found in his South Carolina addresses. The passage below, taken from a description of a legislative

\textsuperscript{57}Letter from Henry Clay to Randell Hunt, New Orleans, April 9, 1851 \( \_\_ \) year estimated\( \_\_ \) (MSS in the Department of Archives, Tulane University).

\textsuperscript{58}Daily Picayune, January 25, 1838. Daily Crescent, July 2, 1852.
debate is typical of Hunt's references to his argumentative development.

The gentleman from West Feliciana had begun his argument by saying that they would beg the question, and he afterwards declared they had begged the question. Did the gentleman know the meaning of the words he had used? To beg a question was to take for granted the matter in dispute. But had he (Mr. Hunt) done this? Had he not established his position logically, by proofs and by reasoning?59

In order to analyze systematically Hunt's "proofs and reasoning," three representative arguments will be discussed. Three economic questions on which Hunt spoke will be examined. They are: (1) arguments against repudiation of state debts, (2) arguments on banking laws, and (3) arguments in support of internal improvements.

Arguments against repudiation. In the 1842 Legislature Hunt was the chief spokesman for the argument that Louisiana should declare its intention to stand behind its debts in the prolonged aftermath of the panic of 1837. He introduced a resolution which stated in part:

The General Assembly of the State of Louisiana feel it due to themselves, and those who have confided in the State, to declare that they hold her pledged faith as sacred and inviolable; and that they regard a repudiation of State obligations as unconstitutional and unjust. . . .60

59 *Bee*, February 25, 1843.

60 Ibid., February 19, 1842.
Hunt based his attack against repudiation on two supporting points. First he contended that a stand should be taken against repudiation to maintain public confidence and, second, he insisted that the state had a national responsibility to denounce repudiation. The reasoning behind his first supporting point can be expressed in the following hypothetical syllogism arranged in logically correct form:

**Major Premise:** If public confidence in the economy should be maintained, then repudiation must be denounced by the state.

**Minor Premise:** Public confidence should be maintained.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, repudiation must be denounced.

Hunt's political opponents accepted the minor premise in his reasoning but argued that the public's confidence did not need to be reassured. Even the conservative *Daily Picayune*, fully aware of the need for public calm to keep the economy stable, expressed the view that Hunt's resolution was "extra legislation" and insisted that the state's credit was not in doubt.61 A majority of the members of the state senate rejected Hunt's view and charged that his efforts to reassure the public might have the opposite effect and create distrust.

61 *Daily Picayune*, February 8, 1942.
In support of his point that the state should reiterate its intention to pay its debts Hunt used examples and statistics. The specific examples of the "extraordinary circumstances of the times" which Hunt employed to show the need for restoring confidence included: (1) the disruption of the money system,62 (2) the renewal of the national debt, (3) depreciation of state bonds, and (5) the repudiation of its debt by the state of Mississippi.63

For the state of Louisiana specifically, Hunt cited statistics to show that if no public announcement were made, there might be substantial reason for the public to worry. Using figures from the state treasurer's report and from a speech by the governor he cited the growth of state loans. He also quoted statistics to show the extent to which the state was out-spending its income, and he referred to additional losses of money on various internal improvement projects. He further stressed that the state had issued bonds in the amount of approximately twenty-two million dollars. Hunt contended that all these figures showed that public confidence needed to be restored because

62 As there was not enough specie currency to conduct business and there was no national paper money, commerce relied largely on bank notes which had depreciated considerably.

63 Bee, February 19, 1942.
of the great extent to which the state was involved in the economy. He concluded,

Could the state with honor fold her arms in cold indifference, and see her just creditors suffer from the distrust growing out of such a state of things? Was she not bound to speak out—to dispel all idle fears and distrust, and protect at a period of general distress and alarm, the interests of those who confided in her?

The reasoning behind Hunt's first contention can be reduced to a simple causal relation. The validity of his logic thus rests on the question of whether unsettled economic conditions can be accepted as a sufficient cause for weakening public confidence. Several tests of causal reasoning may be applied. First, mere coincidence does not account for the frequently observed relationship between conditions and confidence. Second, the adequacy of unsettled monetary matters as a force capable of undermining confidence may be accepted. Third, other possible causes of the alleged effect may be considered irrelevant as the speaker argued merely that the cause he pointed to was sufficient and not necessarily the only matter for concern. The logic of the point may be accepted as valid, and the argument depends, then, on the speaker's use of evidence.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{4}Ibid.}\]
Hunt presented sufficient examples and statistics to justify his case that public confidence was in danger of weakening. His audience of fellow legislators, men with capital invested in the business of the state, had witnessed on several occasions the results of frantic efforts by the public to convert their money into gold when business credit began to falter. To offer reasonable proof to this audience, Hunt did not have to show that runs on the banks, for example, were actually under way. He only had to establish a sufficient danger that panic might occur again if not offset by some stabilizing influence. His examples of the perilous state of credit were adequate, first of all, because they were not isolated instances but were typical of business conditions following the financial crises. Second, the examples appear to have been fairly selected as they were drawn not from a single area affecting the public credit but from several (the money system, debt, loss of faith in state bonds, and actual revocation of debt by some states). Hunt's examples were also current and were unquestionably pertinent to the lack of public confidence even though the original causes of the panic were not discussed.

Hunt's statistics also presented a bleak picture of the state's financial condition. The figures he used were
accurate, based on official reports, and the data, describing debt, income, and bad investments, presented information from which doubt about the state's credit might properly arise. Since the figures revealed that the state was in poor financial condition, Hunt's conclusion that this information would weaken public confidence must be considered correct. The appropriateness of the material might be expected to have been evident to the legislators who were experienced in business affairs.

As a second argument to establish his point that the state should publicly announce its intention to pay its debts, Hunt insisted that the action was a rational obligation. He supported his contention with comparisons as examples of other states which had passed resolutions similar to the one he advocated, Hunt cited Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. He enlarged upon one of the examples by reading excerpts from the Kentucky resolution. He argued that Louisiana should follow the same course, to "proclaim to the world that Louisiana in common with Kentucky and other states of the Union, holds the doctrine of repudiation as anti-republican and immoral." ^6^6

^5^Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 401.

^6^Bee, February 18, 1842.
Hunt did not support the logical validity of his comparisons by explaining how the situation in Louisiana was similar to the conditions in the states to which he referred, nor did he show the basis for his assertion that his examples demonstrated a rational obligation on the part of Louisiana to avoid repudiation. In lieu of argument he supplied repetition. At one point he declared:

The states have a close and direct interest in the honor and prosperity of one another, and the pledged faith of one of the States could not be repudiated without such repudiation giving rise to suspicions and distrust against the faith and credit of the others.\(^7\)

Later he stated that the people of Louisiana were "in a national sense the fellow citizens of the people of the United States of America," and the states, he added, had "a close and direct interest in the honor and prosperity of one another." Every American citizen, he concluded, was "interested in maintaining American credit."\(^8\)

Although Hunt supplied numerous comparisons as evidence for his point, his logic was weak because the argument was not developed. As a result, he may be considered as having presented adequate precedent for the

\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Ibid.
action he proposed but not as having proved it as a
national obligation.

In summary, Hunt's arguments on repudiation contained
considerable evidence in the form of examples, statistics,
and comparisons. This evidence was used with sound reason-
ing in one of his points, but in the other the evidence
did not fully support the speaker's assertion.

Arguments on banking. Throughout his term in the
Louisiana House of Representatives, Randell Hunt argued for
state support for banking but against almost all controls
or regulations of the banks proposed by the Democrats.
His attack against controls was centered on the omnibus
bank bill of 1942 which, even after it passed, was the
subject of numerous debates and amendments. Hunt objected
strongly to features of the bill which (1) set up a Board
of Currency to oversee the activities of the banks and
(2) provided for a return to specie payment before the
banks were ready for it.

The reasoning behind his argument on the Board of
Currency can be expressed in the following categorical
syllogism which is presented in logically correct form:

Major Premise: No unqualified body should regulate
banking affairs.

Minor Premise: The Board of Currency is unqualified.

Conclusion: Therefore, the Board of Currency should
not regulate banking affairs.
Examples of interference and incompetence on the part of the Board became Hunt's major evidence in support of his premise that the members of the board were not qualified to regulate banks. For one example, he pointed out that they were unable to make up their minds on the solvency of the banks and sent conflicting reports to the governor. To prove his point, he cited the various reports the Board had submitted.

Another example which showed that the Board was incompetent, said Hunt, was the inability of its members to discover fraud even though they had access to the banks' records. In one instance where the Board claimed to have uncovered a fraud, Hunt denied that they had had a part in it. He "reviewed the testimony in the case to prove that the fraud had been discovered and laid before the public by the Managers of the Citizens' Bank."  

Hunt also cited the Board's policy of ignoring the difference between the sound and unsound banks in the city. The Board had proposed that each bank should accept the notes of every other bank. Hunt replied that the proposition that the banks should receive each other's notes in payment, was truly a notable method of separating the solvent from the insolvent.

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69 Ibid, March 23, 1843.

70 Ibid.
hanks. Suppose this had been the case, every specie paying bank would have been plunged into deep and hopeless bankruptcy... 71

Although Hunt was able to supply several examples of mistakes made by the Board of Currency which were representative, current, and factual, his evidence was not altogether appropriate for his audience. A majority of the members of the Legislature clearly did not want qualified bankers or bank experts on the board. Still reacting to the aftermath of the panics of the late thirties, the legislature may be considered, as a whole, somewhat anti-bank in attitude. The House was less interested in a qualified board than it was in having an independent body free to investigate the banks at will.

Hunt's next argument, against the early resumption of specie payment in 1842, can be reduced to the following formally correct hypothetical syllogism:

Major Premise: If economic conditions are unsettled, then specie payments cannot be resumed.

Minor Premise: Economic conditions are unsettled.

Conclusion: Therefore, specie payment cannot be resumed.

Since the state Legislature had permitted the banks to default on their obligation to pay specie during the

71 Ibid.
panic, the major premise of Hunt's reasoning was clearly accepted. In 1842, however, some legislators were arguing that conditions were safe enough to resume payment. Hunt used authority to attack this position.

In part Hunt used as his authority the report of the committee which introduced the bill he opposed.

He believed, with them, that the staple production of the state had diminished in quantity and depreciated in value— that this had raised the rate of exchange and increased our commercial embarrassments, or, in the words of the report, was at once their cause and consequence.\(^2\)

Hunt agreed with the bank committee in their general view, but asked them not "to apply a cure which would increase the disease."

Turning to other authority Hunt attempted to show that the economic conditions described in the report were more serious than the members realized.

He read an extract from the evidence taken before the bullion committee of the British legislature, and quoted other authorities to show that specie payments cannot be safely maintained by a country against which the balance of payments lies, which is now . . . the case with this state.\(^3\)

Hunt also turned to the bank bill itself as a source.

The bill recognized the unsettled state of economic affairs,

\(^2\)Daily Picayune, January 7, 1842.

\(^3\)Ibid.
Hunt argued, because it had a provision by which the governor could make the entire law void "in case of unforeseen circumstances."^74

Hunt’s authority, taken in part from opposition sources, was unbiased and reliable in its factual content. It was not, however, especially well suited for the audience because the supporters of the bank bill recognized the conditions pointed to by the speaker but did not consider these conditions sufficiently had to withhold specie payment any longer. In short, they did not accept the conclusions that Hunt drew from his authorities.

Hunt’s arguments on banking laws were not always in opposition to proposed legislation. He advocated a positive program of state supported banks, for example, during the Whig campaign for a new state constitution in the early 1850’s. In 1851 Hunt delivered a major political speech in New Orleans in favor of state help for banks.^75 His argument rested on the basic premise of the following valid syllogism, the minor premise of which was generally accepted:

Major Premise: If prosperity is desired, then the state must aid banks.

^74Bee, January 7, 1842.

^75William Henry Hunt, op. cit., pp. 94-127.
Minor Premise: Prosperity is desired.

Conclusion: Therefore, the state must aid banks.

In his 1851 speech Hunt argued first that there was a lack of prosperity created by the failure of the state to support banks, and, second, that state supported banks would provide prosperity. First, to show the failure of the banks, Hunt gave examples of the shortage of capital. He stated that under the existing system the total circulation of bank notes in the city was less than three and a half million dollars.76 This amount of capital, which was less than it had been in previous years,77 was not enough for New Orleans, Hunt argued. As another example of the need for more banking, Hunt pointed to the city's commerce which required larger sums of money:

Look along the levee, and consider the vast quantities of produce under which it annually groans! You will see at a glance that our bank issues are utterly inadequate to our commercial wants.78

Hunt further attacked conditions in New Orleans by giving examples of less restricted capital in other

76 Ibid., p. 101.

77 Ibid., Caldwell, op. cit., p. 127. Statewide circulation of bank notes had increased slowly since 1841, but had not reached the amount of the days before the panic.

78 William Henry Hunt, loc. cit.
cities. Without developing his argument into a full comparison of the cities, he merely cited the proportionally greater banking facilities in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and asked, "How is it possible under such circumstances for New Orleans to compete with them?" 79

Hunt explained, through a series of examples, the advantages of incorporation which were denied to banks under Louisiana law. 80 These advantages, which were designed primarily to protect the individual stockholder and to give a bank a legal existence apart from its owners, were necessary, Hunt declared, in order to encourage investment.

Hunt's next argument, that state supported banks would help to create prosperity, was also supported by examples. Probably because the Whig system of banking prior to 1845 had been so unstable, Hunt's first evidence was used to show that sufficient safeguards would be included in the system. In giving examples of how the system would work, Hunt stated first that the state would regulate the stock of the bank. Second, the state would regulate the banks' circulating notes. Not only would

79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 103.
the amount of the notes he controlled by state law based on the amount of stock, but the state would also appoint an official to countersign all banknotes. This system would provide money officially printed by the government although the notes would be issued by the different banks. Third, the state would provide that when the banks could not pay in specie on demand, then their stock would be liquidated to furnish the money.\textsuperscript{81} He further supported the Whig system by citing specific examples of its success in New York and Massachusetts.\textsuperscript{82}

Hunt enumerated the benefits which the system would have to investors. "What are the inducements which this system holds out to capitalists to use their stocks and securities as proposed?" he asked. He then cited the lure of profits and the safety of investment resulting from state support which would be sufficient reward for investment.\textsuperscript{83}

The logic of Hunt's argument in favor of state supported banking was valid in the sense that the causal relationship which he alleged to exist between banking and prosperity meets the tests of correct causal reasoning.

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., p. 105.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid., p. 106.
\textsuperscript{83}Ibid.
\end{quote}
Tanking was patently relevant to prosperity and was also an adequate cause for economic change. Although other causes might also affect the economy, unsatisfactory banking facilities alone could be considered a sufficient force in restricting financial progress. A more serious problem in determining the sufficiency of the alleged cause lies in the question of whether or not state support was a necessary feature of banking. Since Hunt supplied evidence to show that state support was required, the sufficiency of his causal argument rests on his use of examples to support his point.

Hunt's examples in support of all his points were numerous, representative, recent, and accurate. The speaker supported all the assertions in his argument with at least two or three examples. While this number of examples does not begin to exhaust the possible areas of consideration, the number might be considered satisfactory for the audience gathered at a political rally. Also, when the text of the speech is considered in its entirety, frequent repetitions of the speaker's point are observed both preceding and following his evidence, and, in general, Hunt appeared to attempt to keep the development of the argument simple.

The examples seem to have been selected fairly. Hunt referred to instances in the everyday commerce of the city,
he dealt frankly with the specific problems which unwise banking had caused in Louisiana in the past, he drew some examples from legal aspects of banking, and he gave examples of the same system working in other places.

Hunt's examples were up to date, and they were accurate. The anomaly of New Orleans as a great trade city which failed to develop its financial facilities to a fuller extent was an unquestioned characteristic of the economic and political conditions of the time. Although accurate, Hunt's examples were somewhat general. In citing specific instances to show that available capital was low or that laws were restrictive, Hunt did not stress details of the logical relationship involved. In view of the fact that he was not addressing an audience of experts, this omission does not appear especially damaging.

The absence of authority, appropriate statistics, and other forms of evidence points out the fact that Hunt's supporting material for his argument was not as complete as it could have been. The material which he used, however, was sound, and the reasoning behind his argument was valid. In summary, he presented a logical case for state supported banking to increase prosperity.

* * *

Shuff, op. cit., p. 112.
Internal improvements. Hunt consistently supported the right of government to finance internal improvements, while he often argued in political speeches that internal improvements were a federal responsibility, aid from national sources was never fully satisfactory for the needs of Louisiana, and many of Hunt's arguments were given in support of state aid. One excellent example of Hunt's position is found in a debate over the continuation of a state law which permitted the city of New Orleans to collect a duty on shipping. The debate lasted for several days in the House of Representatives in February, 1843, with Hunt playing a leading role.

Hunt argued that the continued collection of the duty was (1) constitutional, (2) just, and (3) necessary. The logic and evidence behind these points will now be considered.

Hunt's defense of the constitutionality of the wharfage duty can be considered as the support of a proposition of fact which was in turn the minor premise of a valid hypothetical syllogism. This syllogism, which is arranged below in a logically valid form, represents the reasoning process employed by both sides in the debate although they differed on the truth of the minor premise:
Major Premise: If the wharfage duty is constitutional, it may be legally passed by the legislature.

Minor Premise: The wharfage duty is constitutional.

Conclusion: Therefore, the wharfage duty may legally be passed by the legislature.

Hunt supported the constitutionality of the duty primarily through authority and comparison. He used authority first to define the type of revenue involved to show that it did not violate the United States constitution. He cited Blackstone, Justice Joseph Story, court arguments taken from Martin's Reports, and decisions of the Louisiana Supreme Court to show that the proposed source of revenue was a duty or a toll and not a tax over which the federal government would have jurisdiction under the commerce clause of the constitution.⁵

Authority was also employed in the debate to show that the Supreme Court of the United States recognized the legality of local control over the wharves. One case which Hunt elaborated on in detail was United States vs. the City of New Orleans in which Daniel Webster and Edward Livingston had joined forces to successfully attack national regulation of the wharfage.

Next, Hunt used authority to show that Congress thought state control to be constitutional. In reference to the

⁵Bee, February 16, 1843.
Congressional impost act of 1804, he said that it "expressly reserves to New Orleans its wharfage and other dues." An act in 1808 had done the same thing, Hunt declared, and he said that the act of 1836 had given the city "the direct power to erect wharves, and after that to exact a reasonable compensation for their use."\textsuperscript{86}

Finally, Hunt used authority to establish the constitutional power under which Louisiana was permitted to act. The wharfage duty was authorized, "unt contended, under the "internal police regulations of the state," and this area of state action was respected even by John Marshall, a strong federalist, who was cited by Hunt as an authority.\textsuperscript{87}

Hunt also supported his argument on constitutionality with comparisons. He cited South Carolina, Maryland, New York, and Massachusetts as states which collected wharfage revenue, and he argued that Louisiana could logically do the same thing. He made a particular point of citing "the long and continued practice... of South Carolina, so jealous on the subject of free trade." A report of his speech stated that

\textsuperscript{86}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{87}Ibid.
He appealed to the representatives to know if they were willing to surrender the right of levying wharfage, when it had been maintained and practiced by every other state in the Union.\footnote{Ibid.}

Further comparisons were taken from other actions of state government. If Louisiana collected revenue from houses and land without calling it taxation, Hunt declared, then it could do the same with the wharfage toll. In another comparison Hunt insisted that direct collection of the duty was comparable to the granting of the right of collection to a corporation and then collecting revenue in fees from that organization. Or, said Hunt, the toll could be compared to a practice by the state of New York of collecting fees from canals and railroads. As another instance, he pointed to Georgia's income from the Augusta and Hamburg rail line.\footnote{Ibid., February 25, 1843.}

In summary, Hunt argued that the wharfage duty was constitutional and based his case on authority and comparisons. Since his point was a simple proposition of fact, its validity rested largely on the adequacy of his evidence.

Hunt's authorities were sound. First, they were competent. Almost all his testimony was cited from legal
decisions, commentaries, or accepted arguments in court. Even the opinion of the Congress, while less significant than the judicial sources, gave at least a general indication that Hunt's position was legally sound. Second, the authorities cited were unbiased. Many of them were in fact the same sources to which Hunt frequently referred in support of arguments favoring strong national government. Since the authorities were supporting state action in the wharfage case, they may be considered as not prejudiced. Finally, Hunt's use of the authority from established legal sources may be considered appropriate for his audience. Legislators were, after all, selected from the educated class and many of them were lawyers.

Hunt's comparisons were also valid. Those comparing the collection of wharfage duty in other states, for example, were especially significant since any state would be in the same legal relationship to the national government as was Louisiana. Even when Hunt compared state activities other than collection of wharfage tolls, he always chose illustrations which embodied the same principles of exacting revenue from commerce. Again, the legal nature of some of the comparisons should have made them appropriate for many of the legislators although the
evidence was simple enough not to require extensive training in law in order to be understood. 90

While Hunt's argument on the constitutionality of the wharfage duty led only to the conclusion that the bill was legally sound, his second argument went one step further and concluded that the bill should be renewed by the legislature. Expressed as part of a correct, formal categorical syllogism, his point is seen to be the minor premise of the following chain of reasoning:

Major Premise: All legislation that is just should be passed.

Minor Premise: The wharfage duty is just legislation.

Conclusion: Therefore, the wharfage duty should be passed.

Hunt supported his premise with examples and comparisons.

In contending that the duty was just, Hunt gave several specific instances to show that New Orleans had expended money on the wharves and was justly due compensation. Before any tax money at all had been collected, Hunt pointed out, the city had spent more than one million dollars. He also emphasized that the costs of operating the wharves had been $150,000 per year, and that, even

90 The legality of a toll per se is a settled question as evidenced, for example, by the history of toll roads and bridges.
with the duty, the city was estimated to have spent $400,000 more than it could hope to collect. \(^{91}\)

To further illustrate that the toll was justly due to New Orleans, Hunt added two vivid examples of the expense incurred by the city in maintaining its facilities:

New Orleans was constantly contributing large sums to repair breaches occasioned by the Mississippi. Three years ago twenty acres were carried away by one majestic sweep of that powerful river. Eighteen months ago the wharves of the First Municipality were swept away by the same cause. Continued repairs and heavy expenditures are rendered necessary. \(^{92}\)

In addition to his examples showing that the duty was just for the city, Hunt went on to give several instances of how it was also just for the users of the wharves. His examples showed the difficulties present before the wharves were built:

What was the situation of the Levee in front of the city? Along its entire extent there were but two or three inconsiderable slips where small craft moved. There was no accommodation for steamboats, except a few loose planks. . . . How were cargoes landed? Everyone knew the character of the mud on the Levee, it was soft and porous, but when a hot sun shone upon it, it became covered with an apparently hard crust, which, however, gave way to the slightest weight, and any article placed upon it sank down as if in a quagmire. Vessels were compelled by the help of 12 men, and with 24 hours labor to rig a staging some hundred feet in length.

\(^{91}\) Ibid., February 16, 1843.

