A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis of the Third Party Movement in Alabama, 1890-1894.

Charles Ellington Porterfield

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/1051

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
This dissertation has been microfilmed exactly as received

PORTERFIELD, Charles Ellington, 1922--
A RHETORICAL-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF
THE THIRD PARTY MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA,
1890-1894.

Louisiana State University, Ph.D., 1965
Speech-Theater

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan
A RHETORICAL-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

OF THE THIRD PARTY

MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA, 1890-1894

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

Charles Ellington Porterfield
B.A., Birmingham-Southern College, 1944
M.A., State University of Iowa, 1948

May 1965
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to thank Dr. Waldo W. Braden for his guidance of the study; Dr. Owen W. Peterson, Dr. Claude W. Shaver; Dr. Clinton Bradford, Dr. Edwin A. Davis for their helpful suggestions; the staffs of the libraries at the University of Alabama, Louisiana State University, and the Alabama Department of Archives and History for their kindness and cooperation. He expresses special appreciation to friends and family who have given constant assistance especially to Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Porterfield, Mr. and Mrs. C. D. Porterfield, Mrs. T. H. Ragsdale, Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Jones; and finally to Rebecca and Ellin Porterfield for making this study possible by their patience, love, and encouragement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER

### I INTRODUCTION

1

### II ANTECEDENTS OF THE THIRD PARTY MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA

- Intensifying of Political Disagreements 10
- Rise of Agrarian Discontent 14
- Rise and Growth of Farmers' Organizations 17
- Entrance of Farmers' Organizations Into Politics 26

### III THE THIRD PARTY MOVEMENT

- The Campaign of 1890 33
- The Campaign of 1892 43
- The Campaign of 1894 57
- After 1894 75

### IV THE SPEAKERS

- Reuben Francis Kolb 78
- Joseph Columbus Manning 89
- Peyton G. Bowman 95
- Albert Taylor Goodwyn 101
- Samuel Memory Adams 104
- William H. Skaggs 106
- Warren S. Reese 109
- E. T. Taliaferro 110
- Adolphus Parker Longshore 112
- Frank Baltzell 113
- Oliver Day Street 114

### V OCCASIONS AND AUDIENCES

- Speaking Occasions 117
- 1892 Campaign 119
- 1894 Campaign 125
- Audiences 129
- General Audience Attitude 129
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890 Audiences</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892 Audiences</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894 Audiences</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECHES</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890 Speeches</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolb and the Alliance are Democratic</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolb is a Man of Good Character</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The <em>Advertiser</em> is Unprincipled and Inconsistent</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892-1894 Speeches</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Democratic Party is Guilty of Fraudulent Practices</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The State Administration is Unworthy of Support</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Administration is Unworthy of Support</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Party Agrarians are Democratic</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII SUMMARY</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTOBIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

This study analyzes and evaluates the speechmaking of the third party gubernatorial contests in Alabama, 1890-1894, when Agrarian agitation grew into the Jeffersonian Democratic and Populist Parties. For the most part speakers discussed common topics, used common techniques, and employed similar methods of proof, making possible conclusions about the whole movement from studying the speaking of Reuben F. Kolb, center of the movement, and ten representative leaders: Albert Taylor Goodwyn, Peyton G. Bowman, Joseph C. Manning, Samuel M. Adams, Frank Baltzell, A. P. Longshore, Warren S. Reese, E. T. Taliaferro, Oliver D. Street, and William H. Skaggs. Speech texts and reports came from Democratic and Populist newspapers. Other sources include letter collections, scrapbooks, manuscripts, diaries, and interviews.

Audiences with some exceptions were composed mostly of poor white, male farmers. Gatherings are reported to have ranged in size from 50 to 8000. Partisan listeners enthusiastically applauded, cheered, called for speakers and stories, and in some instances tried to prevent opponents from speaking. Occasions for third party speechmaking were Farmers' Institutes, Alliance sessions and
outings, labor meetings, political rallies and conventions, advertised by newspaper, poster, handbill, and word of mouth. Outdoor barbecues and picnics feathred socializing as well as speeches. From the 1890 campaign between reform speakers and Democratic newspapers, the movement grew into a speaking contest between Democratic and third party orators.