\(^{92}\) Ibid.
The cargo was landed, and if any portion of it came into contact with the mud, it deteriorated in value, and became unsightly in appearance, resembling a drift log on the Mississippi.93

The above evidence was supplemented by additional specific instances illustrating earlier conditions of commerce along the river. A cost of one dollar and fifty cents per barrel of flour had been lost on one cargo due to damages in unloading, Hunt said. Time was lost before the wharves were built, he added, when ships slipped their moorings and were forced to repeat the tedious process of docking. The Bee reported Hunt's conclusion; "Looking at this contrast between the past and present, he repeated that the planter was bound in equity and justice to pay some contribution for the benefits conferred."94

In addition to examples, Hunt also used comparison to support his contention that the wharfage duty was just. The duty was no different, he argued, than the rail costs for produce shipped in from Lake Pontchartrain or Payou St. John. This the planter thought was fair, said Hunt, but when his cotton was landed on the property of the Municipality, and he was required to pay, oh, then it was dishonest; and why? Because the railroad was a corporation of one character, and the municipality a corporation of another character. And was this argument? Both were facilities of

93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
transportation furnished the planters, and for both they should be equally willing to pay.\textsuperscript{95}

The practices of other cities was also used to demonstrate by comparison that the New Orleans toll was just. Hunt charged that "every Atlantic city in the Union did what we do, and though it was fit and proper in every other case, it was found shockingly unjust in New Orleans alone." Comparisons were used to show that the rates charged in the city were fair. Hunt said that the charges were reasonable "and when compared with the different expenses of living and labor, quite as moderate as those of Boston."\textsuperscript{96} In addition to Boston, he also compared New Orleans rates with those of Baltimore and Liverpool.

Hunt's reasoning in arguing that the wharfage duty was just has been shown to be formally correct. Since his major premise was accepted, his argument rested on the evidence with which he supported his minor premise. This evidence was sound.

The examples in the argument were numerous, representative, accurate, and current. Enough examples were presented to clearly show the costs and benefits of the wharves. The instances appear to have been typical of the

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., February 25, 1843.
commercial activity of the time. The accuracy of the examples was most noteworthy for the great amount of their specific detail which resulted in a graphic description of the condition which Hunt discussed. The fact that the examples were recent was reflected by Hunt's references to situations which could still be recalled by some of his listeners. This direct relationship of the evidence with the experiences of his auditors when combined with their vivid detail makes them highly appropriate for the audience.

The comparisons supporting the argument were similar in their important details and hence were valid. Hunt compared one city with another city and one type of transportation expense with another type. In each case the single difference was the missing payment of wharfage tolls in one of the things being compared. The evidence was simple, it was based largely on relationships which were known to the planters and lawyers in the legislature, and can thus be considered as appropriate for the audience.

In his third and final argument, Hurt contended that the wharfage toll was necessary. In logical correct form, his argument may be represented in the following syllogism:

Major Premise: All legislation that is necessary should be passed.

Minor Premise: The wharfage duty is necessary legislation.
Conclusion: Therefore, the wharfage duty should be passed.

As evidence to support the minor premise in his reasoning Hunt first repeated many examples to show that the city had expended great sums of money on the wharves. In addition he introduced two hypothetical illustrations. First, he maintained that state action was necessary to "sustain the credit of Louisiana." If the city could not have funds from the wharfage toll, he predicted, then it would go bankrupt and the credit of the state would also suffer.97

In a second illustration, Hunt declared that the city schools would suffer if the toll were not levied:

Mr. Hunt next alluded to the free schools of the 2nd municipality, where 1,300 children were educated chiefly from the resources of the city. To repeal the wharfage tax would be infallibly to destroy these schools.98

Although based on the same logical foundation as his constitutionality and justice arguments, Hunt's contention that the wharfage duty was necessary was supported by less acceptable evidence. His specific examples only established the fairness of the duty, and his hypothetical illustrations were based on conjecture. The two illustrations

97 Ibid., February 16, 1843.
98 Ibid.
were weak also because they were not well suited for the audience. Needs for specific New Orleans projects which did not directly aid other areas of the state, such as schools, were never popular with a majority of Louisiana's legislators. While the illustration involving state credit would have affected the whole state, it was not developed with enough detail to show a genuine danger.

To summarize Hunt's entire argument on the wharfage toll, he contended that it was constitutional, just, and necessary. The logic underlying each argument was sound. Authority, examples, and comparisons made up the evidence for the first two arguments, and, on the basis of standard tests for validity, the supporting material can be judged satisfactory. The evidence also was appropriate for the audience before which it was used. The third argument, however, was supported mainly by hypothetical illustration which lacked a factual basis and was not well suited to the audience.

Railroad construction was another internal improvement for which Randell Hunt spoke. He advocated state aid for railroad building in both his deliberative and campaign speeches. He was not a frequent speaker at the many railroad conventions held throughout the ante-bellum South,
Although his speech at one such convention in New Orleans was enthusiastically received, he argued in his speeches that state supported railroads were necessary for economic progress. His reasoning can be expressed in a correct hypothetical syllogism as follows:

**Major Premise:** If commercial development is desired then the state must support railroad building.

**Minor Premise:** Commercial development is desired.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, the state must support railroad building.

Hunt's most complete development of his railroad argument is found in his 1851 New Orleans election speech which the Whig party published as a campaign document. He supported the major premise of the above syllogism with arguments which may be grouped under three headings: (1) lack of railroads causes loss of commerce, (2) railroads would stimulate commercial activity, and (3) only through state aid can railroads be developed.

In supporting his contention that poor railroads resulted in lost commerce, Hunt relied largely on examples for his evidence. Some of his examples merely illustrated the limited facilities which were available. "Louisiana

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99 *Commercial Bulletin*, January 5, 1852.
has but eighty-one miles of railroad within her limits,"\(^{100}\)

Hunt pointed out. By relying only on the Mississippi River for transportation, Hunt declared, then "for all practical commercial purposes" (1) the state had no internal transportation, and (2) except for Mobile, it was cut off from major cities in the rest of the nation as well. In one example he vividly illustrated the weakness of depending on the river alone:

During the present season of the year \(\textit{autumn}\), when the rivers are low, a person can come from Louisville to New Orleans by the way of New York sooner than by the way of the Ohio and the Mississippi.\(^{101}\)

Hunt also cited numerous examples of how cities with better rail transportation were attracting trade which would otherwise have gone to New Orleans. "New York and Boston," he said, "have been taking away the commerce of the rich and growing States of the Northwest." He pointed to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and Savannah as cities which were rapidly luring away the trade of the Mississippi valley. Specifically he elaborated in detail on the efforts of the city of Mobile to

\(^{100}\)William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 107.

\(^{101}\)Ibid.
use the Mobile and Ohio Railroad to "turn from its accustomed channels ... large portion of the trade of Mississippi and Tennessee." 102

Hunt's charge that the lack of railroads caused a loss of commerce can be accepted as logically sound because it meets the tests for valid causal reasoning. First, the relationship between railroads and commerce was patently significant and the effect of one upon the other may be suspected to be due to more than chance. Second, railroads were of great enough importance in commerce to be assumed to be an adequate cause of increased or decreased trade. Third, while other causes clearly could be at work to affect the progress of commerce, Hunt did not allege that the railroads were the only causative factor but rather charged that the lack of rail transportation was sufficient to limit trade. Finally, the relationship rested on acceptable evidence.

Hunt's examples were sound in that they were numerous, representative, factual, and current. He used enough evidence to show several instances of both limited transportation facilities and the loss of trade to cities with better railroads. His examples were fairly chosen from

102 Ibid.
several regions, and were factual representations of substantial losses of commerce. Finally, his examples were recent.

While other types of evidence might have been employed to further his argument, Hunt's proof may be considered satisfactory in quantity and type for his audience. Speaking to a political rally, he used valid instances which were specific, simple, and vivid.

Hunt's next argument, that a system of railroads would bring increased commercial activity to Louisiana, had three subordinate points. He contended that rail lines would increase (1) land values, (2) agricultural produce values, and (3) trade volume. He supported the first point with examples and statistics, while he offered examples alone for the other two contentions.

Hunt cited both land along the route of proposed rail lines and land within the city of New Orleans as two examples of real estate which would increase in value. Then he supplied the statistics which supported his

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103 Turner, op. cit., p. 224. Turner points out that very early "Georgia and South Carolina interests saw the possibility of uniting the various minor roads projected by Memphis, Vicksburg, Natchez, and Nashville, into a trunk line that should draw the surplus...of the Mississippi Valley to Charleston or Savannah." Merl Reed, op. cit., IV (1963), 45. Reed also blames transportation for the loss of New Orleans' trade in the upper valley to New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore.
assertion. After briefly tracing the growth of railroads connecting with Boston during the period from 1835 until 1850, he said:

In 1834 the value of all the property of Boston was $21,590,300; in 1849 it was $102,827,500; and on the first of January 1851, it was $238,000,000. The increase in property value which accompanied the growth of railroads was not limited to the city, Hunt declared. He also gave the statistics which showed the corresponding increase in value for the state as a whole.

Some of Hunt's figures were more direct in establishing the relationship between rail lines and property costs. Citing Colonel James Gadsden, a South Carolina railroad promoter, as the source for his statistics, Hunt said:

Land all along the road to Hamburg and Columbia, for five miles each side of the South Carolina Railroad, has appreciated in value since its construction, in some cases 5000 per cent. ... After the railroad crossed into Georgia, Hunt said, "Lands that in 1846 could readily be bought for 25 and 50 cents per acre can now command $10, $12, and $15 per acre. He concluded his point by referring to several additional examples:

104 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 110.

105 Ibid., p. 111.
I might refer to the increase in the value of real estate in the counties bordering on the Vicksburg and Jackson Railroad, and in the counties bordering on the Nashville and Chattanooga road, to the increase in Charleston, in Baltimore, and in Savannah; but I shall content myself with saying generally that... real estate has felt most directly and powerfully the influence of those improvements.106

The causal relationship which Hunt alleged to exist between railroads and commerce in general has already been established as plausible if supported by acceptable evidence. Hunt's combination of statistics and examples may be considered to have established his point that railroads could be significant in increasing real estate prices. Again, of course, the possibility of other important causes is not denied.

Hunt's examples were numerous, factual, and current, but they were perhaps not fully representative. Many railroads which were poorly financed and ill planned brought only financial ruin. Even the sounder roads were not always immediately successful, and an automatic increase in the price of real estate can be considered only a possible rather than an inevitable result of railroad construction.107

106 Ibid.

Hunt's statistics and examples were appropriate for his audience. Although some of the figures cited had perhaps too much detail to be followed easily, most of his statistics were clear. Only in a few instances did he fail to round off numbers to make them readily comprehensible. The increases which he cited were substantial, and might be expected to have been of great interest to an audience economically dependent on the prosperity of New Orleans.

Hunt relied completely on examples to show, in support of another point, that railroads would increase the value of agricultural produce. For one example, he showed how the cost of shipping cotton by water from Tennessee to Liverpool via New Orleans was an important factor in limiting the farmer's profit. Some products, Hunt pointed out, such as ice in the winter in Boston or sugar in a country in South America, had no value at all unless they could be transported.108

In one long illustration, Hunt supplied numerous examples from the findings of Parliament during a study of the British Railway Acts to show how food products increased in value with the coming of rail transportation. Then he applied several of the examples to New Orleans:

The milk, the cream, the vegetables, the fresh butter, the fruit, which are of little or no value in St. Landry, St. Mary, and other parishes, would, if the Arnaud and Opelousas Railroad were established, become articles of considerable value by being transported immediately to New Orleans.  

These and other examples which Hunt used were numerous enough to make his point, they were fairly selected, current, and factual. The examples were particularly well suited for the speaker's audience. The instances cited were simple and clear. They were also in many cases directly related to the everyday interests of the listeners and showed vividly how the people living in the city would get terrible benefits.

Hunt used examples to show how railroads would increase trade. Faster transportation had the effect, he said, of shortening distances, so that with railroads a businessman from Louisville would come to New Orleans rather than going to New York to transact his business. The speaker then gave several instances of how this shortened time-distance relationship would affect New Orleans. Trade would come in, he said, from Texas, from California, and even from the East Indies. He cited South Carolina as a state where trade had increased from $20,000 to more than $250,000 with the coming of the railroad.  


110Ibid., pp. 111-12.
These and other similar examples which Hunt cited were abundant, representative, and current. Since many were hypothetical, the examples cannot be said to be universally factual. In fact, as the passage of time has shown, the possibility of extensive Pacific trade was somewhat visionary. The evidence was fair suited to the audience, however, as it was selected from areas with which the people were familiar and was directly related to their interest.

For Hunt's final major argument on railroads, in which he concluded that state aid was necessary, he showed by example, (1) that the existing state constitution hindered railroads, and (2) that a real estate tax for railroads would be practical. The speaker cited several examples illustrating the difficulties imposed on railroad construction under the existing state constitution. Hunt listed seven separate steps which the law required a corporation to follow in order merely to get organized. He also cited the numerous restrictions imposed by law when the actual construction of a line was begun. These restrictions, Hunt pointed out, permitted towns and individuals along the right of way to delay the construction or even to stop it altogether. As another illustration for

\[\text{Ibid., p. 113.}\]
the need for help from state laws, Hunt gave the example showing that twenty percent of the value of stock subscribed had to be paid at the time of subscription. Although the money was not needed at the time, Hunt also pointed to the provision in the constitution which allowed the state to change the law at will. On the basis of these examples he charged that the state was hindering the growth of railroads.

Hunt used example again to show that investors were willing to risk their capital if legal restrictions were eased. Even under the difficult conditions in force at the time, said Hunt, $400,000 had been subscribed for the New Orleans, Jackson, and Northern line.

Apart from removing restrictions, the next most important part of Hunt's plan for state aid was based on a law permitting parishes to vote a real estate tax to pay for promotion of railroads. Real estate benefited most from better rail transportation, he reminded his listeners, and he gave examples of the refusal of many property owners to help the project unless required to do so.

\[112\] Ibid., p. 114.

\[113\] Ibid.
They say, "Why should we subscribe? If others subscribe, and the community benefits thereby, we will share in the common benefit without paying or risking anything." Such was the late John McDonough, and I know half a dozen such at this time in New Orleans.

Hunt provided many examples of how his plan would work. It would be one-half per cent per year, in five years it would only be twenty dollars on a thousand, and it would be secured to the tax payer by stock.

Hunt's examples in support of state aid were plentiful, representative, factual and current. While other supporting material would have increased the validity of his argument, his examples alone may be considered to have established the presumption that the state restricted the railroads and that a real estate tax would help them.

Hunt furthered his argument in many speeches other than the one cited above. For instance, in the Constitutional Convention of 1852, several reports are available which show more details of his ideas on state aid. He argued that the state should subscribe one-fifth of the stock in the railroads. In support of his argument on this occasion Hunt offered several examples. The state's investment would be secure, he declared, because of the heavy investment of private money, and because of the economic

114 Ibid., p. 115.
prosperity which railroads would bring. He also pointed to numerous railroads working under the plan supported by the whigs and called on the opposition to point to a single road operated on this basis which "was bankrupt or was not making money."\textsuperscript{115}

Hunt's examples in his convention speech were especially well suited for his predominately Whig audience. These delegates, with their strong predilection favoring state support might be expected to readily accept the number of the examples as adequate. In addition, the material was factual, current, and representative.

In reviewing Hunt's entire argument in support of state aid for railroads, his major contentions are seen to correspond generally to the three stock issues in debate. As Hunt presented them in his political rally speech in 1851, they were arranged with the need for change first, the benefits which would be derived from the change next, and the plan last. The reasoning of the whole argument as well as that of each supporting point has been shown to be sound. The final validity of the logic of the case, then, rested on the soundness of the evidence used. This evidence was found to consist almost

\textsuperscript{115}Daily Crescent, July 30, 1852. Daily Delta, July 30, 1852.
entirely of examples with a few statistics. Almost without exception, authority was used only as a source for additional facts or examples, and little or no use was made of other forms of supporting material. The evidence used, however, has been shown to meet the tests for formal validity, and to be appropriate for the audiences before which it was presented. In summary, the reasoning was sound and the evidence was both sound and appropriate.

In reviewing the logical argument advanced by Hunt on various economic issues during the life of the Whig party in Louisiana, his reasoning has been shown to be generally sound although it times his evidence was not altogether sufficient or appropriate. Considering all the arguments together, then, the speaker may be considered to have demonstrated considerable skill in logic. Even so, logic was not the only foundation on which his contentions were based. Ethical and emotional proofs were also used, and the speaker's ethos, his arguments which established him as a good man, will be considered next.

**Ethical Proof**

Hunt's use of ethical proof will be considered under two headings. His ethos will be discussed first as found in his legislative speeches and next as found in his political addresses.
Randell Hunt entered the Louisiana Legislature in 1841 with a good reputation, at least among many in his own party. He won his election handily and had been frequently praised by party newspapers as the following extract indicates.

For the first time in many years the whips have fixed upon a candidate who would do honor to any party. In his political principles he is known to be steady and unflinching whip. In standing he ranks with the most respectable and esteemed of our fellow citizens. In talent he is pre-eminent. His abilities, information and political principles admirably qualify him to assume a conspicuous position in the legislature, . . . . The whips need the services of an individual capable of coping with and conquering the very able representative of the opposition, and such a man is Randell Hunt.

Hunt did not, however, rely on his reputation to reveal his qualities as a good man. He consistently reinforced his logical arguments with proof of his good character, capacity, and good will.

He introduced material which had the effect of establishing his good character, first, by linking himself and his cause with virtuous motives. Once, for example, when opponents implied that he took advantage of his well known eloquence to win a point, Hunt replied that

The gentleman who had preceded him had been pleased to compliment him on the eloquence of the humble individual then addressing the House, but it was the eloquence of truth, justice and constitutional

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116 Bee, September 23, 1841.
liberty which his opponents had to fear, and which he would sustain, however feebly, against the numerous attacks by which they had been assailed. 117

But thus established his modesty and his love of truth, justice, and liberty, while at the same time he did not repudiate the compliment on his eloquence as a speaker.

Association with a worthy cause was a frequent technique in Hunt's argument on banking. In one debate he assured the house that:

He spoke for the people—he pleaded the cause of the poor man—the mechanic—the day laborer, whom a forced resumption of specie payment would grind to the earth. ... The motives which activated him were the general good and the advancement of the country's prosperity. 118

In another debate he used much the same approach:

Motives of principle and duty prompted him to raise his warning voice against the passage of the bill, and although there were indications from the vote just taken that he would be in a minority, still he could not shrink from these principles—he would discharge that duty. 119

As a second method of demonstrating his good character, Hunt frequently had to work to overcome personal charges made against him by his opposition in the legislature.

The following report illustrates this type of ethical proof:

117 Ibid., February 25, 1843.
118 Daily Picayune, December 21, 1841.
119 Ibid., January 21, 1842.
But the gentleman [of the opposition] had brought before the House, that he (Mr. Hunt), had been employed as counsel in a case involving the wharfage tax. This he acknowledged, and was proceeding to answer with much warmth what he considered an ungenerous imputation, when Mr. Ratliff explained that his object had been simply to show that the member from Orleans had come well prepared to argue the case. Mr. Hunt expressed himself satisfied with the explanation.\textsuperscript{120}

In one debate Hunt denied claims that he opposed a bill "because he wanted to screen banks or bank delinquents." In a later speech, he said that "he stood aloof from the banks—there was no link or connection between him and them."

At times he attempted to refute personal attacks by appealing directly to his audience to vindicate him. Once he was accused of quoting material out of context, and in reply he put it to the House, if he had not distinctly avowed that he was inserting the term in order to show the complete analogy of the case with that before the House. He scorned at such trickery, and the miserable insinuation of the gentleman from Carroll was unworthy of further consideration.\textsuperscript{121}

when he was accused of limiting the opportunity of debate for the younger men in the Constitutional Convention of 1852, Hunt again called on his audience to witness his good character.

\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Bee}, September 23, 1841.

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Ibid.}, February 25, 1843.
The charge had been openly and publicly made. Was it so? Was there anything in his remarks to justify it? He called upon each member to hear him testify to its injustice; he spurred the imputation. 122

Only rarely did Hunt introduce ethical proof which stressed his capacity. For the most part he let his wisdom be measured by the logic of his argument. However, in his logical development he sometimes called attention to the fact that he was using both reasoning and evidence to prove his case. 123

Once when an opponent in the Legislature contended that Hunt was arguing the case "like a lawyer", he defended his sagacity in a sharp reply.

... the member from Iberville, forsooth, had said that he had argued the subject like a lawyer. Was it because he had referred to competent authority, because he had enforced his views by contemporaneous decisions, or because he had taken a narrow, contracted and one-sided view of the question? He had appealed to the commercial history of America, Europe and the world—he had based his argument on the eternal principles of truth. If this was arguing the case like a lawyer, then he who argues as a constitutional lawyer takes the highest and broadest of all possible arguments. 124

In another argument against a banking bill where an opponent suggested that Hunt knew less about financial

122 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 24, 1852.
123 See above, p. 156.
124 See, February 25, 1843.
matters than the committee which drafted the bill, Hunt
again gave evidence of his capacity. He pointed out that
he had received extensive training in economics, and his
fellow legislator extended him an oblique apology.125

Demonstrating good will was the third form of ethical
persuasion present in Hunt's speeches. "The handsome
compliments with which Mr. H. invariably overpowers and
disarms his opponents," declared one observer of Hunt's
speaking, "is a feature in his tactics not to be left
unnoticed."126

Hunt offered conditional praise to the legislature
in one of his arguments against a banking bill. He
apparently was attempting to win good will when he said
that "he wished the members of the House to act as
impartial statesmen—he did not wish them to apply a cure
which would increase the disease."127 His praise in urging
support of his anti-repudiation resolution was even more
direct.

"Under these circumstances, gentlemen, did you
not feel yourselves called upon by the highest con-
siderations of patriotism, honor and public duty--as

125 Ibid., March 13, 1843.
126 Daily Delta, July 27, 1852.
127 Daily Picayune, January 7, 1842.
Louisianians proud of the honor of the state... to pass a resolution which would give renewed confidence... \textsuperscript{128}

Apparently because of the antipathy between country and city members of the Legislature, Hunt frequently showed his good will by arguing that members shared a common interest. He argued that the representative "who in that House legislated for a single interest did but half his duty."\textsuperscript{129}

In his arguments for the wharfage duty, Hunt made a strong appeal to the country group.

"Continual repairs and heavy expenditures are rendered necessary. Let the members look at these things and do us justice. We pay one third of the revenue of the State. If this is deemed insufficient, let the Legislature show just ground for increased taxation... \textsuperscript{130}

He concluded with "an eloquent and stirring appeal to the House to act as became the representatives of the whole State, and not of a party, or a section; and to do justice to New Orleans and Louisiana.

In summary, Hunt employed extensive ethical proof in his arguments. Arguments which had the effect of establishing his character and good will were especially prevalent.

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Bee}, February 18, 1842.
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{Daily Picayune}, January 26, 1843.
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Bee}, February 16, 1843.
although the speaker referred to his sincerity also at times. Hunt's ethical proof seemed always relevant to the subject being debated and was apparently designed in large part to refute personal attacks and heal factional disputes.

Hunt used ethical proof in his campaign speeches as well as in legislative addresses. His ethos will be examined in these political arguments where it was used to either support the economic ideas which he advocated or to promote the candidacy of some other Whig who would support them. Again, examples will be cited which had the effect of showing the speaker's character, sincerity, and good will.

In comments which had the effect of revealing his good character, Hunt often candidly admitted that he was supporting a candidate as a second choice. Since his strong preference for Henry Clay was well known, this admission was almost certainly necessary to assure the audiences of his sincerity. The following description illustrated such an occasion:

Randal Hunt, Esq., being loudly called for, addressed the meeting. He expressed sentiments nearly in consonance with those of Mr. Prentiss. He believed that the Whig party could elect whatever candidate they nominated, but that Gen. Taylor would receive the largest vote. With that view he should advocate his selection as the Whig candidate, as a first
choice, and Mr. Clay as a second, although he should prefer Mr. Clay’s election.\textsuperscript{131}

When Taylor formally received the nomination, Hunt stressed the sincerity of his support for the nominee:

Mr. Hunt said that he came to the meeting to give in his adhesion to the cause of Taylor & Fillmore, and to declare his intention of supporting that cause with all his ability and strength. Mr. Hunt said, "ardently as he loved Henry Clay, and as much as he desired to see him nominated... he gave up all personal preference for him and declared his determination to support Gen. Taylor.\textsuperscript{132}

One of the most common techniques which Hunt used in apparent efforts to emphasize the high character of either his cause or his candidate was to associate himself with Unionism. Hunt praised those who supported nationalistic measures in Congress. He said, "I should not be true to myself, to liberty, and to the duty which I owe my country, if I refrained from rendering them the humble tribute of my applause."\textsuperscript{133} In addition to linking himself with the Union cause, Hunt also implied his loyalty, patriotism, and humility in the brief passage.

Although there is no indication that Hunt ever developed any detailed argument on slavery in his political speeches,}

\textsuperscript{131}Daily Picayune, March 15, 1848.
\textsuperscript{132}Commercial Bulletin, June 26, 1848.
\textsuperscript{133}William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 94.
he almost certainly must have realized that Southern audiences considered anti-slavery supporters as thieves who wished to steal Southern property. A speaker who opposed slavery, then, could not be a man of "good character." Perhaps Hunt realized this in a New Orleans speech where, just before a lively discussion of internal improvement, he "highly complemented the Chairman, an old Whig merchant, one of the largest slave holders, one of the most highly respected gentlemen of the South." He then explained his support of liberty as Southern slave holders defined it.

He was, in his earliest days, a friend of liberty, reviewing it in the pages of classical history, or in the struggles of South America, Hungary or France. The love of liberty was the first principle of every genuine Whig. But he had no vague, wild Utopian theories upon this subject; above all things he loved American liberty, the best, purest and truest liberty.134

This passage once again combined several ethical appeals. The speaker indirectly established himself as favorable to slavery and gave evidence that he was both a patriot and a strong party man.

In his campaign speeches as well as his deliberative speeches Hunt seems to have made little deliberate effort to demonstrate his sagacity as part of his ethical proof. One technique which he used, however, was to stress his

134Daily Crescent, July 2, 1852.
personal experience with the subject being discussed. In an attack on the Constitution of 1845, for example, he said,

For the last five years the government of Louisiana has been a failure. I do not say this upon the spur of the moment, nor do I speak for rhetorical effect. I have carefully watched the operations of our state government and long weighed and studied these things; and the result of my best judgement upon them is, that we have been retarded in our progress and paralyzed in our action by the constitution and legislation of the State.\[133\]

While considerable emphasis on the speaker's cool good sense is found in the above passage, his character as an honest man who does not speak for "rhetorical effect" is also stressed.

Hunt revealed another example of personal observation in the same speech. He attacked the failure of the state to vote money for internal improvements by describing a flood which would have been prevented if the state had built a levee. Of the flood, he said, "I do not believe that I have ever looked upon so melancholy a spectacle."\[136\]

Ethical proof was found most frequently in Hunt's speeches in arguments which, in effect, demonstrated his good will. The introduction to one speech, for example,


\[136\]Ibid., p. 99.
reveals how Hunt complimented his audience. Hunt was reported as saying that "it was a cheering spectacle. When he met so many old and friendly faces, when he saw so many good Whig faces, he felt he had a cheering cheer that the Whigs would do their duty."\(^{137}\)

Another apparent effort by Hunt to show his good will by identifying himself with his audience in a united effort for political victory, is seen in a speech for Taylor. The *Commercial Bulletin* quoted the following from the conclusion of the address:

> ... and I know that with each succeeding day we will gather strength (Chews). Who will refuse to vote for him? Who will now slink out of the ring? (Laughter & cries of "none, none.") If any should, he was not taught in the school of Henry Clay. Let us, then do our duty, and let our watchword be "Zachary Taylor and Victory."\(^{138}\)

Another attempt which appears designed to identify Hunt with his listeners is found in his argument that railroads were needed to reduce traveling time. He said, "Time is money. We are all of us, fellow citizens, laboring men, and cannot afford to waste our time."\(^{139}\)

Sectional splits in political ranks gave Hunt another opportunity to demonstrate his good will. At one Whig

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\(^{137}\) *Daily Crescent*, July 2, 1852.

\(^{138}\) *Commercial Bulletin*, June 26, 1848.

Mr. Hunt dwelt with great eloquence upon the injustice and impiety of these appeals to sectional feelings. New Orleans had always repudiated such feelings. For many years they had referred to the country in regard to the representation of this district.

When their late able representative, Mr. Thibodeaux, had been first brought forward, his name had been urged by some of his friends. He had told those friends not to press his name against the wishes of the country gentlemen. They had conformed with his instruction, and when Mr. Thibodeaux was named... he (Mr. Hunt) had cheerfully contributed all his abilities to promote his election.140

In conclusion, several characteristics of Hunt's ethical proof can be noted when his legislative and campaign speeches are examined as a whole. First, three types of ethical proof were found. Material which demonstrated good will was most frequent, numerous examples of references to the speaker's character were employed, and direct mention of his wisdom was used least of all. Second, in many cases there was an apparently clear objective on the part of the speaker. He seemed deliberately attempting to use ethos to adapt to particular audience attitudes resulting from the political alignments of the period. Third, while types and purposes of ethical proof can be isolated for analysis, some of the ethical appeals in Hunt's speeches were not of a single type with a single purpose. Appeals

140 Daily Delta, September 11, 1850.
were never so diffuse, however, to prevent the judgment that either on the whole was well used by the speaker.

In liberal lingo

Hendell used only limited number of appeals to the emotions of his listeners. Most of his efforts were directed toward arousing nationalistic and economic motives.

As an example of specific appeals to nationalism, excerpts from Hunt's speeches on repudiation may be cited. Hunt stressed national loyalty as a reason for adopting his anti-repudiation resolution:

As Americans, as citizens of one common country, we all feel and know that repudiation of its obligations by any one of the states must affect injuriously the interests of the others, and in some degree the character of the country at large.

An unfavorable interpretation of his resolution would be, Hunt said, "a construction at war with American feeling and interest." He praised his supporters in the House for having voted "upon the highest considerations of patriotism, honor and public duty, as Americans concerned for American credit." Those who had opposed him, Hunt charged, had forgotten

that the people of Louisiana were in a national sense fellow-citizens of the people of the United States of America, that our country is commensurate with the Union, that the people of

141 See, February 18, 1842.
the States are united together indissolubly by social, moral and political ties. . . .

A special type of nationalistic appeal which Hunt used was based on loyalty to national heroes. The Whigs frequently nominated men for the presidency who had made their reputations in the army rather than in politics. Such men had no political record on which speakers could debate, and, as the following example of Hunt's praise of Zachary Taylor demonstrates, emotional appeals made up much of the argument:

One good has resulted from the Mexican War. God, in his providence, has wisely ordained that no evil comes without its attendant good. The war has had the effect of raising up a great man, among us, who is both able and willing to cure the evils caused by the war. That man is Gen. Taylor (Cheers).

The alleged divine origin and good will of the candidate contained little appeal other than that of loyalty to a hero. An enumeration of Taylor's military exploits continued on the same basis:

Look at his actions under the most trying circumstances—at Palo Alto, Resaca, Monterey, or Buena Vista, and you will always find him brave, human, and true. It must be admitted that nature formed Gen. Taylor to be a great man.

In campaigning for Scott in 1852, Hunt appealed to the loyalty of the Whigs in the name of two of their heroes.

142 Ibid.
143 Commercial Bulletin, June 26, 1848.
144 Ibid.
of the same time, Hunt inserted his discussion of Scott in between two references to Henry Clay who had only recently died:

These were the sentiments of the Southern Whigs. These were the sentiments of Henry Clay, who, one never again give utterance to words of eloquence and sentiments of chivalry.

Mr. Hunt then referred to the military exploits of Gen. Scott on many fields, and to the statesmanship with which he had stilled the waves of nullification and settled border difficulties without the necessity of appeal to arms—Gen. Scott, he said, had under all circumstances and at all times proved himself as a true patriot, a brave warrior and an honest man, and was well worthy of being the standard bearer of the Great American Whig party.

Mr. Hunt then referred in words of burning eloquence, to the death of Henry Clay.

Hunt's appeals to desire for financial well being were based on more specific and less altruistic motives. For example, he charged in a political speech that the effect of the banking bill, must be to injure or rather prostrate the interests of the stockholders who are no other than the great mass of our population, poor as well as rich, to destroy all credit and confidence, to paralyze the whole business of the State, and to involve the whole community and especially the poorest portion of it, in the greatest distress and suffering.

In a comment in a legislative debate, which has already been quoted to show its ethical content, Hunt said that

145 Bee, July 2, 1852.
146 Daily Picayune, March 9, 1838.
We spoke not for the rich man, or the bankrupt, the interests of both were bound together, and would not be promoted by a premature resumption. But he spoke for the people—he pleaded the cause of the poor man—the mechanic—the day laborer, whom a forced resumption would grind to the earth.  

The whip working system, said Hunt, using the same appeal at a political rally, could not fail "to be highly beneficial to our struggling commerce, to the working man in New Orleans, and to the people of the State at large." Later in the speech he used this appeal to urge the need for faster transportaion. "Time is money," he declared, and added, "We are all of us, fellow-citizens, laboring men, and cannot afford to waste our time." 

Hunt's most commonly used emotional appeals, then, were directed toward nationalism and desire for monetary benefits. A special type of emotional argument will now be considered.

Ad hominem arguments have both ethical and emotional connotations although they are generally discussed in argumentation as faulty logic. Hunt's ad hominem arguments will not be considered in their ethical context because they do not involve primarily his own character.

147 Ibid., January 7, 1842.
149 Ibid., p. 111.
also, these arguments will not simply be described and dismissed as illogical. While such arguments were inherently lacking in logic, they were nonetheless important in Hunt's oratory as a means of evoking emotional responses. Evidence that Hunt recognized the effectiveness of personal argument and admitted its role in the oratory of his time is found in the following statement in an address to his law students:

You should be especially careful, if you possess extraordinary powers of wit and sarcasm, not to exercise those powers unjustly and unkindly, nor to indulge in ridicule and personalities unprovoked and uncalled for.\textsuperscript{150}

Contemporary newspaper accounts make it even more obvious that a vigorous personal attack under appropriate circumstances was an accepted act on the part of an effective orator. A sharp exchange in which Hunt participated during the Constitutional Convention of 1852 evoked the following comparison from the editor of the \textit{Baton Rouge Gazette}:

\begin{quote}
We dropped in the Convention yesterday, and while there we were regaled with a passage at arms between two honorable gentlemen, that we think too good to be lost. It reminded us forcibly of the debate that we were so familiar with in our school boy days, between Walpole and Pitt. . . . but are free to say that the member from Orleans [Hunt] had no Pitt to contend against.\textsuperscript{151}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{150}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 224-25.

\textsuperscript{151}\textit{Baton Rouge Gazette}, July 24, 1852.
a letter from Later Rouge described the scene for another paper with obvious delight.

... Mr. Cotton from the parish of Jefferson took occasion to pitch into Randell Hunt. ... who was also assailed by Mr. Smart from Sabine. ... Mr. Hunt rose to reply to Messrs. Cotton and Smart, and it was a startling reply. The cotton flew like lint from a cotton pin. Mr. Hunt handled them without gloves, and so skillfully was the lash applied that every lick tore the flesh. ... 152

The dispatch from a reporter for a third paper stated:

He exhibited powers of withering, and at the same time, polished sarcasm, so happy in the mere collocation of epithets as to "bring down" the Convention in rounds of applause, utterly regardless of the feelings of the member against whom the harmonious anathemas were hurled. 153

In the legislative debate on the wharfage toll, Hunt employed argument ad hominem against two opposing representatives. In a rebuttal speech, he said that

The statesman from Iberville had revolted against the plea of necessity, as the plea of the highwayman. If the gentleman could see no difference between an equitable claim for a reasonable compensation for the use of property erected and maintained at vast expenses and the immoral and criminal pursuit of a highway robber, he did not envy his powers of logic and commended him with all joy to his future reflections. ... 154

The next gentleman who spoke—the member from Carroll—had attempted to hurl a javelin, but it was teium imbellie sine ictu; mere sound and fury signifying nothing; brutum futmen; talk, words, nothing more. 154

153 Daily Delta, July 27, 1852.
154 Bee, February 25, 1843.
Hunt's personal arguments could hardly have been intended merely to express his anger. Undoubtedly he realized that his words might evoke emotions of distrust and contempt which would discredit his opponent's argument.

Touches of humor were present in some of Hunt's personal attacks. Later in the debate cited above, he attacked the use of John Marshall as an authority by a member of the opposition. Hunt said that:

It reminded him... of the fable of the "Critic," by that most brilliant of wits, Richard Krinsley Sheridan. Juff enters and exclaims, "Pardon me, my soul but I do love thee." "How now," says Speaker, "Never I heard that somewhere. It seems to me that one Shakespeare says the same thing." "Never mind," says Juff, "Great minds sometimes hit on the same thought." Thus it was with the member from West Feliciana and Chief Justice Marshall... 152

The speaker could hardly have been unaware in employing the above attack that he was evoking emotions which would detract from the logical argument of his opponent. His illustration seems designed to evoke both humor and distrust.

In summary, Hunt used two kinds of emotional argument. First, he made a limited number of appeals based on rationalism and desire for financial well being. These appeals seem to have been well suited for creating a

152 Ibid.
favorable attitude toward candidates and arguments which Hunt supported. Second, he used ad hominem arguments to evoke feelings of distrust and contempt against his opponents and to make them appear ridiculous. "Inquestionably such arguments were lacking in logic and were not in the tradition of appealing to basic human drives as a part of arguing the merits of a question. Those tactics were acceptable procedure in the oratory of Hunt's time, however, and it might be suggested that the speaker would not have been using all the available means of creating an emotional response had he avoided those attacks. Hunt's use of appeals to the emotions must be considered, in conclusion, as appropriate for the time and occasion in which they were used.

III. EFFECTIVENESS

Randell Hunt was a recognized political leader during the life of the Whig party in Louisiana. His effect on state policies, while it has not received separate and detailed historical investigation, was comparable to that of other major figures in the state. As James K. Greer points out in an excellent analysis of ante-bellum politics in Louisiana, Hunt was the contemporary equal of men who are today better known. "A striking feature of Louisiana politics..." Greer observed, "was the
prominence of the personal element due to the unusual characteristics of such leaders as Soulé, Benjamin, Slidell, and Randell Hunt."\(^{156}\) These men were called the "whig-four" by Robert Meade in his biography of Benjamin, and he stated that around the time of the collapse of the Whig party, they "largely dominated Louisiana politics."\(^{157}\)

Of the members of this group, only Hunt held no significant national office. He held his position of leadership almost exclusively because of his ability and reputation as an orator. The relationship of Hunt's success as a speaker to his role as a political leader becomes readily apparent through an analysis of specific ways in which his effectiveness as a speaker was demonstrated.

**Surface Response**

Randell Hunt's legislative and campaign speeches were delivered before listeners who were not restrained in expressing their approval of speakers. In the heat of political campaigns an orator needed only to mention a popular hero's name to draw applause from an audience. Overt audience approval, then, was common, and its presence during a speech would not by itself be a significant mark

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\(^{156}\)Greer, *op. cit.*, XII (1929), 381.

\(^{157}\)Meade, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
of effectiveness. In considering listener responses during Randall Hunt's speeches, however, three characteristics emerge which indicate that Hunt's oratory can be considered effective in this area.

First, in comparison with other orators appearing on the same platform, Hunt appears to have been consistently one of the most popular speakers with Louisiana audiences. At one Whip meeting, for example, his speech was the only one for which the newspaper reported extensive applause. In another instance, speaking in favor of railroads on the same platform with Judah F. Benjamin and James Robb, the reaction of the audience as indicated by the newspaper reports was easily the greatest in the case of Hunt's address.

Occasionally reports were made of speeches which permit a direct comparison of the reaction to Hunt's speeches with that of his fellow orators. For example, one report stated,

I do not intend to be understood as detracting in the least from Mr. Hays and Mr. Roselius, when I say that in Mr. Hunt's speech in defense of Whip doctrines . . . he enchained for two hours or more, the undivided attention of the meeting, and I

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158 *Daily Delta*, September 11, 1850.
159 *Commercial Bulletin*, January 5, 1852.
heard many of the best informed listeners say they never heard such eloquence before. 160

During the same campaign a report appeared in the Saddle Southwestern which stated,

Mr. Hays spoke in a beautiful, argumentative, and persuasive manner; but Mr. Hunt's address was more than this, it was a series of unanswerable arguments for Scott; powerful in effect and in the sublimest straits of oratory. 161

Hunt's speeches in the Constitutional Convention of 1852 were especially well received. The fact that his oratory attracted visitors to the convention has already been mentioned. The convention's half hour time limit for speeches was frequently lifted for Hunt, and even during his personal attack on the delegates from Jefferson and Sabine it was reported that "the member from Orleans was frequently interrupted by applause during his remarks, and the smile of exultant approbation was on every countenance when he sat down." 162

Hunt's oratory, then, evoked responses of approval from his audiences. The reaction to his speeches in many cases was more openly favorable than that given to other speakers.

160 See, September 25, 1852. Hays and Rosellius were also Whig lawyers from New Orleans.

161 Quoted in the Bee, October 23, 1852.

162 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 24, 1852.
A second indication of Hunt's effectiveness in securing overt audience approval is found in reports which indicate that the speaker knew how to adjust to audience reaction. In a speech on hunting, for example, he mentioned Henry Clay, and it was reported that

He seemed to have no idea of awakening applause; but it came so instantaneously, so loud, so intense, so like a sudden peal of thunder, that the orator himself caught the electric influence, and, as soon as he could be heard, pronounced a beautiful eulogy upon that great statesman.163

A similar example may be cited from a speech ten years later, when

he seemed, on this occasion, to have caught new vigor from the enthusiasm of the crowd around him, and even seemed to surpass himself in power of eloquence and terseness of logic.164

Hunt's rapport with his audiences, as indicated in these and many other reports, seems to have been excellent.

As a third consideration, the overt reactions to Hunt's speeches appear at times to have been deliberately triggered by the speaker. He frequently used rhetorical questions, as in the case when he asked in support of Taylor, "Who will refuse to vote for him? Who will now slink out of the ring?" The reported reaction was laughter.

163 Daily Picayune, January 25, 1838.
164 Bee, October 7, 1848.
ard cries of "none, none." In another political occasion, Hunt mentioned an objection to the Constitution of 1845 which, he said, need not be discussed in the speech. The reported reaction was an outburst from the crowd insisting that the matter be taken up. The readiness with which the speaker obliged indicates the extent of his support with his audience and suggests as well that the response might have been anticipated.

Surface response to Hunt's speeches, then, was enthusiastic and can be compared favorably with the public reaction to other prominent local orators. Hunt demonstrated considerable skill, furthermore, in adjusting to audience reactions, and at times he probably planned such reactions.

Immediate Results

The economic issues which have been discussed in this chapter were supported in a large number of speeches in several different situations. Naturally the response in terms of votes on the issues was varied.

In the Legislature Hunt for the most part led a minority fight. On measures such as the wharfage toll,

163 Commercial Bulletin, June 26, 1848.
164 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., pp. 120-121.
which he lost by a single vote, he was defeated on sectional lines. His banking arguments were also rejected by a combination of party and economic interests, and he was able only to delay the action of the anti-bank forces. Many of his proposed amendments to the banking laws in the early 1840's were defeated by votes of two to one or even three to one. Only in his anti-repudiation argument did he find a broad base of support which he maintained in the House even after the Senate rejected the resolution. The resolution first passed the House with only a single negative vote and after the Senate rejection it was sustained by a majority. When Hunt ended his four years in the House, although his political victories had been limited, his speaking ability had won general recognition from his colleagues. As his last official act as a representative, he was selected to lead the impeachment proceedings against a corrupt city judge.

In the Constitutional Convention of 1852, Hunt was considerably more effective in his deliberative speaking. While the Whigs were in the majority, the party was never noted for its discipline. The 1852 convention, however, smoothly completed its work in less than a month. With Benjamin holding the position of floor leader and Hunt spearheading the major floor debates, party unity was largely maintained.
Although Benjamin is given credit by some as the leader of the party at the time, one newspaper suggested that Hunt had been the outstanding spirit in the convention:

"I know of no gentleman who deserves more from his party, and the people of Louisiana, than Mr. Hunt. He was the leading spirit, the commanding influence of the late convention. . . ."  

In addition to leading party debate, Hunt served as chairman of the Judicioly Committee, and made many key motions and reports.

Hunt's ability as a speaker and his position as a party leader were inseparable. An estimate of his effectiveness by an opponent is revealed in the following account.

"He went over the whole ground of the benefits diffused by railroads, and enraptured his audience by his impassioned oratory so completely, that when he had concluded, Mr. Simms, who is opposed to Mr. Hunt's views, asked the convention not to vote while the influence of that gentleman's powerful appeal was yet upon them."

Another newspaper summary of Hunt's role in the convention linked his leadership closely with his speaking:

"This gentleman has won "golden opinions from all sorts of people," in our State convention. On almost the first occasion he has had of displaying

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167 *Daily Crescent*, August 4, 1852.


169 *Daily Crescent*, July 30, 1852.
his fine talents and attainments in political science and history, before the leading men of the State, he has reached, at the first bound, the very highest position as an orator, scholar and legislator. His speeches in the convention have been unanswerable in logic and unapproachable in eloquence.\textsuperscript{170}

Hunt's arguments were ineffective in only one important area. He voted with the minority in opposing the system of representation under the new constitution.\textsuperscript{171} In all aspects of the economic program which he favored, he helped to lead the Whigs to victory.

Effectiveness in terms of the immediate response to Hunt's campaign speeches is extremely difficult to establish. The Whigs carried the Louisiana presidential campaign only twice, in 1840 and 1844, and were unable to elect a governor after 1830. Hunt was active in all major campaigns although his influence in the votes of a statewide election is impossible to measure.