The reform orators contended offensively that the Democratic Party should be removed from power because it was guilty of fraudulent practices and the state and national administrations were unworthy of support. They defended themselves against the attack of not being Democratic. Kolb and his colleagues seldom if ever attempted before popular audiences to analyze the fundamental social and political problems involved in the times. They spoke instead on local issues such as election frauds, convict lease laws, disfranchisement of certain groups, pardoning of criminals, extravagance of public officials, and the Negro problem. Speakers reasoned from analogy, causal relationships, and specific examples offering testimony and statistics as a basis for their reasoning. They evaded argument by insinuation, sarcasm, name calling, and petty appeal to prejudice. They seemingly were most eager to stir listeners through emotional appeals to the basic drives of security, freedom of action, fair play, pride, and tradition. Although all speakers used ethical proof
to enhance their own characters and employed negative associational techniques against the opposition, much of the campaigns centered around the ethos of Kolb. Apparently revered by the farmers, he encouraged the presentation of himself as a martyr. In the campaigns of 1890 and 1892 he used the strategy of transferring the attacks on himself to the movement as a whole.

Although the third party was never successful in electing a governor or legislative majority, the movement was politically and socially significant. The speech-making of the third party movement assured that in Alabama in the 1890's, the voice of the people was heard in the land. The Democratic Party underwent a housecleaning, the farmers became an active electorate, and their demands became a basis for future legislation. To prevent the Negro vote from becoming a deciding factor in elections, Alabamians, through the Constitution of 1901, effectively disfranchised many poor whites and almost all Negroes. The Agrarians would have been successful in electing Kolb governor in 1892 and 1894 if the votes had been counted fairly.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The years 1890 to 1900 saw the rise and decline of the American People's Party, one of the most important third party movements in the history of the nation. Although the Populists\(^1\) were never successful in electing a president, their strength in the early nineties was reflected by the inclusion of their demands in the Democratic Party platform of 1896. The party supported causes which were later enacted into constitutional amendments, namely the income tax, direct election of United States Senators, prohibition, and woman suffrage. Many Populist reforms became parts of several state constitutions. The third party movement caused one of the most controversial decades in the history of Alabama, the period of Populism.\(^2\)

Laboring under distressing economic and social conditions, the Alabama farmers joined various agricultural

---

\(^1\) The American People's Party was also called the Populist Party. The names People's Party and Populist Party were used interchangeably and members of the party were called Populists.

\(^2\) Spelled with a "p" the term refers in this study to the Agrarian Movement. Spelled with a "P" it refers to the Populist Party. This period has been called the "farmers' uprising," the "turbulent nineties," "great party split," "populist revolt," and "new sectionalism."
organizations which were pledged to the betterment of their lives. They gradually came to the conclusion that political action was necessary to solve their problems. When they failed to gain control of the Democratic Party, many left that party to become either Jeffersonian Democrats or Populists. In evaluating this agrarian revolt Moore writes, "When the farmers of the State decided to rescue themselves from the clutches of poverty and class inequality by cooperative political action, a new epoch in the history of Alabama was at hand."³

Statement of Purpose and Scope

The prominence of the third party movement of the 1890's in Alabama and the absence of investigation into the rhetoric of the movement led to the present study, "A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis of the Third Party Movement in Alabama, 1890-1894." The purpose of this study is to describe, analyze and evaluate the rhetorical pattern of the third party movement in Alabama from its inception (1889-1890) through 1894.⁴ The investigation centers


⁴ Similar movement studies include the following:


Leland M. Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion: a
around the speech-making of the 1890, 1892, and 1894 gubernatorial contests in which Reuben F. Kolb as the reform candidate led the battle against the regular Democrats for political control of the state. Kolb as leader of the Agrarian crusade made a majority of the speeches and determined to a large extent what the issues and contentions would be. Consideration of his speaking therefore requires a major share of the attention of this study.

Leland M. Griffin points out an inherent difficulty in a movement study: "the necessity for the researcher to treat speakers, speeches, and audiences analytically, while at the same time he endeavors to present the movement synthetically, in a broad chronological manner." However, the nature of the Populist movement in Alabama lessens this


problem. For the most part speakers discussed common topics, used common techniques, and employed similar methods of proof, making easier the study of the rhetorical pattern of the movement as a whole.