Hunt was also a frequent speaker for many local Whig candidates. Although the precise effect of his speaking on the election of some of these men to office cannot be isolated, at least it can be assumed that the Whig party thought Hunt's oratorical help valuable. The party's numerous demands on Hunt as a speaker were noted by an opposition paper:

\textsuperscript{170}\textit{Daily Delta}, July 31, 1852.

\textsuperscript{171}\textit{Journal of the Convention of 1852}, op. cit., p. 65.
The Whigs held their meeting in this town on last Saturday, ... Mr. Hunt of New Orleans was the only speaker. ... Mr. Hunt has long been known to the people of the state as a gentleman of distinguished powers of eloquence. Wherever any drudgery is to be done, he is the man always put forward by his party to do it—all Whig meetings in New Orleans without him would be like a book without a title page. 172

Democratic party comment on Hunt's oratory were not always as kind as the one cited above. Hunt's 1851 speech against the Constitution of 1845, for example, was a bitter attack on the Democrats and was reported to have disturbed them considerably. The Bee reported that the speech

seems to have agitated the Locofoco party in an unexpected manner. Like "an Eagle in a dove cote," Mr. Hunt has fluttered the Veleccians of Locofoco-ism. They are all circling around him, shrieking harsh discord, and striving to assail him with beak and talons. The effectiveness of the speech alarms the adversary. It contained too much truth, remorselessly exposed and made clear and evident to the simplest understanding, to allow Locofocoism to pass it by as a mere every day effort of the canvass. 173

The speech mentioned above, which was referred to several times in the analysis of Hunt's argument in this chapter, was printed by the Whig party as a campaign document. In both its printed and spoken form the speech almost certainly contributed to the growing public support which

172 Natchitoches Chronicle, no date indicated. Quoted in the Commercial Bulletin, October 18, 1852.

173 Bee, October 27, 1851.
permitted Hunt and his fellowships to derive the
conversion for a new constitution.174

For the most part, Hunt's campaign oratory can be
induced effective only on the basis of indirect evidence.
apparently his speaking was considered a valuable aid by
the Whigs in activating and convincing voters while it
was at once feared and respected by the Democrats.

Long Range Effects

Long range effects of Hunt's speaking can be judged
by observing how his oratory advanced him politically
and succeeded in establishing his ideas as official
policy.

If political office holding is accepted as the
measure of Hunt's effectiveness as a speaker, he cannot
be credited with achieving a substantial long range effect.
He was elected to the House only twice, in 1841 and 1843,
and was defeated in an 1847 attempt.175 On two occasions
Hunt was a strong candidate for the United States Senate
(in 1849 and 1852), but lost both times in legislative
balloting. Once he was supported by Clay for a post in

174Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 597.
175Daily Picayune, February 23, 1847.
Fillmore's cabinet, but another Louisiana whip was chosen.\textsuperscript{176} Also, in 1852 he was nominated for governor in the whip convention, but he was not a strong candidate.

None of these defeats, however, were the direct result of Hunt's failure as a speaker. Except for scattered speeches in 1847, Hunt had no opportunity to speak in his own behalf in the other situations which were decided by select groups. Hunt's ability as a speaker, which was never challenged, simply was not a decisive factor in his defeats. He was a victim of conflicts between power groups in the whip party which frequently resulted in an unfavorable outcome for the city candidate.\textsuperscript{177} Ironically, Hunt's ability as a stump speaker was never lost by the party through his defeats since he was always a loyal supporter of the whip cause.

The incongruity of Hunt's role as a leading orator holding no important office was the subject of occasional fruitless comment by the press. "How happens it," inquired one editor, "when the rewards of political toil are to be...


\textsuperscript{177}Greer, op. cit., XII (1929), 591, XIII (1930), 74-75.
distributed, his claims are always postponed;" another said.

It testifies to, as Louisianians, to think that such a man as Randell [sic] Hunt should have been so long overlooked by the small tricksters, brazen demagogues and street corner looters, who constitute what are called popular men in this city. 179

The Democrats also occasionally called attention to Hunt's lack of office. As one editor pointed out, "Hunt is always the whip great man in a canvass and a crisis, but when there are posts of honor and of ambition to fill they shirk and shuck him, a la node, Webster." 180

In conclusion, Hunt's abilities as a speaker were recognized by his party, but other factors prevented his election to important offices. He failed to be elected in spite of, rather than because of, the effectiveness of his speaking.

Hunt was more effective in his efforts to have his ideas adopted. The economic principles for which he spoke were restored to the constitution although the party which brought them into law soon ceased to exist as a political force.

179 E Baton Rouge Gazette, October 23, 1852.
179 Daily Delta, July 31, 1852.
180 Louisiana Courier, September 26, 1852.
Once again precise measurements are impossible. Hunt’s oratory was but one of the forces which brought Louisiana in 1853 back to the principle that the state should support the economy. Hunt was unquestionably effective, however, in filling the role of a minority spokesman during the time when the forces which opposed banks and internal improvements were in control. He and his fellow orators kept Henry Clay’s principles alive at every election and when public opinion was ripe they effected a change in the law.

The ultimate aim of the constitutional changes was never realized. Interest during the decade before the Civil War increased, but Louisiana had still not fully begun to develop its resources until shortly before the war broke out.

The long range effect of Hunt’s speaking included the theoretical acceptance of his economic ideas although Hunt did not personally win any outstanding political offices. A precise measurement of his effectiveness is difficult because of the many forces at work in the politics of the time. Without question, however, Hunt was

181 In addition to orators and newspapers, there was one periodical in New Orleans, DeBow’s Review, which vigorously advocated economic action.

182 Caldwell, op. cit., p. 40.
recognized by his contemporaries as a leader in supporting
this measure, and his oratory was generally considered his
major asset in this role.

Speech Content as an Indication of Effectiveness

Written records of Randall Hunt's speeches which have
been used in analyzing his argument included entire speeches,
quoted excerpts, and third person summaries. In the case
of the incomplete reports of many speeches, there were
frequently several newspaper versions to compare, so that
a reasonably accurate description of his ideas, and even
in some cases his words, was available.

In these speeches, as in earlier ones from South
Carolina, ample evidence is present to indicate that the
speaker adapted his material to fit the speaking situation.
The printed speeches provide numerous examples of the
speaker's awareness of the presence of his audience which
suggests that he consciously attempted, in selecting
supporting material and in phrasing ideas, to meet the
special needs of oral communication.

The frequent use of the words, "I," "we," and, especially
the often repeated term, "fellow citizens," seems to have
resulted from the speaker's efforts to take advantage of
the immediacy of the speaking situation to establish
personal link between himself and his audience. To approach
the analysis from a negative point of view, there was nothing in the written records of the speeches which indicated that they were written out as abstract arguments without regard for the relationship of a speaker to his listeners.

Without attempting an involved analysis of style, the use of rhetorical questions by the speaker may be suggested to have illustrated the technical suitability of the content of Hunt's speeches. He used rhetorical questions both to evoke overt answers from his audience and to permit his own rapid fire replies. The following passage, for example, in its quick shift from point to point while building to a strong conclusion is an excellent specimen of material worded for a speaking situation.

In answering a charge by an opponent that the Democrats were the only progressive party in the state, Hunt replied:

Impudent assertions! Progressive? In what? In removing the restrictions and injustice of the present constitution? No. Stand fast. The Constitution is good enough for him. In introducing the benefits of a free banking system? No. Stand fast. In promoting the cause of public education? No. Stand fast. He is satisfied with what has already been done. In advancing the cause of internal improvements? Alas! the Whigs recommend it. Progressive in what, then? In that only which leads to ruin. . . .

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183 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 123.
To say that the above passage is not proper writing does not, of course, necessarily make it good speaking. However, the probable intellectual reaction between speaker and listener as the questions were asked and answered suggests that the material was well constructed for a speaking situation. This direct approach, in varying forms, can be considered typical of the content of Hunt's speeches and on this basis he may be considered effective in adapting material for speaking.

Effectiveness in Judging Trends of the Future

"Indeed," said one editor of Hunt's politics, "ever since he settled in this state, he has always been on the liberal side, frequently in advance of his party and of the times." Hunt's economic philosophy, with its emphasis on state protection for vested interest, could hardly be called liberal today after a century of change. Even during his own lifetime the motives of Hunt and his party in advocating change were always suspect. They were men of considerable wealth, and they wanted to protect it. Possibly they wanted laws enacted simply to allow them to operate as they pleased. Or, from a more charitable point

184Daily Delta, July 31, 1852.
of view, they wanted a system which would encourage a prosperous economy in which everyone would benefit.

While Hunt's motives cannot be established, his perception of the inevitable drift of public policy was nevertheless sound. His speeches make it clear that Hunt envisioned a system of government sufficiently representative of the public welfare to enact positive measures in areas where individuals were helpless to act. The Whig party collapsed in Louisiana only shortly after the concept was written into the state constitution in regard to banking and internal improvements. While action by the government always lagged behind the need and the Civil War soon cut progress short, the idea at least continued to grow. Whether in the New South or the New Deal, the basic premise of Hunt's economic philosophy, as well as his concept of a stronger Union, continued to gain wider acceptance. In his ability to judge the trends of the future, Hunt was an effective orator during the period of the Whig party's existence in Louisiana.

Randall Hunt's public speaking as a Whig party leader was most effective in securing enthusiastic responses from audiences. This result, while important in political campaigns, could not always be translated into a more lasting effect in terms of votes and control of government
action. In these efforts Hunt's oratory on some occasions contributed to victory and on others it did not. The content of his speeches may be judged technically effective, and his public speaking was especially noteworthy in that he advocated programs which were representative of the eventual direction of public policy.
CHAPTER IV

SPEAKING DURING THE KNOW NOTHING PERIOD

Within two years after his success as a party orator in the 1852 Constitutional Convention, Randell Hunt found that the Whig party in Louisiana was no longer a substantial political force. To remain active in politics, he was forced to choose either to join the Democrats or to align himself with a rising nativistic force, the Know Nothing or American party. Hunt chose to become a Know Nothing, and his oratory from 1854 until 1859 was greatly influenced by his membership in that organization.

I. THE SPEAKING SITUATION

Historical Background

The nativistic movement did not spring magically into being in Louisiana at the time of the passing of the Whig party. Nativism, both as a social force and a political movement, had been present in the state for several years. As early as the 1830's a Native American Party of Louisiana, which was really a pressure group rather than a party, had...
been formed. It issued a few publications and lobbied for more restrictive naturalization laws.¹

Within the ranks of the Whig party some early nativistic sentiment appeared, particularly because of the tendency of naturalised persons to vote for the Democrats.² In 1843 the Whigs were especially bitter because of the alleged fraudulent naturalisation of numerous prospective Democratic voters by Judge Benjamin C. Elliot of the City Court of Lafayette. The following year Randell Hunt directed the impeachment proceedings against Elliot, and, facing opposition led by Pierre Soule, secured his conviction before the Louisiana Senate.³

The wealthy conservative element of the population in general mistrusted the radical political ideas which foreigners were suspected of harbouring. They also objected to paying taxes for the hospitalisation and policing of immigrants who sometimes arrived in New Orleans in poor health and with little money.⁴ The size of the growing number of immigrants, who poured into the country

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²Greer, op. cit., XIII (1930), 81.


unrestrained by any federal regulations, also alarmed the conservatives, and they feared the ever-increasing political power of the new arrivals. Many of these misgivings were aired in public with the introduction of such political issues as the Congressional homestead act in 1850 which engendered a battle over the right of aliens to take advantage of the proposed law.5

The Know Nothing movement intensified the violence that always threatened to erupt in Louisiana politics. Riots were especially frequent when the votes for an election were being counted.6 Although speaking occasions at which Randell Hunt appeared were never marked by anything more than considerable enthusiasm, some of the legal cases in which he participated were direct outgrowths of Know Nothing violence.

A unique feature of Know Nothingism in Louisiana was its refusal to follow the anti-Catholic line of the national party. The state organization insisted only that loyalty to a church should not supercede loyalty to the Union, and in 1855 the national platform plank attacking


Catholicism was omitted in the Louisiana platform. Many Catholics, in fact, became active members of the party in Louisiana.

The efforts by the Know Nothings to gain political control of Louisiana was brief but spirited. When the Whig political structure began to disintegrate in 1853 and 1854, many former Whigs joined the new organization which, as early as 1852, had taken on national proportions. By the Spring of 1854 the party was active in the local politics of several areas in Louisiana, and in the following year it fielded a strong slate of candidates for all major state offices. With Randell Hunt as the party candidate for state Attorney General, the Know Nothings lost the election by 3,000 votes. They were able, however, to elect one of the four United States Congressmen, nine of eighteen state senators and forty-one of eighty-eight members of the Louisiana House of Representatives. One year later, in the presidential election of 1856, the Know Nothings lost the state by a margin of only 1,400. The party made a poor showing nationally and the 1856 election was to be the "supreme effort of the American party in Louisiana." Only in the politics of the city of New

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Orleans did the Know Nothing faction continue to exist as a significant force, and even there the last organized remnants of the party had disappeared by 1860.\(^8\)

In summary, strong feelings of nativism existed in Louisiana for many years. When the Whig party collapsed, a strong effort was made to construct a new political party on a foundation of nativism. This effort, marked by vigorous campaigns in 1855 and 1856, \(\text{failed to provide a lasting substitute for the old Whig organization.}\)

**Specific Speaking Occasions**

Hunt's legal arguments and his campaign addresses were the two most significant types of speeches he delivered as a Know Nothing. Special features characterized each of the two situations.

The political rally as a speaking occasion in a Know Nothing campaign was much the same as it had been in the days of the Whigs. Officers were elected, party emblems were displayed, and speeches were delivered in abundance. The only major change in Hunt's participation was the marked increase in the number of towns outside New Orleans which he visited. In the state campaign of 1855, when he was the Know Nothing candidate for Attorney General, the

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\(^8\) Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party in the South*, p. 291.
following list of "Randell Hunt's Appointments" was widely printed by newspapers supporting the Know Nothing cause.9

We are authorized to state that Mr. Randell Hunt will address the people at the following named places, on the days designated:

- Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Sept. 8
- Bayou Sara, West Feliciana Sept. 10
- Clinton, East Feliciana Sept. 12
- Vidalia, Concordia Sept. 15
- St. Joseph, Tensas Sept. 17
- Winnsboro, Franklin Sept. 19
- Richmond, Madison Sept. 22
- Lake Providence, Carroll Sept. 25
- Bastrop, Morehouse Sept. 27
- Monroe, Ouachita Sept. 29
- Farmerville, Union Oct. 1
- Vernon, Jackson Oct. 3
- Minden, Claiborne Oct. 6
- Shreveport, Caddo Oct. 8
- Mansfield, Desoto Oct. 10
- Watchitoches, Watchitoches Oct. 12
- Alexandria, Rapides Oct. 16
- Marksville, Avoyelles Oct. 18
- Opelousas, St. Landry Oct. 22
- Vermillionville, Lafayette Oct. 24
- St. Martinsville, St. Martins Oct. 25
- Franklin, St. Mary Oct. 27
- Thibodaux, Lafourche Oct. 29

The notices also carried the ambitious announcement that "Mr. Hunt, upon his return, will visit the Florida Parishes, of which due notice will be given." The Florida Parish speeches were never delivered apparently because the orator was thoroughly exhausted on his return. As for the other speeches, the one in Clinton had to be cancelled because of transportation difficulties and the Vidalia

9See, September 12, 1855.
address was changed to Natches, Mississippi, but Hunt followed the rest of the schedule with only minor changes.10

Two characteristics of the "country audiences" appear to be especially pertinent. These audiences seem to have been somewhat more impressed with Hunt's reputation than were the citizens of New Orleans. Praise of his speaking was considerably more lavish in the smaller towns, and the reason for this reaction was probably that people in the country did not have occasion to hear as many capable orators as did the city voter.

A second characteristic of the audiences was the relatively large number of anti-Know Nothing voters present at the meetings. Although opposing parties frequently attended each other's rallies in the city, Hunt reportedly spoke to groups on his tour in which only half his listeners were party followers.11 Also, many prominent politicians of the opposition attended his speeches, and on occasion this turned a rally into a debate rather than simply a party speech fest.

Newspaper accounts agree that crowds were large at all the political speeches. One small town paper insisted

10 Ibid., September 25, October 23, 27, 1855.
11 Ibid., October 23, 1855; Daily Crescent, October 2, 23, 24, 1855.
that one-half the voters of Union Parish had turned out to hear "the great orator of Louisiana," and people were turned away when the weather forced some speeches to be delivered inside. The presence of ladies was noted on several occasions, and a few reports stated that the size of the gatherings was especially large in view of the yellow fever epidemic which was present at the time.

Hunt's political speeches delivered in the 1855 campaign provided in part the arguments which will be analyzed in this chapter. Other arguments were presented by Hunt in law suits growing out of the Know Nothing movement. Hunt headed the team of lawyers in three famous cases during this period, and the opposing legal battery was directed by Judah P. Benjamin. The three cases, each of which became a cause célèbre for the Know Nothings of Louisiana, were Auld vs. Walton, Bell vs. Huffy, and the Know Nothing Commissioners case.13

The commissioners case arose when a contempt charge was pronounced by a judge against the Know Nothing commissioners of one precinct when they refused to report the number of votes they had counted before a mob destroyed

12Farmerville Enquirer, October 11, 1855. Quoted in the Daily Crescent, October 23, 1855.

13Overdyke, Know Nothing Party in the South, pp. 244-46.
the ballot boxes. The other two cases were decided by juries with the question at issue being the determination of the candidate who had received the most votes.

Interest in these cases was intense as, for example, at one trial where "the court-room was thronged with a deeply interested audience," and a crowd of Know Nothing partisans was reported to be gathered outside. Procedure in the court room was rather informal, although during one of Hunt's three and a half hour speeches his listeners reacted so favorably that "the Sheriff was frequently called upon to put down their enthusiasm." Hunt was frequently applauded during legal speeches and was once interrupted by his brother, Theodore, who was impressed with Randell's eloquence and called out to him to speak louder so that he could be heard better.

In summary, Hunt's oratory for the Know Nothing cause, which was most extensive in 1855 and 1856, included both legal and political speeches. In both situations

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15 *Daily Crescent*, May 21, 1856.

Hunt had a considerable number of highly enthusiastic listeners although frequently a number of Democrats were present.

II. THE ARGUMENTS

Randell Hunt employed extensive logical, ethical, and emotional proofs in his arguments supporting the nativist movement of the 1850's. Behind the ringing slogan, "America must be ruled by Americans" was a deep conviction that restrictions should be imposed on the naturalization and enfranchisement of immigrants to the United States. Hunt's arguments in support of that conviction will now be examined.

Logical Proof

Before discussing the specific evidence and reasoning by which Hunt supported his arguments as a Know Nothing, the relationship of Hunt's fundamental political beliefs to the nativist movement will be described.

Intellectual Resources of the Speaker. Nationalism was the consistent and dominating theme in Randell Hunt's thinking. Gradually, however, Hunt's strong nationalism became infused with equally strong nativist sentiment. He was no doubt influenced in this process by his objections to frauds in naturalization, by his opposition to immigrants
voting in blocks for the Democrats, and, perhaps, by his
racial prejudice. Each of these factors will be briefly
treated so that the intellectual basis for Hunt's support
of Know Nothing arguments can be seen.

The close relationship between nationalism and
nativism is described as follows by Professor Darrell
Overdyke:

Nativism is a state of mind, conscious or
unconscious, intimately connected with nationalism.
Its roots, like those of nationalism, spring from
a sense of common association, common history,
common speech, common customs, common religion,
etc.17

The connection between nativism and nationalism is also
evident in the more respectable title of "American party"
which the Know Nothings assumed.18 Hunt stressed the
nationalistic aspects of the American party in describing
its platform in 1855. He said that the platform

acknowledged the providential care of God in the
rearing and preservation of our beloved country,
and taught a love of country and veneration of
our ancestors whose wisdom and patriotism reared
this great temple of liberty in which we now
worship.19

17Overdyke, Know Nothing Party in the South, p. 2.

18The efforts of the early party to maintain secrecy
and establish an involved ritual is not pertinent to this
study except to point out that the name "Know Nothing"
resulted from the refusal of party members to answer any-
thing more than "I know nothing," when questioned about
party affairs.

19Bee, August 16, 1855.
Distrust of foreign immigration seems to have become a conspicuous part of Hunt's nationalism only gradually. His defense of George Granstein's right to citizenship in South Carolina, for example, although fully justified by Hunt's opposition to states' rights, had represented a friendly attitude toward immigrants. In 1844 he favored a poll tax which would have made it easier for naturalized citizens to vote, and as late as 1852 he opposed special residence requirements in enfranchising naturalized persons. 20

Undoubtedly Hunt's role in the impeachment of Judge Elliot for issuing fraudulent naturalization papers in 1844 was a factor in shaping his thinking. Only two months after he had warmly supported a more liberal franchise based on payment of a poll tax, he submitted the motion to impeach Elliot in the State Legislature. The Bee described his speech in a report which revealed Hunt's mixed attitude toward immigration at that time.

He was not opposed to foreigners, far from it, he welcomed them here, but how could foreigners become good citizens, when their first act was a fraud upon the laws resulting either from ignorance, or culpability.

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Mr. Hunt spoke warmly of the necessity of guarding the naturalization laws and having them faithfully administered. He went into a history of these laws and showed how the subject was taken up by the National Government and that the most liberal and generous course had been adopted. The probation was but a brief one. But while these liberal terms were exhibited it became us to guard our institutions. He was here as an American citizen, to protect, uphold and defend our own peculiar liberty, and how could this be done if such miserable frauds were permitted. 21

Hunt's role in the impeachment proceeding almost certainly moved him closer to a position of opposition to unlimited immigration. It also provided him with experience in prosecuting naturalization fraud as evidenced by the fact that his line of argument in the Know Nothing cases was much the same as it was against Elliot.

The political activity of immigrants was certainly a decisive factor in Hunt's final decision to support nativism. His speeches reveal that he was particularly distressed by the influence he believed that the German vote had on Pierce's election in 1851. Because of Hunt's long record of opposition to the Democratic party, the tendency of immigrants to vote for the Democrats must have unquestionably influenced his position in regard to immigration.

21 Bee, March 11, 1844.
A final consideration, Hunt's attitude toward the Negro, might have had a bearing on his acceptance of nativism. Of course, it should be noted that nativism was not limited to the South and also some staunch supporters of slavery opposed the Know Nothings. However, since the Negroes of the South constituted a large non-Anglo-Saxon group just as did many of the immigrants, a certain transfer of attitude might be expected. Hunt, no doubt in keeping with the attitude of the overwhelming majority of his Southern contemporaries, believed with no reservations in the inferiority of the Negro race. He argued this point at length in private conversations with Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Salmon P. Chase.  

This belief was almost certainly one of Hunt's motives in proposing a bill before the legislature which made the entrance of freed slaves into Louisiana more difficult.  

In conclusion, Hunt's strong nationalism seems to have become gradually infused with equally strong nativistic sentiment. He was no doubt influenced in this process by

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23See, January 7, April 2, 1842. The bill was passed by the House. The extent of Hunt's feelings toward other minority groups is not clear. At various times, for example, he was allied politically or in law practice with individual Creoles or Jews and at other times he opposed them.
his objections to frauds in naturalization, by his opposition to immigrants voting for the Democrats, and, perhaps, by his racial prejudice which was revealed in his attitude toward the Negro.

**Argumentative Development.** Hunt contended in his speeches as a Know Nothing that immigrants should not be allowed to participate in political affairs. He urged that they neither be allowed to vote nor to hold elective office. Hunt supported his position with the argument that political participation by immigrants was bad for the country.

The reasoning process by which Hunt's contention supported his conclusion can be seen in the following valid hypothetical syllogism:

- **Major Premise:** If political participation by immigrants is bad for the country, then political activity of immigrants should be restricted.
- **Minor Premise:** Political participation by immigrants is bad for the country.
- **Conclusion:** Therefore, political activity of immigrants should be restricted.

Hunt supported the minor premise of the above syllogism with five major supporting points. Perhaps the most important was his assertion that immigrants were not loyal to the United States. In developing his point, Hunt sometimes used as an authority Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*.
In his Natches speech, for example, he used an analogy which Jefferson had employed to illustrate the hypothetical effect of American immigration to Europe:

He then asked what influence four or five hundred thousand Americans would be likely to exert, upon England or France. If we should annually pour this number of American citizens into any of the nations of Europe—loving their native land—venerating its illustrious dead—gathering about them the mantles of its heroes and statesmen—revolution and overthrow must inevitably follow.²⁴

Hunt used examples of actions by immigrants as evidence to show that they were disloyal. He pointed to the fact that foreigners coming to America "mostly intermarry among themselves, associate amongst themselves and preserve their national language, prejudices and notions."²⁵ In particular he criticized the Germans for forming their "Free German" societies. He cited the extent of their activity in several cities in the North and the South, and held that their loyalty was questionable because they wanted the United States to become involved in European revolutions.

In addition to authority and example, Hunt at times resorted to mere assertion in his efforts to show that immigrants were disloyal. For example, in a speech in

²⁴_Natches Weekly Courier_, September 18, 1855.
²⁵_Bee_, August 16, 1855.
Thibodaux he warned that if the "Red Republicans of Europe once obtain the ascendancy" then the political traditions of the country would perish. In an earlier speech in New Orleans Hunt had argued:

What can we rationally expect of men, who are thrown upon our shores, actuated by all motives and governed by all prejudices of their early life, --who were reared under different institutions--are either Red Republicans, or Monarchists--and who have no feelings in common with... natives... who have been taught from infancy to cherish our institutions?

Hunt's evidence did not support his contention that immigrants were disloyal. His use of Jefferson as an authority can be disputed on two points. First, the authority was not directly applicable to the situation existing in 1855. While Hunt did not misrepresent Jefferson's stated opinion in principle, he was guilty of drawing conclusions about a specific situation which were not warranted by Jefferson's mild, philosophic reflections of a much earlier date. Second, the analogy contained in the authority was in itself weak. It was not logically sound because it ignored the crucial differences

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26Thibodaux Minerva, November 3, 1855.
27Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
between immigrating to a new, expanding democracy and immigrating to an established European state. While the citation from Jefferson can be seen to be of little logical weight when considered from a dispassionate point of view, the authority was probably accepted as Hunt intended it by many of his listeners. Because logical argument could be easily clouded over by emotion in Hunt's Know Nothing speeches, consideration of the acceptability of the speaker's evidence and reasoning to his audiences will be reserved until the validity of the logic in all his arguments has been tested.

Hunt's examples were also unacceptable in logically establishing the disloyalty of immigrants. The examples may be dismissed on the basis of a single fault. They were not shown to be true representations of disloyalty as they merely established the existence of several instances where immigrants associated together. The examples in fact contained little more proof than did Hunt's assertions when considered purely as logical support.

As a second point to support his premise that political activity by immigrants was bad, Hunt argued in many of his speeches that immigrants engaged in block voting. He supported his point by examples. One instance to which Hunt pointed frequently was the efforts of the major
parties to secure the alleged block vote. "Both sought to coalesce with it," Hunt said in one speech, "for well did they know, that by doing so, they secured the triumph of their party."29

Hunt also gave examples of the concentration of immigrant voters in the cities which, he said, gave the foreign element dictatorial control. "In illustration of this assertion," reported the Delta, he gave as an example "the Twelfth Ward of New York, wherein the foreign vote exceeded the native vote by a considerable majority."30

Hunt cited the election of Pierce in 1852 as another example of the exercise of their political balance of power by recent immigrants. He objected to a manifesto on Pierce's behalf issued by the Hungarian liberal, Louis Kossuth, who had urged the Germans to reject the Whigs. Pierce's election had been due to the foreign vote, Hunt charged, and added that the President had paid his debt by appointing numerous naturalized Americans to diplomatic posts. Hunt gave examples of the result in his Natches speech when he said that

Most of the ministers to the important governments were foreigners—to the disgrace of the nation.
Places held by Franklin and Jay and Adams, when

29 Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
30 Ibid.
Hunt sometimes named several of the ministers including "a Frenchman in Spain" who was his long-time political rival, Pierre Soulé.

Hunt's examples again fail to stand as logical support for his point because the examples cannot be taken as true representations of the point at issue. While the accuracy of some of the examples cannot be questioned, such as the concentration of immigrants in cities and the appointment of foreign-born persons to diplomatic posts, these instances do not necessarily prove that Hunt's charges of block voting were either true or evil. The Democratic press in New Orleans took particular exception to his charges against the diplomatic appointments and developed extensive and convincing arguments to show that the posts were filled on the basis of qualifications and not as political payments.

At least one of Hunt's examples cannot be accepted as factual. While foreigners historically tended to become Democrats to a large degree, Hunt's evidence did not prove

31 Natchez Weekly Courier, September 18, 1855.
32 Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
33 Louisiana Courier, August 21, 1855.
his charge that they elected Pierce in 1852. In fact, Pierce's vote in the South was stronger than in the North (where more immigrants settled), and this indicates that the effect of the immigrant vote was less than Hunt's limited examples suggested. Finally, the evidence contained contradictory examples. By Hunt's own admission, both parties believed that a portion of the immigrant vote could be won, and Hunt supplied too few factual examples to establish the presence of a dangerous power block.

In a subpoint which also attacked the power of the immigrant vote, Hunt contended that aliens were voting unconstitutionally in some states. He argued that only citizens should hold the franchise and objected especially to the case of Michigan which had enfranchised all aliens within its borders when it was admitted to the Union. In his Natchez speech, Hunt repeated his charge that

Michigan had come into the Union with a statute providing that aliens should be allowed the elective franchise. This was done in 1836 to secure the election of Mr. Van Buren. Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Clay, and other distinguished patriots and statesmen... left the Senate Chamber rather than behold the Constitution so basely disregarded.  


\[35\] Natchez Weekly Courier, September 18, 1855.
He made a similar charge against alien voting as provided for in the Kansas-Nebraska bill. This argument appeared for example, in his speech at Mansfield on October 10, when he "attacked the Kansas-Nebraska bill as a violation of the constitution in allowing aliens to vote."  

Hunt's argument against alien voting was patently illogical. In fact, in view of his experience in debating constitutional questions, it is difficult to understand how he could have believed his own contention. Apparently he argued from the premise that congressional power over naturalization extended to control of voting. The United States Constitution, leaving the control of voter qualification to the states, did not support Hunt's assumption, however, and thus his reasoning was invalid.

His evidence was inadequate even if his reasoning had been sound. In numerous reports of the argument there is no suggestion that the speaker at any time cited the applicable constitutional provisions on voting. In conclusion, the argument was totally invalid.

As a third argument against political activity by immigrants, Hunt charged that they participated in widespread frauds in order to become eligible to vote.

36Mansfield Advertiser, October 11, 1855. Quoted in the Daily Crescent, October 30, 1855.
He used numerous examples to support his point in both his legal arguments and his political speeches.

In *Auld v. Walton* Hunt illustrated the presence of fraud when he described

the infamous manner in which the naturalization papers were issued, prior to the November elections. In the Fourth District Court, it had been shown that in one day sixty naturalization papers were issued in four or five hours—a physical impossibility, if the requirements of the law were observed; and some of the papers were not even signed by the judge, the clerk signing them for him, by wholesale.37

Hunt added examples of the result of fraudulent court procedure. Of the immigrants who had been brought into court in the case, Hunt said that 122 of them did not know who the candidates were in the election, 106 had never read the constitution of the country, 28 had attempted to vote at the wrong precincts, 20 tried to vote before their papers were complete, one had voted four times before he was naturalized, and another had earlier been convicted for perjury when he had falsely sworn that he was a citizen. In *Bell v. Hufy* Hunt also attacked fraudulent naturalization and charged the Democratic party "with having perpetuated the most outrageous frauds."38


38"*Bell vs. Hufy,*** p. 27.
Hunt also gave examples of fraud in his political speeches. In one address he charged that the Democrats were brokers in votes who had immigrants "waiting to be bought like sheep in the shambles." As evidence to support his charge, Hunt cited three elections in Louisiana and one in Louisville which had been marked by fraud and violence.39

Hunt's evidence can be accepted as sound in establishing the existence of extensive naturalization fraud. The specific instances to which he referred were numerous, representative, current, and factual.40 Only a limited conclusion, however, can be logically drawn from the evidence. While the numerous examples which Hunt cited were sufficient to establish that many votes cast against Walton and Hufty were invalid, no causal relationship was demonstrated between immigration per se and fraud. Another solution to the frauds other than restricting political rights would obviously have been enforcement of proper naturalization procedure.

A fourth argument which Hunt presented, his charge that immigration was rapidly increasing, was developed

39Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855.
with statistics:

He read Census statistics of a potent bearing upon the question. The returns of the six decades from 1790 to 1850 showed the following increase: In the first decade (from 1790 to 1800) the annual immigration was 5,000; in the second, 7,000; in the third, 11,000; in the fourth, 13,000; in the fifth, 15,000; and in the sixth, (from 1840 to 1850) 160,000 per annum. He then read other statistics, showing the increase since 1850 to be in the same alarming ratio. 41

Hunt based his statistics on census figures although his secondary source was the Louisville Journal of an unspecified date. 42 He repeated the figures throughout the 1855 campaign, and he stressed the same facts in the Auld Case in 1856 when he "began by depicting the increase of foreign immigration within recent years. . . ." 43

In contending the number of immigrants constituted a dangerously high percentage of the population, Hunt continued his statistical analysis. On the basis of the census figures, he predicted that by the next census the foreigners in the country would be in a ratio to the white natives of five to sixteen, and their number would exceed that of the entire white population of the Southern States. Every fourth vote he therefore asserted, would be the vote of a foreigner. . . . 44

41 Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855.
42 Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
43 Daily Crescent, May 21, 1856.
44 Bee, August 16, 1855.
Hunt further emphasized the growth of immigration in his New Orleans speech by referring to "the increase in pauperism [and] citing hospital statistics." This information was widely published and showed "four to five as many foreign paupers as native" and established that an overwhelming majority of the New Orleans Charity Hospital patients were foreigners.45

Hunt's evidence in support of his point was largely sound. The statistics which he used to establish his charge that a large number of immigrants resided in America can be confirmed as accurate, properly defined, and properly classified. Only his predictions for the future proved to be exaggerated.46

Again, however, the speaker failed to demonstrate a logical relationship between the presence of a large number of immigrants and the alleged need to curtail their political activity. The effect of his argument was merely to establish on a prima facie basis the proposition of fact, "Immigration is extensive."


46Prescott P. Hall, Immigration and its Effects Upon the United States. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1907), pp. 9-10. The ratio of immigrants to native Americans reached a peak in the early 1850's which was not exceeded for twenty years.
As a fifth argument, Hunt charged that immigrants were enemies of slavery. This point was developed with better logic than his other arguments. Hunt offered many examples as evidence to show that "abolitionism had grown formidable" with the influx of foreigners.

Several of his examples were drawn from newspapers which opposed slavery.

The former paper /Horace Greeley's New York Tribune/ says: "They all come with an instinctive love of liberty, and opposition to slavery; and may God speed the tide!—let them come!"

Hunt continued by declaring that "Giddings, the abolitionist of Ohio, boasts that there will be 30,000 foreign votes cast for Chase, the Abolition candidate for Governor!"

William Seward was also quoted as saying that by immigration "soon shall we give freedom to the oppressed slave!"

Hunt also pointed to examples of anti-slavery activity by immigrant organizations. He cited declarations against slavery by German societies in the North and in Louisville, Baltimore, and Richmond as well. They had, Hunt charged, "avowed their determination to combine and exert all their power to abolish slavery in the South."

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47Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
48Ibid.
49Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855.
Hunt's examples of opposition to slavery by immigrants were numerous, representative of at least a large segment of opinion, up to date, and factual. His reasoning rested on the premise that opposition to slavery was bad for the country. The validity of the premise rested in turn on the extent to which it was accepted by his audience. Special consideration will now be given to the suitability of Hunt's logic for his listeners in all the Know Nothing arguments described above.

Only one argument was logically valid of the five contentions which Hunt developed in various speeches in his attempts to show that political participation by immigrants was bad for the country. All of these speeches were remarkable, however, in that they appear to have projected an aura of plausibility quite unjustified by a close examination. Numerous reports, written shortly after the speeches were delivered, made special mention of the "soundness" of the speaker's logic. According to the *Daily Delta*, Hunt's New Orleans speech in 1855 was "worthy of his great fame as an orator and a logician." A country

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51 *Daily Delta*, August 16, 1855.
editor declared after a speech in North Louisiana that Hunt "deals not in vituperations. . . but appeals to judgement, and by his overwhelming diction, his persuasive and logical reasoning convinces his hearers. . . ." These reactions are typical of many others which found the logic of Hunt's arguments worthy of special note.

Three suggestions may be offered for the acceptability of the logic of Hunt's arguments by many of his listeners. First, some of his auditors were partisans who were predisposed to believe him. Second, he supplied an abundance of evidence even though some of it was questionable. The weakness of his reasoning on some points, then, could have been lost behind the mass of specific instances which he recited. Third, the subject matter with which he dealt was charged with emotion. Although many points will be isolated later in this chapter to show specific emotional appeal, the influence of emotional and logical reactions cannot be completely separated. No doubt emotional motivation resulted in a ready acceptance of many of Hunt's undeveloped premises. For people growing rapidly more defensive about slavery, for example, little argument might be expected to be necessary to convince them of a danger.

52Daily Crescent, October 23, 1855.
In summary, Hunt's Know Nothing arguments may have appeared to be logical, but, taken as a whole, they cannot be considered valid. His evidence at times was neither representative nor factual, and in all but one of his major arguments he failed to establish a sound logical relationship between his evidence and the premise he supported. The judgment of a Democratic editor, written with professed regret, seems a reasonable evaluation of Hunt's logic:

The orator, as he descended from the rostrum, had lost, like poor Michael Cassio, his reputation; the stern lawyer had become the mere declamer; the logician had changed to the flippant sophist.53

Ethical Proof

Often Hunt included material in his speeches which revealed him to be a man of good character, good will, and good sense. Examples of each of these classical divisions of ethical proof will now be presented.

First, Hunt frequently indicated that he was a man of good character. At times this was accomplished with references to the Diety. In his New Orleans speech, for example,

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53 *Louisiana Courier*, August 21, 1855.
He concluded by invoking the Almighty to prosper
the country, and to infuse into the great American
party the heart and the courage to encompass all
obstacles and march on to victory. . . . 54

In Baton Rouge, he declared that in the American platform
"the first principle was a firm reliance upon the providence
of Almighty God—a providence that was manifest in the
growth and greatness of our country." 55 At Thibodaux, he
employed the same device for elevating his own character
through association. The continued loyalty of immigrants
to their homeland, he declared, was ordained by the "Great
God of Nature," and he suggested that it would be folly
"to seek to alter His immutable laws." 56

As a final example of the use of ethos to demonstrate
good character, a passage in his New Orleans speech in
which he explained his motives for leaving the Whig party
may be cited. The Crescent quoted part of his remarks
directly:

54 Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855.

55 Baton Rouge Daily Advocate, September 10, 1855.
The Democratic editor commented sourly, "He did not say if
this was claimed as an original discovery with the Know
Nothing Convention at Philadelphia, or whether Moses, the
Prophets, the apostles, and other more modern religious
and theological worthies were entitled to any credit for
a prior acknowledgment thereof."

56 Thibodaux Minerva, November 3, 1855.
For years I was a member of the Whig party, and labored earnestly in its behalf, but now I see something far more important than ever commanded my attention then. I see the dark sea of foreign immigration lashing the foundation of American liberty, and the temple about to be submerged beneath its waves.  

Here Hunt showed his good character by pointing to the purity of his motives in becoming a Know Nothing.

Since the Know Nothings were frequently guilty of violence, Hunt sometimes found it necessary to give attention to the character of the cause which he supported. In the opening of his argument in the Auld case, for example, he quickly clarified his own motives and then cast doubt on the character of the opposition:

Whilst he did not, nor ever would, approve of acts of violence such as were charged to have been committed at the November election, he could not look upon them as less iniquitous than the frauds and perjuries that had been perpetuated on the part of the prosecution in the present case.  

Thus in many ways Hunt's good character was implied in his speeches.

Second, Hunt demonstrated his good will in his speeches, and perhaps the best example of this type of ethical proof came in his frequently repeated passage on his attitude toward foreigners. Although his immigration policy was

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57 *Daily Crescent*, August 16, 1855.
severe, Hunt emphasized that he felt no ill will toward immigrants. In Natchez he was quoted as stating,

But it is said "we do injustice to foreigners." We do them no injustice. Who rules England? Who governs France? Do foreigners usurp authority there? We invite the oppressed of all nations to occupy our territory—to enjoy our privileges—but we ask that Americans shall rule America. 59

In showing good will toward immigrants in his New Orleans speech, Hunt appealed to those already naturalized to join the American party and stressed that he favored the protection of their rights.

He appealed to all naturalized citizens to come forward and join the American party. . . .

In regard to the change in the naturalization laws, it was necessary; it would not interfere with the vested rights of anyone. 60

In introductions to his speeches Hunt often combined suggestions of his good character and good will. In addition to containing ethical appeal, his introductory remarks were also adapted for the situation in which he spoke. In his New Orleans speech, the Crescent reported that

Mr. Hunt began by stating that he was present in response to an invitation by a committee of the American party, to speak upon the platform of the National Council at Philadelphia, as modified by

59 *Natchez Weekly Courier*, September 18, 1855.
60 *Daily Delta*, August 16, 1855.
the American party of Louisiana. The principles of that platform, said he, are so simple that they need only be read to be understood; and he proposed that the platform be read to the meeting before he proceeded with his speech.  

Hunt indirectly intimated that he was of good character because of the invitation to speak which had been extended to him and because he wanted to proceed openly with the reading of the platform. He also demonstrated his good will by coming as the official representative of the party to modestly explain the simple issues of the campaign.

When Hunt carried the campaign to Baton Rouge, he altered his introduction slightly, and said that

he was happy to appear before the people of Baton Rouge in defense of the principles of the American party. The scourge that was prevailing in our midst reminded us how brief was human life; but may the constitution be immortal; and. . . it should be guarded against those who sap its foundations.

Apart from the elements of emotional appeal which this passage introduced, once again the good character and good will of the speaker were strongly implied.

By the time he reached Natches, Hunt had added to his introduction a passage which had consistently evoked a favorable response when used in the body of his other speeches.

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61Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855.
62Baton Rouge Daily Advocate, September 10, 1855.
Mr. Hunt began by saying that his position was a singular one, and his object in canvassing his state might sound strange. He was advocating the right of Americans to govern America. Does any man deny it? Does not the proposition meet the approval of every native American. . . ?

Thus, Hunt once again implied that he was a man of good character and good will who was supporting a worthy cause.

A few points in Hunt's speeches contain material which pointed out the speaker's sound wisdom. Hunt was especially fond of commenting on the extent to which he had given serious thought to problems he spoke about. Two examples in his 1855 speech in New Orleans illustrate this technique. At one point, in attacking the Utopian ideas of some of the German immigrants, Hunt disclaimed the wild reverence of liberty in the abstract, which is characteristic of uneducated men, and established the superiority of constitutional liberty, founded in law, to the study of which the best portion of the speaker's life had been devoted.

Later in the speech while developing his argument that all aliens should be denied the franchise, Hunt stated that it was his deliberate opinion, formed upon much study of the subject that the liberties and institutions of the country were in peril from the present state of the naturalization laws of the land.

63 *Matches Weekly Courier*, September 18, 1855.
64 *Daily Delta*, August 16, 1855.
65 *Daily Picayune*, August 16, 1855.
Hunt also showed his sagacity by revealing that he had personally had experience with the problems he spoke about. In attacking Pierce's appointment of foreigners to diplomatic posts, Hunt was quoted by the *Crescent* as saying,

> Since that event, I have had the time to cross the ocean, to visit different countries and to hear expressions of contempt and reproach for our country as it is at present, from lips that have spoke [*sic*] with enthusiasm of Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and other great men of our early Republic and I have blushed, my cheek has tinged with the blush of shame, that I could not answer and repel those reproaches, for I could not deny the truth.  

This illustration, in some form, appeared in every speech which was reported in the 1855 campaign.

In conclusion, the above examples illustrate Hunt's use of ethical appeal to demonstrate his character, sagacity, and good will. Some of the passages contained more than one appeal, but in many instances apparent efforts to stress the good character of the speaker or his cause were especially evident. All of the ethical appeals found in the speeches appear to have been well suited for the subject and the occasion.

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66 *Daily Crescent*, August 16, 1855.
Emotional Proof

Appeals to emotions were frequent in Hunt's Know Nothing speeches. Especially common were his apparent efforts to move his listeners through a combination of appeals to both national pride and fear of foreign influence. He also appealed to emotion in extensive ad hominem arguments.

His combined appeals to pride and fear are illustrated in the following quotation from the *Crescent*:

Gentlemen, when we see these immense hordes of foreigners pouring into the country, and settling in the North, and from ocean to ocean—in Kansas, Nebraska, California, everywhere—are we to do nothing? Are we to stand by and see the liberty of our country perish? For one, I say no! For years I was a member of the Whig party, and labored earnestly in the behalf, but now I see something far more important than ever commanded my attention then. I see the dark sea of foreign immigration lashing the foundation of American liberty, and the temple about to be submerged beneath its waves.67

Appeals to love of country and fear of foreigners are so interwoven in the above passage that they can hardly be separated. Opposing symbols were depicted to represent liberty versus domination. First, the immigrants were described as an invading "horde" attacking the country. A briefer description in the *Delta*, which did not quote all of the passage directly, strengthens the invasion

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symbol by reporting the question "are we to do nothing?" as "and shall we not combat it?" A second symbol, the picture of the dark sea washing against the temple of liberty, continued the contrast. Indirect quotations in both the Delta and the Picayune suggest that Hunt might have used the word tide rather than sea unless perhaps both were used. There was universal agreement, however, that the color of the menacing force was "dark." These symbols, then, might be expected to awaken both feelings of national pride and fear of foreign destruction.