Other Studies

Studies in history and political science of the period of the nineties in Alabama include *Populism in Alabama*, a doctoral dissertation at New York University in 1927 by John B. Clark; and "Agrarianism in Alabama 1865-1896," a doctoral dissertation at the University of North Carolina in 1959 by Warren W. Rogers. Other studies are Master's theses in history written at the University of Alabama and Auburn University.6

6 These studies include:


There are two previous studies of Populist oratory of Alabama. In a Master's thesis, Mary A. Booras analyzes the speeches given at the two-day convention in Birmingham in 1892 and emphasizes the speaking of the three leaders of the National People's Party who were visiting the state at that time. In an article appearing in the *Southern Speech*


Mary A. Booras, "A Case Study of the Speeches of the Birmingham, Alabama, Populist Party Convention, September 15-16, 1892" (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alabama, 1952). This study is erroneously titled since the convention was called as a joint affair of the Jeffersonian Democrats and the Populist Party. Jeffersonian Party leaders who spoke at this convention were not at that time members of the Populist Party.
Journal Wayne Flynt and William Warren Rogers present a brief historical survey of populist oratory from 1890-1896. 8

Sources

Alabama newspapers published 1889 to 1896 furnished the main body of source material for this study. 9 The writer examined both conservative and reform newspapers. Of the extant reform press, few gave accounts of speeches, but they concerned themselves with editorializing, attacking Democratic editors, and explaining Populist theory. The majority of the accounts of speaking occasions and the reports of speeches come from the two daily newspapers, the Birmingham Age-Herald and the Montgomery Advertiser.

Other source materials include letter collections, scrapbooks, theses, dissertations, pamphlets, articles in contemporary periodicals, histories, appraisals of the movement and its leaders, and interviews with Alabamians who remember the period. Of particular value were collections


9 These papers are deposited in the Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama; the Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library at the University of Alabama; and the various offices of Probate over the state. Alabama law requires that newspapers within a county deposit a file of the paper with the Office of Probate in the county and with the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery. Newspapers published before the Archives Building was completed in the 1930's had to be collected from the Probate
of the Alabama Department of Archives and History containing the following: the Thomas Goode Jones Papers supplying the personal letters of Jones while he was governor; family biographical folders furnishing material on the speakers E. T. Taliaferro, Warren S. Reese, A. T. Goodwyn, William H. Skaggs, Frank Baltzell, A. P. Longshore, and Reuben F. Kolb; the Agriculture Departmental Letter Books containing Kolb's official and semi-official correspondence while he was Commissioner of Agriculture; the Robert McKee Papers which include letters to and from the prominent Democrats of the period; the unpublished manuscript of John Witherspoon DuBose, "Forty Years of Alabama, 1861-1901." Also useful were the collections of the Alabama Room of the Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library at the University of Alabama. Interviews with Mrs. Rubye Richardson Hume, Kolb's great-granddaughter, contributed additional information about Kolb.

The newspapers mentioned 505 scheduled speeches for the period considered. The total number of speeches is impossible to verify. Of the scheduled speeches, 190 received attention in the newspapers. Press accounts revealed offices to complete the Archives holdings. During research for this study many of the newspaper files were yet in the Probate Offices.

10 These contained the O. D. Street Papers in which is found correspondence between Judge Street and many of the third party leaders including Kolb.
eighteen full texts of speeches and 117 summary or quoted excerpts which suggest what the speaker said. Many reports which contain quotations are helpful in distinguishing between reporter's paraphrase and the actual words of the speaker. Comparison of reports of different speeches indicates that the speakers made essentially the same speeches throughout the campaign. Full texts are often reported by more than one paper. These texts are consistent with each other indicating that they are probably reliable as an account of what was actually said.

Plan of Development

Chapter Two presents the historical background of the movement, discussing the general political, social, and economic antecedents.

---

11Cf. bibliography for a list of the speech texts and reports.

12 Typical of the comments about a speaker giving the same speech are the following:

"His speech was in substance the same that had been delivered at nearly all his appointments in the present campaign heretofore."

Birmingham Age-Herald, April 17, 1892.