Unquestionably Hunt's most frequently repeated passage in all his 1855 speeches was the one described below by an editor of the Delta.

He then proceeded to show that Americans should rule America. . . . Englishmen, he said, govern England; Irishmen wish to govern Ireland, and Americans have as clear a right to govern America.68

The Delta editor added his opinion on the emotional nature of the passage. The remarks were received, he stated, with more applause than the solid and really eloquent portions of his address. . . . However, the sentiment (and we are rapidly becoming a people of sentiment) appears indispensable to such discourses as that which delighted the immense audience last night.69

68 Daily Delta, August 16, 1855.
69 Ibid.
In its several forms, the passage described by the Delta was used repeatedly. The enthusiastic response with which it was always greeted suggests that rather intense feelings of national pride and fear of losing power to immigrants were aroused.

One of the soundest and most logical claims of immigrants to American citizenship was answered in Hunt's speeches with a blatant appeal to emotion. In his Natchez speech, for example,

he replied with a full heart to the insulting taunt of that contemptible and senseless claim of foreigners that we are natives by accident—thety citizens of choice. He did not choose his birth place, nor did he choose her who gave him birth,—but he bore for none the love he had, and should cherish, for the mother who bore him.70

The "many in that audience [who] wept" were indeed exposed to a show of emotional appeal. Not only did Hunt evoke emotions of love of homeland and mother, but he also transferred this emotion to a dislike of foreigners who dared to put this kind of devotion in question. The reasoning behind the foreigner's claim to having demonstrated his loyalty by undergoing the hardships of immigration was lost in the emotional outburst by which Hunt

70 Natchez Weekly Courier, September 18, 1855.
"briefly but most sarcastically" treated their contention.71

Emotional appeals to pride and fear were by no means absent in Hunt's legal speeches for the Know Nothing cause. In the Auld case, for example, where the legal issue was a simple question of the validity of some votes,

Mr. Hunt began by depicting the increase of foreign immigration within recent years, and the danger that it threatened to American institutions; upon the Democratic party availing itself of its vote. He argued the inevitable nature of the movement that has latterly \( \text{sic} \) taken shape and strength under the name of the American party, and the excitement that men must feel when they see the liberties of their country in danger.72

In the Hufty case, Hunt reportedly "concluded with an earnest appeal to the American feeling of the jury."73

Thus it can be seen that the same combinations of appeals to national pride and fear of foreigners was presented in both legal and political speeches.

Other emotional proofs scattered throughout Hunt's speeches were based on appeals to God, common sense, economic security, tradition, and even fear of physical

71Daily Crescent, August 16, 1855. The Democrats were not entirely unskilled in emotional argument, and they circulated the slogan, "Lafayette was a foreigner and Arnold an American."

72Ibid., May 21, 1856.

73Bell vs. Hufty," p. 28.
violence. The most important type of appeal based on emotion which is yet to be discussed was his *ad hominem* arguments.

In his defense of Huffy, for example, Hunt alluded to the manifestation of an unfavorable feeling toward Mr. Huffy by one of the jurors; warned them not to give over their judgments to the control of the judge who had decided every point against them. . . .

Since he only needed a majority to win, Hunt could afford to alienate one juror, and he was apparently trying to generate feelings of independence and fair play in the others.

The most outstanding personal attack which Hunt ever made in any of his speeches came in his repeated attacks on Judah P. Benjamin during the 1855 campaign. Hunt criticized Benjamin on a number of points, but he was especially harsh in dealing with Benjamin's support for the formation of a southern party. Hunt's purpose, of course, was to defend the Know Nothing party as the answer to the needs of the South, but the argument was almost entirely personal in content. According to the editor of the *Crescent*, Hunt said,

> Why form such a party? What is it for? Is it to act against the North? Is it for disunion— for war? If there be a Northern and a Southern party, the weaker one must give way, and if it

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comes to a battle, the South will be in the minority. Mr. Benjamin says he will take the foremost rank in battling for the rights of the South. Oh, what a dreadful loss our bar will sustain! He is going to do battle for the South. Men of Massachusetts, stand out of the way! He is coming! I think I see him now, his victorious arms extended, and the poor Yankees scampering in all directions—

"Helter-skelter, how they fly!
The killed and wounded how they die!"

The reaction to Hunt's attack on Benjamin was wildly favorable, and he continued to include some version of the argument in the rest of his speeches in the country parishes.

In conclusion, Hunt's emotional appeals and *ad hominem* arguments reached their most intense peak in his oratory for the Know Nothings. While his reasoning became less sound and his evidence less direct, his appeals to nationalism and fear increased. These appeals were found throughout his arguments, and they appear in many cases to have replaced rather than supplemented logical reasoning.

III. EFFECTIVENESS

Randell Hunt's speaking tour of the country parishes in 1855 included an address in the small North Louisiana

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*Daily Crescent*, August 16, 1855.
town of Farmerville, which inspired a local citizen to write confidently, "The effect was tremendous, and we expect much good and useful results. . . ." While this report was quite devoid of specific information, the observer's comment can be verified by a considerable amount of supplementary evidence. This evidence will now be examined in detail for both the legal and political speeches which Hunt delivered as a Know Nothing supporter in 1855 and 1856.

Surface Response

Perhaps because of his extensive use of emotional proof, Hunt's 1855 speeches received the greatest overt audience response of any speeches in his career. The New Orleans speech, for example, ended after two and a half hours with a general request from the crowd that Hunt continue to speak, and after he declined because of fatigue, "he sat down amidst a renewal of the enthusiastic applause which had accompanied his remarks throughout." When he reached Thibodaux, a local editor wrote, with a strong element of exaggeration, of "enthusiastic applauding that greeted him at the close of every sentence."

76 Ibid., October 13, 1855.

77 Daily Picayune, August 16, 1855.

78 Thibodaux Minerva, November 3, 1855.
However, his entire tour was characterized by tremendous applause and the Bee summarized his reception by reporting that "the country press chronicles his triumphs of reason and eloquence in every direction." 79 Hunt's legal speeches for the American party cause were also frequently interrupted by overt audience approval. 80

One specific reaction which occurred during many of the political speeches deserves special notice. Hunt's strong emotional appeals resulted in numerous instances of apparently unrestrained weeping. When Hunt described his attachment to his country in Natchez, for instance, "many in that audience wept." 81 While it might be assumed that this reaction would be largely limited to female listeners, the editor of the Minerva was careful to point out that this was not true of the Thibodaux speech.

So powerful were his appeals to American pride, American honor, and American patriotism, that tears were seen to course down the manly cheeks of many faces; with the ladies, who are always more susceptible of being touched by the pathetic, the effect was still more visible--white cambrics were in great demand. 82

79 Bee, October 23, 1855.
80 "Bell vs. Hufty," p. 28; Daily Crescent, May 21, 1856.
81 Natchez Weekly Courier, September 18, 1855.
82 Thibodaux Minerva, November 3, 1855.
Tears were apparently not even limited to followers of the party, as the account of a correspondent from Natchitoches reveals.

Near me sat an old gray-haired Sag Nicht,83 the bones of whose father, lay canonized upon the plains of Monmouth,84 with each of his waning optics jeweled with a tear, as the orator painted, in undescribable language the past and present glories of his native land. This little circumstance caused me to look around for another instance of the kind, when I found, that nearly a quarter of the assembly were actually weeping.85

There is no doubt, then, that Hunt's emotional appeals evoked several instances of crying.

One reaction among Democrats is worthy of special notice. Hunt's 1855 campaign tour was unique in that he offered to debate with the Democrats rather than following the usual practice of appearing only with speakers of his own party. Several opposition orators accepted the offer, but one of the most interesting results of Hunt's speeches was that occasionally a Democratic speaker would refuse to debate. In Mansfield, for example, the local paper reported that Hunt personally challenged the Democratic representative

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83 Sag Nicht (Say Nothing) was a term the Know Nothings applied to Germans.

84 In the Battle of Monmouth Court House, June 28, 1778, Washington engaged British forces which included a division of German troops.

85 Daily Crescent, October 24, 1855.
to Congress from that district but he declined and "not a solitary voice was heard from the anties." When he spoke at Vernon "it was thought that Mr. Hunt would be answered by Mr. Polk, but after hearing Mr. Hunt, he declined." In his Monroe appearance a local judge began a debate, but during Hunt's rebuttal he rose and "fled from the contest" amid laughter and cheers from the crowd.

In conclusion, the responses during Hunt's speeches included tremendous displays of enthusiasm and several instances of weeping. Some of the Democrats were made uncomfortable and, on occasion, declined an opportunity to reply.

**Immediate Results**

Whatever criticisms may be made against the soundness of Hunt's argument, he could not be accused of speaking for display. He was attempting to win votes and several factors may be isolated in determining the extent to which he was successful.

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87 *Farmerville Register*, October 11, 1855. Quoted in the *Daily Crescent*, October 23, 1855.


One measure of the immediate effect of Hunt's oratory on changes in public opinion is found in the reports of conversions of voters described in the papers. In Know Nothing parlance new party members were described cryptically as having "met Sam." An illustration is found in the following report.

His speech is certainly not only his, but the great speech of the canvass. All the wavering were satisfied as to their future duty, and a goodly number, at night, shook patriotic Sam by the hand, who bade them "God speed" in the noble work.

Another account took note of the efforts of Hunt's Democratic opponent to carry North Louisianas "by speaking in almost every ward in the different parishes," but went on to predict that "Mr. Hunt will go South of Red River with a large majority." After Hunt's speech in Richmond, in Madison Parish, a correspondent boasted,

We have already taken all into the Order in this parish but the office seekers, the incorrigible and the disappointed, yet the truth was so powerful as Mr. Hunt told it, that four or five were convinced and enrolled in the cause of the Americans.

These opinions (although highly subjective) contribute to

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89 *Daily Crescent*, October 24, 1855.


a full evaluation of Hunt's effect when they are supplemented by an analysis of the actual election returns.

The entire ticket lost to the Democrats in 1855 by about 2,000 votes out of the roughly 40,000 which were cast. The returns reveal, however, that Hunt's speaking had been effective in several ways. First, Hunt ran ahead of his ticket, receiving over 500 more votes than the candidate for governor.92 Hunt's share of the vote was unquestionably increased by his speaking tour into twenty-three of the state's 48 parishes. He exceeded the average vote for the other members of his ticket in twenty of the parishes where he spoke and failed to lead in the other three by only one or two votes in each case. In the parishes where he did not speak, which included many areas where the Whigs had always been strong, Hunt exceeded the ticket average in only fifteen parishes and failed to do so in ten.

The effect that Hunt had in adding votes to the ticket as a whole is difficult to assess with absolute accuracy. The ticket carried seven of the parishes in which Hunt spoke and seven in which he did not speak. It is possible that Hunt's oratory was a significant

92Daily Picayune, November 30, 1855. The official returns were published on this date.
factor in the northern victories because that section of the state was traditionally Democratic.

Without question, then, Hunt increased his own popularity through his speaking, and he possibly added some strength to the whole ticket. Although he did not win an office, his speaking appears to have been effective in winning more votes than he would have gotten had he not spoken.

In his legal speeches, Hunt was somewhat more effective in his immediate results. The judge in the contempt case fined the Know Nothing Commissioners twenty-five dollars each, but Hunt won both the Hufty and Walton cases by jury votes of seven to five in each instance.93

Long Range Effects

The long range results of Hunt's oratory for the Know Nothings was negligible. He remained a loyal but rather passive follower of the movement until the rise of the Constitutional Union party in 1860. He made only a single speech for Fillmore, the Know Nothing candidate for president in 1856, and was himself a very weak Know Nothing candidate for the United States Senate in 1859.94

93 Daily Picayune, May 21, 1856; "Bell vs. Hufty," p. 29.
94 Greer, op. cit., XIII (1930), 445.
The fruits of Hunt's victory in the Know Nothing court cases was taken away from him by the Democrats. The Democratic legislature simply passed a special bill throwing Hufty out of office as sheriff and the state Supreme Court overturned the Walton decision. The public reaction to these reverses was heated but brief, and the offices were lost to the party.

The fires of nativism which Hunt and the other American party orators had fanned later cooled in the face of an even more violent issue. All political passions were soon devoted to the effect of the slavery controversy on the nature of the Union.

**Speech Content as an Indication of Effectiveness**

Only carefully limited observations can be made about the technical effectiveness with which Hunt selected material for his speeches. Newspaper accounts formed the only source for reports of what he actually said, and, although their accuracy in reporting the issues which he argued is beyond question, lengthy passages which quoted the speaker directly were infrequent. Even some of the quoted passages were suspect in cases where they could not be confirmed by two or more sources.

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The great length of most of the reports and the availability of several reports of a single argument, however, makes it possible to analyze the content of the speeches except for detailed consideration of style. The most significant conclusion which can be reached in judging the extent to which Hunt employed material effectively is the rather clear indication that his speeches were well adapted for the various speaking situations at which he appeared. He made occasional references to the significance of the occasion on which he spoke as, for example, when he mentioned the yellow fever epidemic or the invitation of the American party committee. He continued his earlier habit of employing frequent rhetorical questions to involve his audiences directly in the speech process. Also, to a greater extent than in any of his previous speeches, he simplified his arguments and made them especially vivid with the result that he established excellent rapport with his listeners.

In general, the speeches appear to have been well adapted for oral presentation. In fact, if written out the speeches probably would have not been as effective as when they were delivered, and the speaker was perhaps never in his career more justified in neglecting to have his speeches published. Although the absence of logic is by no means a prerequisite to simplicity and clarity
in argument, Hunt's arguments for the Know Nothings derived much of their effectiveness from the relationship which the speaker established with his audience rather than from the cogency of his reasoning.

One lengthy description of a campaign rally which did not contain a single reference to the content of the speech, stated, "To attempt to follow Randell Hunt is beyond the ken of human pen." More than the writer of the report probably realized, he was complimenting the speaker on his ability to make his argument sound better than a careful analysis would reveal it to be.

**Effectiveness in Judging Trends of the Future**

Hunt had declared that the Know Nothing party was the answer to the needs of the South, but he unwisely made foreign immigration the scapegoat for all southern troubles. He insisted that immigrants were controlling the government, destroying slavery, and undermining national loyalty. Unquestionably these were valid problems. The South, and most especially the wealthy conservative South, needed representation in the national parties, it needed protection for slavery, and it needed a strong bond of nationalism to hold a prosperous Union together. In fact, the absence of these features finally

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96 *Daily Crescent*, October 24, 1855.
brought on the Civil War. When a "Northern Party" won the presidency, when real and fancied danger to slavery reached a new peak, when loyalty to Union became secondary, then war broke out. Unionism was Hunt's controlling emotion, and in his insistence on the American movement "as a truly national party" he was undoubtedly attempting to combat forces which he feared would cause serious disruption in the future. But nativism was a most unsuccessful means to the end he hoped for, and by 1860 he was forced into yet another party to fight a final battle for the Union.

Obviously not all of Hunt's support for the Know Nothing movement was based on his concern for the Union. He believed that a national policy which permitted unchecked immigration invited fraud and manipulation. While in the 1850's the country was growing so rapidly that the assimilation of immigrants hastily and without regard to legal form was accomplished successfully, the trend could not be allowed to continue indefinitely. Hunt was premature in his concern and severe in his solutions, but he was ultimately vindicated in principle. By the end of the century, as Overdyke points out, federal action had been taken on "practically all the immigration reforms, and many of the naturalization reforms, suggested by the Americans."97

97 Overdyke, Know Nothing Party in the South, p. 294.
In summary Hunt was correct in seeing the need for a party to oppose the Democrats which would protect the South and hold the Union together at the same time. He also correctly saw the need for eventual reforms in the immigration laws. His great error was not in understanding the problems of the future, but in failing to find a logical and workable solution for the time in which he spoke.
CHAPTER V

SPEAKING DURING THE CONSTITUTIONAL UNION PERIOD

Randell Hunt became a leading member of the Constitutional Union party in the final efforts of the conservatives in Louisiana to preserve the Union. As usual, Hunt's oratory was his most valuable political contribution.

I. THE SPEAKING SITUATION

Historical Background

The events which led to the final Union crisis in Louisiana were many and complex. Secession was preceded by a long period of increasing sectional tension over slavery which resulted in a strong sectional alignment of political parties.

The decade of the 1850's had begun with a false peace when Clay's Compromise of 1850 had been heartily accepted in Louisiana as a satisfactory arrangement between the North and the South. California was permitted to enter the Union as a free state in return for stricter fugitive slave...
laws to pacify the South.\textsuperscript{1} Other national events, however, soon renewed the agitation. From the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852 until John Brown's abortive raid in 1859, incidents occurred which increased the acceptability of disunion to the citizens of Louisiana.\textsuperscript{2}

As the presidential election of 1860 approached, a highly significant development occurred when the major political forces in the state split into three sections. The main body of the Democrats divided into two groups. John Slidell, becoming increasingly radical, led the administration Democrats of Louisiana out of the party fold and threw his support behind the cause of John Breckenridge, the "Bolter" candidate. This section of the party was characterized by many of its enemies as the party of disunion. It was clearly a sectional party, and, while many of its spokesmen denied disunion sentiment or evaded the issue, Breckinridge's followers were militant in their support of slavery and "southern rights."\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1}Craven, *op. cit.*, p. 106.


At the opposite end of the sectional spectrum was the Republican party. Entering its second presidential race, the Republican organization was purely a party of the North. While Lincoln had no electors on the ballot in Louisiana, he was still the subject of considerable denunciation by the orators for the other candidates.

The two remaining parties decried the sectional nature of the Republicans and the Bolter Democrats. The regular Democratic organization, for example, nominated Stephen A. Douglas who made an unprecedented campaign tour into the heart of the South where he labeled disunion as treason. In Louisiana Douglas had the support of Pierre Soulé.

The second Union organization was the Constitutional Union party. It was composed largely of former Whigs and others who refused to align themselves with either of the Democratic groups. The candidates of the new party were enthusiastically hailed in Louisiana and in other states where the Whigs had been strong. In an obvious effort to bridge sectional feeling, the Constitutional Unionists nominated John Bell of Tennessee for president and Edward Everett of Massachusetts for vice-president.

The sectional basis of the Republicans and the Bolter Democrats is seen in their respective stands on the slavery issue. Typical of the Democratic position was the demand
of the Louisiana Platform that the federal government commit itself to the protection of slavery in the territories. In direct opposition the Republicans insisted that the spread of slavery into the territories be stopped completely. Seeking compromise, the Douglas Democrats adopted their leader's concept of local option or popular sovereignty while the Constitutional Unionists, embracing several shades of opinion, offered as a national solution only "the Constitution and the enforcement of the laws."^4

In conclusion, the election of 1860 arrived at a time when sectional differences over slavery had reached a new peak. Two of the four political parties were sectional in their origin and in their appeal. Disruption of the Union had become a real possibility.

Specific Speaking Occasions

A number of letters which were available to Randell Hunt's biographer reveal that Hunt was widely sought as a Union orator in 1860. Numerous invitations to speak came to him "from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and by the score from the cities of every Southern State." In a phrase which was popular at the time, a correspondent from Arkansas declared, "One blast now upon your bugle-horn

^4 Craven, op. cit., pp. 312-48.
is worth a thousand men!" The same letter suggested that the fate of the state was in Hunt's hands. Among the other letters received was one from Mississippi signed by several prominent politicians including William L. Sharkey, who became governor after the Civil War.5

Of the invitations to speak out of the state, Hunt accepted only the one from Philadelphia. He devoted the rest of his oratorical efforts to the Louisiana campaign where he was both an elector on the Bell-Everett ticket and a candidate for the state senate. Hunt began a tour of North Louisiana in a series of speaking engagements which he was unable to complete because of illness. The speeches on his tour were poorly reported by the press, and extensive records remain only of his New Orleans and Philadelphia addresses.

The general features of political rallies which have already been described were present at all of Hunt's Union speeches. However, two features were sufficiently different to warrant comment. The normal amount of pageantry and enthusiasm showed a notable increase and political ties were considerably weakened.

Perhaps the presence of three candidates in the contest was responsible for increased emotion, suggested the Bee.

5William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. xxxix.
The effect of the campaign, reported the paper, was to awaken "some spark of emotion among even the most indifferent." When Hunt spoke in Philadelphia, the local press there commented at length on the enthusiasm and excitement demonstrated by the citizens of the city.

Pageantry in the form of costumes, pictures, slogans, and fireworks was in evidence at all speeches. An unprecedented number of political clubs representing all candidates contributed much to this aspect of the campaign. The extent to which the clubs added color to the contest is revealed in the following description of a New Orleans parade:

The Sixth Ward or Butterfly Club... rather took the shine off the rest. They had a huge and splendid butterfly with outspread wings at their head; and the members, belted and red-capped, with their butterfly transparencies, marched in open line with fine effect.

Before the Philadelphia speech a number of eye-catching objects were displayed which included the following:

One of the largest and most beautiful transparencies in the line was one representing the American patriot in the time of '76, leaving his ploughshare to hasten to the field of battle.

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6 *See*, September 25, 1860.


8 *Daily Crescent*, October 22, 1860.
Two medallion portraits of the respective Union candidates were also exhibited, eliciting general commendation for their faithfulness and artistic coloring.9

The great enthusiasm of the campaign was based in part on the fact that many voters were no longer bound to old political ties. The New Orleans Bee saw these newly independent voters as "a golden opportunity for the effective display of zeal, energy, activity, perseverance, eloquence and talent" on the part of political leaders. The Picayune agreed that

The canvass is really to have more of the popular element in it than usual. The organization, the means of conducting the contest, and all its accessories, will be more independent of centralized committees and long recognized leaders.10

Efforts to gather voters into new political associations were marked by increased oratorical output. Many orators no longer active were called back into service while promising younger men who might have been thought too immature in earlier elections were pressed into service. In Louisiana political clubs of New Orleans made arrangements for city orators to visit the country parishes but the demand for speakers was never fully met.


10Bee, August 1, 1860.
In the great turmoil of the campaign of 1860, only broad generalizations can be suggested about the attitude of Hunt's audiences toward the issues discussed in the canvass. Certainly the Constitutional Union party attracted the attention of many people who were primarily concerned about the effect of the vote on commerce. A study by Caskey of the membership of the party in New Orleans points out the strength of "business men of character and prominence" in the party.11 The audiences to which Hunt spoke, both in Philadelphia and in Louisiana, did not include a substantial number of slave holders. In none of the situations, however, can the attitude of the people be considered hostile to slavery. Slavery was constitutional in 1860, and even in Philadelphia slogans appeared which suggested anti-abolition if not pro-slavery feeling. Of several such signs in evidence before Hunt's Philadelphia speech two read, "Are Abe's rails used on the underground railroad?" and "Uncle Sam says Abe can't be elected because he keeps colored company." Finally, in consideration of the most complex attitude of all, Hunt's listeners were generally in favor of maintaining the Union. National sentiment was especially strong in

11 Caskey, op. cit., p. 237.
New Orleans. When William L. Yancey spoke there for the Bolter Democrats, even he did not openly advocate disunion. Gradually, however, an equivocal attitude in Louisiana was beginning to be expressed which declared that certain actions by the North could not be accepted. Hunt's speeches indicate that he feared that Lincoln's election had become to many in his audiences an unacceptable action which would justify a reluctant secession.

In general, then, a strong concern for commercial interests was found among Hunt's listeners. Although slavery was the basic point of friction between North and South, Hunt's audiences were not directly involved in the ownership of slaves. Finally, his listeners may be characterized as wishing to see the Union preserved. These attitudes existed in an atmosphere of intense enthusiasm as old political ties no longer bound voters to their traditional political organizations. The campaign was marked also by an increase in the number of speakers who took to the stump in support of the candidates.

II. THE ARGUMENTS

A division of arguments according to the classical forms of proof is appropriate for Hunt's 1860 speeches just as it was for his earlier address. Based on his
speeches in Philadelphia and New Orleans his logical, ethical, and emotional proof will be examined.

**Logical Proof**

In Randell Hunt's campaign tour of 1860 "the tenor of his speeches was for the Union." His arguments rested on a belief in the indestructibility of the American Union. This belief was the fundamental premise in his political philosophy.

The **Intellectual Resources of the Speaker.** Hunt held that the Union should be preserved both as a matter of policy and of right. His arguments in 1860 were concerned only with the question of policy, but his belief that no right of secession existed formed the legal or constitutional basis of all of his arguments.

Hunt's ideas on the constitutionality of secession had been expressed in many addresses prior to 1860. For example, in his speeches during the nullification crisis Hunt had insisted that no state could interfere with a citizen's place in the national government. The laws of the nation, said Hunt, "operate immediately and directly upon the citizen, and thus create an immediate and direct connection between the citizen and the general government."  

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twenty years later, speaking as a Louisiana Whig supporting the Compromise of 1850, Hunt elaborated on his earlier stand:

The Constitution of the United States forms a government, and not a league. It operates directly upon the people individually, and not upon the states. Each state has surrendered many essential portions of its sovereignty for the purpose of constituting with the other states a nation. To secede, then, is not to break a league, but, in the language of General Jackson, to destroy the unity of a nation.\(^{14}\)

Hunt's concept of the nature of the federal union was based on considerable study of history and law. He frequently supported his arguments with citations from constitutional history, the opinions of constitutional authorities, and legal cases which decided constitutional questions. Hunt's reputation both as a practicing lawyer and a professor of law suggests that his opinions were not lightly formed. Beginning in 1847 when the University of Louisiana was founded, Hunt taught civil law which was his special field both as professor and attorney. He became dean of the school in 1850 although he continued as a teacher until long after the Civil War.

In arguing that the South should not secede as a matter of policy, Hunt was again supporting a deeply

\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 124.
ingrained belief. The most important objection to secession which Hunt advanced was his contention that the Union resulted in prosperity. To destroy the Union, then, would be to ruin the possibility of economic progress. Hunt believed that the major motivation behind the forming of the United States Constitution had been "commercial purposes," and he insisted that secession, legal or not, would result in an economic decline for the nation.

While the legal and economic bases for Hunt's Unionism were significant in motivating him, his genuine patriotism and love of country should not be ignored. Hunt's private sentiments as a young man in South Carolina were echoed in public utterance throughout his life:

I could not but ask myself what is Patriotism? The term is derived from Patria—our country. It is an attachment to the honor & glory & the interest of the nation. . . . What to me is a particular spot of ground? Shall a free-born American, a Citizen of the U. S. postpone to that, his liberty? . . . He then is a true Patriot who will uphold the honor & true interests of his Country, & will devote himself if need be to the support & protection of that government, whose arm and whose flag have protected him in the enjoyment of his rights. . . .15

In summary, Hunt's support for the Union rested on several basic ideas. First, although he did not discuss this point in his 1860 speeches, Hunt believed that no

legal right of secession existed. Second, he believed as a matter of policy that the best economic interests of the country would be served by maintaining the Union. Finally, Hunt was motivated by a deep loyalty to the nation.

**Argumentative Development.** In arguing that the Union should be preserved as a matter of policy, Hunt confined his logical proofs almost exclusively to the point that the Union should be maintained because of its economic advantages. He thus largely ignored two highly important issues in the 1860 campaign. First, he refused to discuss the question of slavery, and, second, he failed to develop an argument to show that Bell and Everett were the most likely candidates to preserve the Union.

Hunt's refusal to discuss the slavery issue in detail was perhaps a reflection on his many years of experience in the Whig party. The Whigs had repeatedly tried to suppress such issues and had instead always stressed those points on which large numbers of people could unite. This was the course of action which Hunt adopted, as illustrated by his New Orleans speech at the meeting which gathered to ratify the nomination of Bell and Everett.

He came forward cheerfully, and said he had not attended the meeting to make a speech on the great subject or political topic that had divided
the people's attention early and late, touching on the issue of slavery...\textsuperscript{16}

In his second omission, Hunt merely asserted that Bell and Everett were the best candidates to preserve the Union. Possibly Hunt was doubtful of the success of his party and wished to avoid attaching the disunion label too securely to any party likely to win. In fact, throughout the campaign Hunt suggested to his listeners that even under "Black Republicans" the Union might be preserved. Reporting a speech early in the contest, the editor of the \textit{True Delta} wrote sarcastically,

\begin{quote}
Mr. Hunt went over the grounds of the Black Republicans, showing that possibly there were many hundreds, nay, thousands, of B. R.'s who were not as dangerous as some persons thought; but were subdued and gentle B. R.'s.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

As the time of the election drew closer, Hunt was even more open in discussing the possibility of maintaining the Union if his party lost. The \textit{Bee} reported on the eve of the election:

\begin{quote}
But in the event of Lincoln's election, the speaker was not in favor of opposing him by force. It would be treason. Any person who took such a course should be tried before the Courts and if the public policy required it, he should be hung.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16}Daily \textit{True Delta}, May 31, 1860.
\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Bee}, November 6, 1860.
Although Hunt praised his candidates as "men who embodied the purity of character, the wisdom of experience, the patriotic devotion to the country that are peculiarly demanded at this crisis in our history," he did not argue logically that only they could save the Union. Without this premise, then, his arguments praising the economic value of the Union did not prove that the candidates should be elected. Hunt apparently proceeded, however, on the assumption that many of his listeners would accept as a premise the assertion that Bell and Everett offered the best chance of holding the country together. The truth of this assumption before the campaign began cannot be established, but the heavy vote for Bell and Everett in the commerce-minded city of New Orleans suggests that many accepted Hunt's premise.

Turning now to the major logical argument which Hunt advanced in support of his candidates, his reasoning may be seen to follow the form of the correct hypothetical syllogism presented below:

Major Premise: If the Union has economic advantages, then Union candidates should be elected.

Minor Premise: The Union has economic advantages.

Conclusion: Therefore, Union candidates should be elected.

Again without supporting his underlying assumption, Hunt concentrated his proof on his minor premise. In his speeches of 1860 he relied almost exclusively on examples for his evidence.

Hunt used negative examples in his Philadelphia speech to show how commerce had suffered before the Union was formed under the Constitution. He cited the limitations imposed by the inability of states to coordinate their tariff policies. Using Pennsylvania as an example he explained how a protective state tax on foreign goods could be negated by the importation of duty free goods into a neighboring state. These goods, he stated, could then be carried into Pennsylvania to be sold and thus "countervail all the legislation" by that state.²⁰ Turning from a single illustration, Hunt said that before the Constitution was adopted, "There was a commerce of Massachusetts, a commerce of Rhode Island, a commerce of Pennsylvania, but there was no commerce of the United States." As another negative example of conditions preceding the Constitution, Hunt cited the subjection of the country to commercial control by foreign governments:

²⁰William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 333.
We were completely at the mercy of foreign nations, and especially. . . Great Britain, whom, though we had conquered in war and achieved our independence, we were yet subjected to by our commercial laws.\footnote{Ibid.}

As positive examples of the commercial value of the Union under the Constitution, Hunt cited the advantages of a national commerce. The \textit{Daily True Delta} parodied one of his illustrations from a New Orleans speech when it reported,

He then pictured commerce like an eagle in the noonday sun, &c., taking wings, &c., and going Americanwards, not Carolinewise, or Massachusetts-wise, but broadly Americanwards, under the Blessings of the Constitution.\footnote{\textit{Daily True Delta}, May 31, 1860.}

When Hunt used the figure of commerce as "an uncaged eagle" in his Philadelphia speech, he cited specifically the increase in trade, the rise of domestic manufactures, and the variety of production in agriculture as business advantages under the Union. These advantages came, Hunt declared, only when "the little restraints and bars of local legislation and of state provisions were removed."\footnote{William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 335.}

The details of these examples appear to have been substantially repeated in Hunt's election eve speech in
New Orleans. Then, according to the Bee, Hunt "pictured the flourishing condition of our country, in its agricultural, commercial and other relations, and traced its progress and success to the preservation of the Constitution and of the Union."  

Several other examples of national growth were also cited by Hunt as proof of the economic advantages of the Union. He pointed to the vast growth of population from "three or four million" to an estimated thirty-two million as evidence of a flourishing economy. (Hunt seems to have overlooked the fact that only five years earlier he had found the same type of information alarming as an indication of dangerous immigration.) As another example, Hunt cited the growth of the nation's territory:

Instead of a narrow strip along the border of the Atlantic Ocean, we have a vast extent of territory, extending from the Atlantic clear over to the Pacific Ocean. From the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico our territory extends.

The increase in the number of states was also cited as an economic advantage of the Union. "Our States," said Hunt, "from thirteen have advanced to thirty-three."

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24Bee, November 4, 1860.


26Ibid.
All these examples of "material progress," Hunt stated, resulted from the adoption of the Constitution which created "a national government for national purposes, leaving a local government for merely local purposes." 27

Hunt's examples cannot be accepted as prima facie evidence of the economic value of the Union. While the specific instances which he cited were factual, they were not necessarily true representations of economic progress unquestionably dependent on the Union. The connecting link between the various examples of material growth or increased commercial cooperation and the adoption of the Constitution was not established. In failing this crucial test, then, the evidence does not stand. To some extent, however, the causal relationship was probably accepted by many of Hunt's listeners. Avery Craven concluded, for example, that the commercial orientation of New Orleans was a strong factor in Union sentiment in the city. 28 This conclusion is supported, too, by Shugg and his authorities. 29

In general the appeal of the Constitutional Union party was aimed at those who shared the old Whig philosophy which

27 Ibid.
28 Craven, op. cit., p. 106.
viewed nationalism and economic progress as strongly related. On the basis of the strict logical validity of his examples, Hunt's evidence does not stand, but to some degree the relationship which he suggested between the Union and his specific instances of progress were probably accepted by many of his listeners.

Hunt's arguments which could be called primarily logical made up perhaps a third of his 1860 speeches. The great bulk of his addresses were made up of appeals which were devoid of logical argument and which were instead based on emotional and ethical proofs.

Ethical Proof

The Daily Delta objected to what its editor called the "pathetic allusions" to Hunt's "personal history" which he included in his 1860 speeches. These appeals, which the Delta admitted to be impressive, were frequent in Hunt's speeches and pictured the speaker as a man of good will, good character, and good sense.

At times Hunt showed his good will by praising his listeners. In the introduction of an early speech in the campaign Hunt said, according to the Picayune, that when he "looked upon the large audience before him--on the

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30 Daily Delta, December 14, 1860.
beaming eyes, the earnest faces, the deep emotion, he felt that all would... do their duty in the canvass." Lavish in his praise of the citizens of Philadelphia, Hunt said, in part, that he was happy to be "in the city of Philadelphia, this beautiful city, with its magnificent private structures, with its splendid public edifices, abounding in brave men and beautiful women." He concluded the Pennsylvania speech with praise by assuring his auditors that their influence was powerful in deciding the outcome of the election.

Hunt also showed his good will through repeated statements which expressed his identification with his audiences and their interests. While he supported the Union, Hunt reminded a New Orleans audience, "he was a citizen of Louisiana, born and raised in the South." Faced with a situation in Philadelphia in which identification might require more emphasis, Hunt praised Washington as a hero belonging to both the North and the South, and declared,

33Ibid., p. 336.
34Daily Picayune, May 31, 1860.
In addition to showing Hunt's good will, the above passage also revealed him to be a man of good character because of his patriotism. Examples of this aspect of ethical proof can be isolated in other passages from Hunt's speeches.

Hunt's character was demonstrated through his patriotism when in one speech he said that, although he was a Southerner, "he did not forget that he was also a citizen of the United States." Reporting the concluding speech at a Union meeting in July, the Daily Delta stated,

Mr. Hunt said he was born an American, he had thus far "lived as an American, and not a miserable sectionalist." He also pledged himself to go before the people, and address them as became an American and a Southerner.

Although the following passage is rather long, it presents a typical example of Hunt's patriotism as he revealed it in his Philadelphia speech.

36Bee, November 6, 1860.
37Daily Delta, July 6, 1860.
Yesterday I went down to old Independence Hall to refresh my patriotism and kindle anew the fire of love of country, which has never yet left my heart; and as I walked around and beheld the old bell that proclaimed "liberty throughout the land and unto all the inhabitants thereof," and as I turned my face to the venerated statue of that man who above all mortals must deserve the reverence of the Sons of Liberty, George Washington prolonged cheers, and as I looked around, fellow-citizens, as I beheld these ancient things connected with our revolutionary history, as the grand swelling sentiments of liberty filled my heart, I could not help exclaiming to myself, "Glorious Philadelphia! Cheers, and cries of "Good!" Glorious Pennsylvania!"

Some of the material in Hunt's speeches showed him to be a man of good character through association. In many ways, for example, he tried to show that the candidates for whom he spoke were virtuous. This indirect method of establishing his own good character was found in a New Orleans speech where Hunt was reported to have said,

John Bell is known to many here present, to all by reputation, who have read the history of the times. He is no adroit manager of intrigue, or skilled political strategist, changing his position to catch the favoring breeze or popular favor. No, he is... a man of the strictest integrity, the most scrupulous consistency, a man of liberal views, enlarged statesmanship and pure patriotism.

Hunt also told his audience of the "exalted character of the men composing the Baltimore Convention" who had

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nominated the candidates, and thus further elevated the
caracter of both his cause and himself.40

Part of the material in Hunt's speeches which was
concerned with his character consisted of remarks in which
he asserted that he was humble. At a ratification meeting
for the candidates Hunt came forward "to give them his
homage and support to the best of his humble ability."41
In a much less routine fashion, the speaker developed this
aspect of his character with considerable care in his
Philadelphia speech. He confessed that he came as "a
private citizen, unknown to more than two or three of this
vast multitude."42 Since he had been introduced to the
crowd as an elector from Louisiana, Hunt modestly attributed
his warm reception to his position rather than to his
person:

It seems yet to have been sufficient to state to
you that I appear before you an elector selected
by the Union party of Louisiana, as a candidate
for elector of President of the United States from
Louisiana, to insure this heartfelt greeting.43

41Daily True Delta, May 31, 1860.
43Ibid.
Later in his somewhat lengthy introduction, Hunt again intimated that he was an humble man. He had nothing to say, Hunt told his listeners,

that you have not already heard from your favorite orators, or that you will not hereafter hear from orators in better terms and in more glowing language than I can possibly use; yet, as I have been called upon to address you. . . I felt that I would be derelict to my duty if I did not come forward. . . .

Finally, Hunt sometimes mentioned his experience with the problems about which he spoke. This material, which demonstrated the speaker's sagacity as well as his character, is illustrated in a speech where he paid a tribute to the Constitution, which he had read and studied, not politically, but privately, in his library, from boyhood up to this day, and still wondered at and admired the wit of its concoctors.

Hunt implied his direct experience when he said to his Philadelphia audience, "They tell you Louisiana is unsound. I deny it. She is sound to the very core. She is true to the Union. She will vote for John Bell and Edward Everett."

In summary, Hunt used material which showed him to be a man of good will, good character, and, to a degree,
good sense. A slight difference in emphasis was noted between the Louisiana and Pennsylvania speeches, and it appears likely that the speaker was attempting to use ethos in a manner appropriate for each case.

Emotional Proof

A report of one of Hunt's speeches during the 1860 campaign stated that he was "more earnest and impassioned than usual" and that he employed "frequent bursts of warm feeling and fervid eloquence." While emotional appeals were present in all of Hunt's ante-bellum speeches, appeals to patriotism, to fear, and to imitation were strong in his campaign addresses.

Appeals to patriotism were included in all Hunt's arguments for the election of Bell and Everett. The platform of the party simply pledged support for the Constitution, the Union and the enforcement of the laws. From the beginning of the canvass Hunt insisted that these statements of principle were sufficient and should be accepted as "the primary objects of patriotic desire." Later in the campaign, in a statement which combined ethos with appeals to patriotism, Hunt stressed that national

47 *Daily Delta*, July 6, 1860.

48 Ibid., May 31, 1860.
loyalty was not inconsistent with Southern beliefs when he said that "he pledged himself to go before the people, and address them as became an American and a Southerner."\textsuperscript{49} Using the same appeal in a later speech, Hunt said that being a citizen of Louisiana did not cause him to forget that he was a citizen of the United States as well.\textsuperscript{50}

Appealing to patriotism in his Philadelphia speech, Hunt reminded his audience of the traditions of the city. At this place, he recalled, "was passed the glorious resolution which declared these colonies no longer subject to the King of Great Britain, but free and independent States."\textsuperscript{51} Hunt also appealed to national pride when he pointed to the personal liberty enjoyed by Americans:

Where else is there a leader of liberty throughout the enlightened world? where the man who, when he hears the sound of liberty, does not turn his eyes instinctively to America?\textsuperscript{52}

Other national appeals in the speech included praise of the nation's conduct in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Mexican War.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49}Ibid., July 6, 1860.
\item \textsuperscript{50}Bee, November 6, 1860.
\item \textsuperscript{51}William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 331.
\item \textsuperscript{52}Ibid., p. 335.
\end{itemize}
Hunt appealed also to fear in his efforts to win support for the Union party. He warned that the struggle for power among the other parties threatened to destroy the country.

In New Orleans, for instance,

*The speaker then made a brief review of the condition of the country, depicting in glowing colors the factions which distract and divide a nationality. . . the laws derided and broken. . . and asked if the country was in condition, then could foreign nations respect it, or even its own citizens fearlessly depend on it?*

In the introduction of his speech in Philadelphia Hunt again appealed to fear. All elections were important, he said,

*But it appears to me that, from the origin of our government to the present day, there has never been any question, any issues more important than those that are now presented to the public; for they are not only issues that affect the policy of the country, but they are issues that affect the very existence of the government.*

Hunt continued his appeals to fear until the very end of the campaign. In his last speech for Bell and Everett, "he drew a vivid picture of the condition to which we would be brought by disunion, evil following evil, until we would find ourselves the subjects of a despot."

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55 *Bee*, November 6, 1860.
A final emotional appeal of significance in Hunt's 1860 speeches was based on imitation or the desire to be on the "band wagon." Although the Union party was never so sanguine as to expect a clear majority of electoral votes, it based its hopes of success on throwing the election into the House of Representatives. In this situation, Hunt proclaimed on election eve in Louisiana, John Bell would stand an "excellent chance." In the same speech Hunt promised his listeners that Bell would secure enough electoral votes to stop Lincoln's election. For instance, he stated that he believed on the basis of "telegraphic information received by him yesterday," that the important votes of New York and New Jersey would go for a compromise slate of electors opposed to the Republicans.56

Typical of several appeals which Hunt made in his Philadelphia speech to encourage the "band wagon" impression, are those in the following passage:

We have formed a party that has carried Kentucky by nearly thirty thousand majority; we have formed a party that will carry Virginia as sure as tomorrow's sun will rise. Tennessee is with us, and North Carolina will be with us. . . . I tell you gentlemen, the South will present almost a united front.57

56 Ibid.
Hunt's appeal for all to join in the Union movement was presented with great candor in an early New Orleans speech. Attempting to take advantage of weak party ties, he concluded his speech by stating that Bell and Everett could never be elected without the cooperation of those who had belonged to other and different parties, and after appealing to those present to enroll themselves under the banner of Bell and Everett and work for the Constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the laws, he retired amid a perfect tempest of cheers. 58

In summary, appeals to such emotions as patriotism, fear, and desire to imitate or "join the band wagon" were common in Hunt's 1860 speeches. Missing almost entirely from his stock of emotional arguments were the ad hominem appeals which Hunt so frequently made in earlier speeches. Just as his logical appeals were devoted largely to arguments for the Union, Hunt's emotional appeals too appeared to have been designed for conciliation and unification.

III. EFFECTIVENESS

Commenting on Hunt's campaign oratory in 1860, a North Louisiana editor recalled the many causes for which Hunt had spoken in past years. In evaluating the speaker's effectiveness as a champion for his various causes, the

editor observed that Hunt had been "often baffled" in his immediate objective, but "never conquered" in his arguments for a strong national government. This record of the past proved to be an accurate picture of the future. Once again Hunt was able to win only the praise of his listeners. His policy was again not to be adopted at the time when he supported it.

**Surface Response**

As always, Hunt’s oratory evoked cheering and applause from his audiences. Perhaps the increased enthusiasm and pageantry of the campaign made such responses especially easy for his listeners, but even so the audience reaction to Hunt’s speeches was noteworthy. The *Daily Delta* noted that speakers who followed Hunt on one occasion were unable to hold the audience which had interrupted him with frequent applause. The *Bee* observed of the same speech that Hunt was greeted with an outburst of applause from the crowd when he rose to speak, and then the paper commented on the reaction during the speech:

> He was listened to throughout in an unusually attentive manner, every hearer appearing to be mentally enchained by his vigorous thought and

59 *Caddo Southwestern*, Quoted in the *Bee*, October 26, 1860.

60 *Daily Delta*, May 31, 1860.
intensity of expression, and he was frequently interrupted by irrepressible bursts of applause. \textsuperscript{61} The same source noted that Hunt peroration "was followed by the most deafening shouts of gratification and applause."

The reaction to Hunt's Philadelphia speech was equally favorable. A large bell, symbolic of the Union party's presidential candidate, added to the din "at those appropriate points where the 'applause came in.'" \textsuperscript{62} In addition to the customary applause and cheers, the press recorded "cries of 'good!'" from the audience. During some passages which have been discussed above as consisting almost entirely of ethical or emotional proof, Hunt was interrupted at the end of every sentence by overt signs of approval by his audience. \textsuperscript{63}

Hunt received a highly favorable reaction to one speech which was delivered under conditions somewhat trying for the audience. At the end of a Union convention in July, when the delegates were hot and tired after seven hours of business and speechmaking, Hunt made the concluding address. According to one report, he stirred "the enthusiasm of the Convention into a state of red heat and uncontrollable

\textsuperscript{61}Bee, November 6, 1860.

\textsuperscript{62}William Henry Hunt, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 331.

\textsuperscript{63}Ibid., pp. 329-36.
explosiveness... and concluded amid immense applause. 64

In summary, Hunt oratory in the 1860 campaign was marked by extensive indications of approval by his listeners.

**Immediate Results**

The entire Union effort in 1860 must be measured to a great extent in votes. As a leading figure in the Union party and as certainly the outstanding party orator in Louisiana, Hunt's effectiveness can be considered as being reflected in the extent to which people voted for him or for his cause. This measurement, obviously tenuous and indirect, provides the only tangible method for gauging the immediate results of Hunt's speaking.

Hunt's effort in Philadelphia was not sufficient to stem the Republican tide. Two months after his speech the Republicans carried the local elections. This victory proved to be a forecast of the presidential contest in which Bell received only about 13,000 votes out of the nearly 500,000 cast. 65

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64 *Daily Delta*, July 6, 1860.

The party fared somewhat better in Louisiana. The ticket on which Hunt was an elector gathered in more than 5,000 votes in New Orleans which was nearly as many as the combined total for the two Democratic factions. When the returns from all over the state were tabulated, however, the Union ticket lost the electoral votes of the state to John Breckinridge, the Bolter Democrat, by slightly more than two thousand votes.66

The vote for Hunt as state senator might be expected to give a somewhat more exact indication of Hunt's immediate effectiveness as a speaker. Hunt won the seat in the state senate, thus demonstrating that the approval of the Union ticket in the city extended to him personally.

In addition to examining how the votes were divided among the candidates, some insight into Hunt's contribution to his party's success may be gained by considering the number of qualified voters who failed to vote. The Union press had warned that a heavy turnout in New Orleans would be necessary to give the state to Bell. However, only about 10,850 of 17,975 registered voters went to the polls. The vote, which was smaller than that cast in the previous

66Caskey, op. cit., pp. 11-14. Breckinridge also carried six of the seven parishes in North Louisiana where Hunt spoke.
presidential election, was a disappointment to the Union supporters. The Union party had expected at least two-thirds of the voters to participate and to give Bell seven thousand votes in the city.67

Conclusions about Hunt's effectiveness on the basis of the votes cast in the election of 1860 can obviously be drawn only with qualifications. In New Orleans at least the acceptance of Hunt's ideas by the voters was clearly indicated by his senate victory. His share of the credit for Bell's plurality in the city and his share in the blame for the failure of more people to vote is not easily determined. His speeches were prominent features of the campaign, however, and may be considered as contributing factors in the final results. In the case of the Philadelphia speech, no meaningful conclusion can be reached regarding Hunt's effect on the election.

Long Range Effects

Secession was the inevitable result of the election of Abraham Lincoln. Hunt had clearly foreseen this danger and had argued against it during the campaign. His argument went unheeded, however, and the ranks of the Union men diminished rather than increased in the aftermath of the

67Bee, November 6, November 7, 1860.
election. In terms of long range effect, then, Hunt was unable to make a decisive contribution to stopping secession just as he had been unable to contribute significantly to victory for the Union party.

The extent to which sentiment for disunion blotted out national feeling in Louisiana is especially evident in the sudden shift of loyalty by some of the political clubs whose members had in part made up the audiences for Hunt's New Orleans speeches. Caskey reports that many which had been strongly Union turned secessionist. When the Louisiana legislature called for a convention to consider the matter, these clubs supported secessionist delegates.68

Hunt's influence continued to be felt in the immediate period after Lincoln's election. His strong stand for the Union in his 1860 speeches and in his earlier addresses as well caused him to be regarded as the spokesman for a large element of the population. The Senate postponed its final decision on calling the convention until Hunt could arrive in Baton Rouge to make a final and unsuccessful speech against it.69

Gradually Hunt was forced to alter his position radically in order to have a voice in the final decision

68 Caskey, op. cit., pp. 16-19.
69 Greer, op. cit., XIII (1930), 626.
about secession. When the convention was called, Hunt became a candidate as "co-operationist" delegate which meant that he no longer openly opposed secession *per se* but rather argued that any action should be taken slowly and in concert with other Southern states. He was defeated, however, in an election which sent an overwhelming majority of secessionists to the convention. 70

Once secession was an accomplished fact, the final remains of Hunt's influence for the Union vanished. Hunt himself began to weaken in face of the popular pressure for the newly forming Confederacy. Although he never became a thorough-going rebel, the change in Hunt's position can be seen from information obtained by Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase. Chase's interest was based in part on the fact that he and Hunt had married sisters, and in part on his political ambitions. Writing on May 30, 1861, Mrs. Hunt sought to impress upon her brother-in-law the unity of southern feeling which included, presumably, the attitude of her husband.

The South is now united to a man. There is no division among the people here. There is but one mind, one heart, one action. Do not suffer yourself

to be misled with the idea that there are union men in the South.71

When the war broke out one of Hunt's brothers and a nephew served in the Confederate army. Hunt, however, stayed out of the war and out of politics, too, as Chase learned from an agent in New Orleans. In June, 1862, Chase was informed that:

It is believed by all that his opinions are entirely unchanged, but since the beginning of the war, he has been perfectly passive. He has never gone over to secession, and Union men here have the greatest confidence in him, though he does not come out a declared Union man even now.72

In November of the same year, Chase's man in New Orleans reported with regret that Hunt had not changed his position. "In the Union movement in this City," he wrote, "I am sorry to say that Mr. Randell Hunt and Mr. Roselius have stood aloof--especially the former.73

In summary, the long range effect of Hunt's oratory for the Union cause was not substantial. The influence of his arguments began to wane immediately after the election,

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71 Albert Bushnell Hart (ed.), "Letters to Secretary Chase from the South," American Historical Review, IV (1889), 338.


73 Ibid., p. 334.
and by the time of the election of delegates to the secession convention Hunt no longer had the majority support in New Orleans which had sent him to the state senate in November. He gradually retreated from his Union position by changing first to a co-operationist and finally to a neutral. The election of Lincoln seems to have marked the end of realistic consideration of the stand which Hunt took in the campaign of 1860.

**Speech Content as an Indication of Effectiveness**

The content of Hunt's speeches in 1860, as found in reprints, quoted excerpts, and indirect quotes, suggests that Hunt was effective in establishing a rapport with his audiences. An examination of the content of the speeches reveals several ways in which the speaker established direct contact with his listeners.

First, Hunt often mentioned the place and time in which he spoke. His speeches reflect the transitory character which is peculiar to the speech situation; no effort for literary effect or attempt to produce a lasting political essay is evident. Hunt's willingness to include transitory material in his speeches to establish rapport is seen in the passage where he said, "I know, fellow-citizens,
where I am. I am in the old State of Pennsylvania, one of the glorious old thirteen. . . . 74

Second, Hunt often made direct reference to the people to whom he spoke. This was illustrated in a New Orleans speech where he mentioned "the beaming eyes" and "the earnest faces" of "the large audience" before him.75 Again, in his Philadelphia address, Hunt referred to "this vast multitude that I see before me."76 His most common form of direct address was the expression "fellow-citizens" which he constantly repeated in all his speeches.

Third, Hunt used rhetorical questions extensively. "Is patriotism connected with a single spot?" he asked his Philadelphia audience,77 and in numerous questions in this and other speeches he invited his listeners to become mentally engaged in his address.

Finally, Hunt employed great variety in sentence structure with the result that his points often received special emphasis. Often many clauses would be strung together in long sentences which were relieved at intervals

74 William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. 331.
75 Daily Picayune, May 31, 1860.
77 Ibid., pp. 331-32.
by short emphatic statements. "Look at our commerce!" he declared at one point, and at another he concluded, "All these liberties we have enjoyed."\(^7\)

In summary, the content of Hunt's speeches can be judged effective for the situations in which he spoke. He established rapport with his listeners with direct references to places and people. He also involved his audiences in the speech process with rhetorical questions and emphasized points with varied sentence structure.

**Effectiveness in Judging Trends of the Future**

Lincoln waged the Civil War to preserve the Union. Without regard of the many other results of that war, its effect in holding the states together was alone a vindication of Hunt's arguments. The threat which Hunt had first recognized during nullification and which he had fought at every turn until his final defeat in 1860, passed out of existence with the Northern victory. His concept of the Union was validated in an awesome fashion.

In the immediate aftermath of the war Hunt seemed certain of recognition and reward for his earlier stand for the Union. Late in 1865 he was elected by the state legislature as United States Senator. The Picayune reminded the

\(^{78}\)Ibid., pp. 234-35.
people that Hunt had been "zealously opposed to the secession" and added further praise of the newly elected senator:

Randell Hunt, who was elected by a nearly unanimous vote, enjoys a reputation which is by no means limited to the bounds of this State. The reputation of a profound jurist, publicist, and statesman, an orator and logician of the first class, a scholar of varied learning and great zeal and devotion to science, literature and the law, a gentleman of dignified manners and bearing, an ardent patriot, and an honest man.79

From as far away as New York came praise which recalled Hunt's role as a Union spokesman before the war:

The election of Randell Hunt as a Senator of the United States from the State of Louisiana affords another proof of the sincerity of the Southern people in their professions of a desire to yield to the Constitution and the Union a firm and honest support. Mr. Hunt is well known as one of the ablest members of the bar of Louisiana -- as a Whig of the old school of Clay and Webster, and, in 1860, as an eloquent and powerful advocate of the Constitutional Union party.80

A most ironic turn of fate, however, prevented Hunt from reaping his delayed reward. The radicals among the Republicans in control of the Congress refused to seat the southern representatives, and the South began a chaotic period in which the Congress was to "reconstruct" the nation.

79Daily Picayune, December 9, 1865.
80New York Express, quoted in the Picayune, January 4, 1866.
When Hunt returned to New Orleans from Washington, the Bee expressed its regret at his destiny and paid a tribute to Hunt's oratorical ability which had been so important in winning him his place in public life. Hunt had, the editor stated, "all those qualities that would constitute him an eloquent advocate" before the Senate. "With earnestness and fervor," the report continued, "he has a felicity of diction, and a stateliness and grace of delivery." If Hunt could only be seated in the Senate, concluded the editor, in a satisfying dig at one of the most hated of the Radicals, then "the elaborate and pedantic patchwork rhetoric of the great 'quotationer,' Charles Sumner, would be sure to shrink into immeasurable inferiority, judged by a true standard of eloquence."\(^8^1\)

In judging the trends of the future, then, Hunt must be considered effective. He had foreseen the impossibility of secession and after the Civil War he was remembered as an advocate of unionism. Only because of an ironic political development in the Republican party was he denied a seat in the Senate as a reward for his earlier views.

Considering Hunt's effectiveness as a whole in the campaign of 1860, it must be concluded that the results of

\(^8^1\)Bee, May 28, 1866.
his speaking were mixed. He was successful in realizing the long-range policy which the nation was to follow, but his results in transmitting his ideas to the voters was only superficial. He delivered speeches in which he established excellent rapport with his audiences who in turn gave him an enthusiastic response. In the immediate test of effectiveness which came in the election, however, he won the office he sought but failed to add enough strength to his ticket to contribute additional electoral votes to Bell. His oratory was hardly remembered in the aftermath of the election. During this period Hunt was forced to retreat from his Union position, and he withdrew to a neutral stand until the outcome of the war justified his Union arguments.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND APPRAISAL

On the basis of the speeches examined in this study, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the public speaking of Randell Hunt. First, Hunt was well trained and educated for his role as a public speaker. Second, he spoke with a consistent purpose under a variety of conditions. Third, he supported his arguments with proofs which were generally correct and appropriate. Finally, as a result of his public speaking, Hunt had a significant effect on his times through his contribution to full public discussion of vital issues.

I. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Randell Hunt's widely recognized reputation as a public speaker cannot be attributed to some undefinable knack or gift of eloquence. Lacking outstanding physical attributes, Hunt developed his ability as a speaker through study and practice.

Although he received no formal schooling in rhetoric, Hunt's writing and speaking revealed that he was familiar
with the classical precepts. His thorough education in the
classical languages undoubtedly accounted for some of his
exposure to rhetorical theory, especially to the writings
of Cicero.

Hunt's study in subjects other than rhetoric was
significant in contributing to his ability as a speaker. He
was recognized at all levels of his education as a
scholar, and his habits of intellectual curiosity and
investigation remained with him. He acquired a great
reservoir of knowledge on which he drew as a speaker. He
continued to read widely upon leaving school, and he pre­
pared for speaking on specific issues with detailed research.

Practical experience was also important in Hunt's
training. Throughout the years preceding his admission to
the bar, Hunt was exposed to several excellent speech
models. As a small boy in a society which prized men of
elloquent address Hunt observed the important public men
of Charleston in political discussion with his father.
As a student, he studied under Bishop John England and
Thomas Cooper, both controversial figures who also were
known for their speaking ability.

The first public speech delivered by Hunt, as far
as the records show, was the one he gave on the Fourth of
July at the age of sixteen. When he enrolled in the College
of South Carolina in 1823, Hunt's participation in speaking
exercise increased considerably. As an active member and leader in the Clariosophic Society he frequently engaged in debate and public speaking. Upon his graduation from college he found a ready acceptance as a public speaker in the intellectual and political affairs of Charleston.

II. CONSISTENCY IN PURPOSE

Randell Hunt was a southern nationalist with a vested interest in economic progress. His oratory consistently reflected this position. From the nullification controversy until the Civil War, he argued for a strong central government which would aid the economy of the nation. The situations in which he spoke frequently arose during periods of critical decision and always at times of political excitement.

In South Carolina Hunt's nationalism was strongly tinged with abstractions and idealism. Economic considerations appeared secondary as Hunt attacked a powerful political force on matters of principle.

In contending that the state of South Carolina was subordinate to the national government, Hunt faced audiences in which deep feelings of sectionalism were beginning to stir. The full public discussion of nullification raised all the major issues which were to be debated for the next thirty years.
Leaving South Carolina, Hunt moved to New Orleans where his public arguments were considerably less idealistic. As a member of the Whig party until its demise after the election of 1852, Hunt employed his oratory largely in support of practical economic matters. In particular he argued for government aid to banks and internal improvement projects. Although favoring national action on these matters, Hunt's party was seldom in control of the federal government and he was forced to fight for action by the state of Louisiana.

In Louisiana Hunt encountered the same intense interest in politics which he had faced in South Carolina. The Whig party, especially in New Orleans, was strong, and Hunt found a more favorable reception than he had enjoyed during nullification. The effects on New Orleans of the financial panics of 1837 and 1839, however, created considerable distrust of state aid. Hunt fought to overcome this reaction in legislative and stump speeches until the Whig dominated convention passed a new constitution in 1852.

For a time during the mid-1850's Hunt's nationalism degenerated into pronounced nativism. He became a leading member of the Louisiana Know Nothing party and made numerous speeches, including tours through North Louisiana, in which he attacked political rights for immigrants.
Although the people of Louisiana showed some concern about the problems of immigration, Hunt and the Know Nothings found that nativism was not a lasting base for a political party.

In the presidential election of 1860, Hunt shifted his emphasis back to the fundamentals of his political philosophy. Arguing for the Union on the basis of both patriotism and economics, Hunt joined the newly formed Constitutional Union party. Following his party's lead in ignoring the explosive slavery issue, Hunt attempted, as a state elector for John Bell, to block the election of Lincoln. The campaign clearly showed that the country was deeply divided, and even in the commerce-minded city of New Orleans the danger of disunion was recognized. Hunt thus ended his ante-bellum career on the same note with which he began; in the face of a sectional crisis, he argued for the Union.

III. ARGUMENTATIVE DEVELOPMENT

In all of his speeches Hunt used a combination of arguments based on logical, emotional, and ethical appeals. The presence of such proofs in Hunt's addresses does not appear to be a matter of chance since he recognized and recommended a division of proofs obviously based on classical precepts. Especially in the use of logic was the deliberate use of technique in argument apparent. This
technique was reflected in Hunt's frequent references during debate to his logic and to the evidence and reasoning on which his conclusions were based.

Hunt's use of logic was neither poor nor perfect. On one hand, he frequently omitted an argument needed to establish the basic premise on which a contention rested. This fault was mitigated at times by the fact that his premise probably had wide acceptance among his listeners. Also, Hunt's evidence was weak in some arguments. He had a marked tendency to rely heavily on examples without adding further support. Furthermore, his examples in some cases were hypothetical with the result that he made some arguments clear but did little to prove their logical validity.

On the other hand, Hunt's logic exhibited many strong points. Almost without exception his reasoning can be reduced to valid syllogistic form. Throughout the period, except for certain points advanced as a Know Nothing, Hunt's arguments were consistent. His evidence, although perhaps weak at times when considered from a formal or abstract point of view, was generally well chosen for the audiences to whom he spoke. Examples, his main form of evidence, were frequently vivid and forceful as well as directly related to the experiences and interests of his audiences.
Hunt's use of emotional appeal was strong in all his speeches. He made particular use of appeals to pride. Most commonly Hunt attempted to evoke feelings of national pride or patriotism, but he also appealed to fear and the desire for financial well being as well. One type of emotional argument which he employed at times was *ad hominem* appeals directed against his opponents.

In his use of ethical appeal Hunt demonstrated that he was a man of good will, good character, and good sense. Such appeals, occasionally interwoven with emotional argument, were generally highly appropriate to the audiences and issues involved in a given speech. Common techniques which Hunt used included praising his audiences, associating himself and his arguments with virtuous causes, and revealing his practical experience concerning the problems about which he spoke.

Considering the period of this study as a whole, Hunt's use of emotion and ethical appeals gradually increased in proportion to his use of logic as time passed. His most extensive use of logic came in his early speeches on nullification and Whig economic policy. Emotion dominated the appeals in his Know Nothing speeches while *pathos* and *ethos* were equally prominent in Hunt's campaign oratory in 1860.
In conclusion, Hunt's use of proof must be regarded as generally sound. Although during the Know Nothing period application of formal logic was noticeably weak, these speeches may be regarded as atypical of Hunt's ordinary employment of logic. In all of his speeches, his use of proof was generally appropriate to the audiences and occasion which he faced.

IV. EFFECTIVENESS

Randell Hunt acquired a favorable reputation as an orator and in fact came to be popularly identified as an orator rather than a lawyer, professor, or politician. Few discussions of Hunt, either in printed accounts or in private papers, fail to mention his speaking ability. Public speaking, important to Hunt in his dual profession of lawyer and educator, was the very essence of his political role.

As a political speaker Hunt's most obviously successful achievement was the enthusiastic responses which he elicited from audiences during speeches. He stirred listeners to the point that they interrupted him with applause and cheers, he touched their emotions at times with such skill that some were moved to tears, and he developed his arguments with sufficient vividness to completely engross the attention of his hearers. Even though he spoke on occasions
when overt responses were relatively easy to secure, Hunt clearly was more effective than his peers in gaining responses from audiences.

Closely related to Hunt's success in winning favorable audience responses was the technical skill which was reflected in the content of his speeches. Hunt's use of language was significant in establishing rapport with his listeners. Varied sentence length, interjections, direct address, topical references, rhetorical questions, and other devices which apparently were designed to involve audiences directly in the speeches constituted a significant feature of Hunt's speaking.

Hunt was less successful in winning his immediate cause in most of his speeches. In political campaigns the vote more often than not fell short of a majority for Hunt and his party. While measurements which reflect Hunt's direct effect on the vote are extremely difficult to obtain, some indications suggest that his oratory decreased the margin of defeat in certain cases. This was especially true in the Know Nothing campaign of 1855, where Hunt's effect in increasing the vote can be convincingly isolated.

In legal speeches which dealt with political issues, Hunt fared somewhat better in terms of immediate results. He won one case in South Carolina on an essentially political question and lost another one of a similar type. In
Louisiana, defending the Know Nothing cause in court, he lost one case and won two.

The immediate results of Hunt's legislative speaking were also mixed. He generally fought a losing battle for bills pledging state support for economic measures although he led a Whig move in 1852 to create a state constitution which included such proposals. In all the judgements based on votes as indications of immediate effectiveness, conclusions must be limited because the exact extent to which Hunt's oratory was a causative factor is difficult to determine.

In his effects on long range policy, Hunt was clearly not effective although once again the exact contribution of his oratory cannot be precisely isolated. His failure to be elected to high political office, for example, suggests that he was not lastingly effective. On the other hand, his speaking ability was repeatedly called on by the parties to which he belonged.

Some of Hunt's immediate successes were turned to defeat after a time. The court which ruled in his favor in South Carolina, for example, was later disbanded; his victories in the Know Nothing cases were thrown out by the legislature; and his triumph in the Constitutional Convention of 1852 was thwarted by inaction. In short, the long range effect of Hunt's speaking was highly limited.
Hunt achieved his greatest success in his ability to correctly judge the trends of the future. His vision of a more powerful and active central government, the foundation of his political position, must be considered as characteristic of the direction in which the government moved in the years after the Civil War. The supremacy of the Union was established by a most decisive test, the government entered the economy with greenbacks and aid to railroads on a scale the old Whigs had hardly dreamed of, and even some of the immigration reforms which Hunt supported were adopted. Clearly, then, Hunt grasped the drift of public policy.

His significance as an ante-bellum orator, however, does not rest solely on his ability as a prophet. Hunt filled a valuable function in contributing to active consideration of the issues of his day. While he was by no means alone in this task in any of the causes he supported, his skill as an orator made him a significant figure on the state and local level. Hunt's name attracted listeners, his speaking ability engaged their attention, and he gained their consideration, if not always their approval, of his arguments. In this somewhat unglamorous role, Hunt was one of the most active and popular orators in Louisiana during his time.
The irony of Hunt's consistent failure to win his immediate objective does not lie only in the fact that he was eventually proved to be essentially correct. In the emotional upheaval following the Civil War, reward was available for only one "lost cause." Gratitude and political position were to go, when free choice was permitted, largely to those who had been active in the Confederate cause. Randell Hunt was thus left, after his abortive attempt to serve in the United States Senate, with little political future.

Hunt's primary forum as an orator was the political stump, a position which does not leave abundant records in the case of an extemporaneous speaker. This consideration, plus the fact that Hunt held few elective offices which might have attracted greater historical interest, has left Randell Hunt somewhat neglected in studies of the period in which he lived. His role was nevertheless significant, and the evaluation appearing in his brief biography seems appropriate:

If as a statesman his career seems at first to involve disappointment in its immediate results, in the light of events it deserves to be recorded as that of a wise and strong citizen, constantly contributing to the improvement of his State, even where he failed to control her action, and a patriot, whose devotion to the Union was the only foundation of his hopes and desires.  

1William Henry Hunt, op. cit., p. lxxvi.
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AUTobiography

Jerry L. Tarver was born November 7, 1934, in Sicily Island, Louisiana.

In September of 1953 he entered Louisiana State University, where he majored in speech and was graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in May, 1957. In September of 1957 he entered the graduate school of Louisiana State University as a speech major. His graduate study was interrupted in January, 1958, by a two-year term of service with the United States Army. He returned to Louisiana State University in January of 1960 and completed the requirements for his Master of Arts degree in August, 1960.

He taught speech at Southeastern Louisiana College from 1960 through 1962 and then returned to Louisiana State University to complete his graduate work. In 1963 he accepted a position in the Speech Department of the University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Jerry L. Tarver

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: A Rhetorical Analysis of Selected Ante-Bellum Speeches by Randell Hunt

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination:

May 11, 1964