"Captain Kolb made his usual speech."

Birmingham Age-Herald, July 7, 1894.

"It was the same old thing which he (Kolb) had been relating over the state."

Birmingham Age-Herald, July 7, 1894.

"The usual catalogue of grievances was presented by Adams."

Birmingham Age-Herald, July 20, 1894.
Chapter Three is devoted to the background of the movement with emphasis on the emergence of campaign issues.

Chapter Four considers five principal and six minor speakers.

Chapter Five discusses and analyzes the speaking occasions and the audiences.

Chapter Six analyzes and evaluates the speeches of the campaigns of 1890, 1892, and 1894.

The concluding chapter attempts to synthesize the rhetorical and historical movement and to evaluate third party speaking.
CHAPTER TWO

ANTECEDENTS OF THE THIRD PARTY MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA

In the third party movement in Alabama in the 1890's the basic antecedent contributing forces were intensifying of political disagreements, rise of agrarian discontent, growth of farmer's organizations, and entrance of farmer's organizations into politics.

Intensifying of Political Disagreements

Geography has influenced politics in Alabama to a large degree. A Black Belt of fertile soil which is admirably suited to cotton production bisects the state. Here the great plantations flourished with concentration of Negro population. Small farms turned the less fertile land of the hill counties of northern Alabama into a section populated almost entirely by whites. Black Belt control of the state government plus the conflict of agricultural interests led to strong sectional feeling. During the Civil War, conflicts were laid aside; but when it was over the old rivalry reappeared.

1 The Negroes were concentrated in the Black Belt in the 1800's with two exceptions, one in Madison County in the Tennessee River Valley of North Alabama, and the other in the area around Mobile.
During Reconstruction the Black Belt Democrats worked to regain political control of the state and found various methods to counteract the carpetbag-scalawag manipulations on the Negro vote. In 1874 they made an all-out effort to re-elect the Democratic and Conservative Party, realizing that cooperation of the white county voters was necessary. Many white citizens felt that the Black Belt politicians were getting their just deserts at the hands of the Radical government. One writer suggests that some of the people in the white counties "felt possibly that they might as well continue to experience hard times and devastation under alien rule as to relieve the black-belt politicians and thus perpetuate the wrongs of the past and get the little end of the game." 

The political leaders of the Democratic Party made numerous appeals to voters of the white counties. The Mobile Register noted: "Nothing has been conceded that part

---


3 A.B. Moore, History of Alabama (University, Alabama: University Supply Store, 1934), p. 580. The name Democratic Party was changed to Democratic and Conservative Party to make the party acceptable to the former Whigs. It will be referred to hereafter as "Democratic Party."

of Alabama that lies south of Montgomery. . . . We, of south Alabama, only ask in return their [north Alabama's] full vote at the polls in behalf of our common principles and our South Alabama safety."^5 Likewise the Montgomery Advertiser editorialized: "South Alabama raises her manacled hands in mute appeal to the mountain counties."^6 The Conservative campaign for "white supremacy" was successful. Although the Republicans rolled up large majorities in the Black Belt, the vote of the white counties enabled the Democratic and Conservative Party to gain a thirteen thousand majority in the election of 1874.

The victory did not resolve the friction between the Black Belt and the white counties. Between 1874 and 1892 constant internal strife disturbed the unity of the elements of the Democratic Party. Black Belt politicians controlled the party with the same methods they practiced to combat the Radical Republican government.7 Particularly offensive to the white counties was the Bourbon Democrats' insistence "that the sole and exclusive issue in any campaign should be the maintenance of a 'Democratic, white-controlled' government."^8 Other grievances were the

---

5 Mobile Register, August 2, 1874.
6 Montgomery Advertiser, November 1, 1874.
8 Allen J. Going, Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-
convention system and the means used to control Negro votes. Black Belt indifference to white county complaints led to some minor third party movements. In 1878 large numbers of the farmers in the Eighth District of north Alabama, affiliating with the Greenback Party, succeeded in electing William G. Lowe to Congress. In 1880 a Greenback-Republican fusion elected full tickets in several of the northern counties.9

Another important factor to the third party movement was the policy of the Republican Party. After its defeat in 1874 this party often found that cooperation with third party or independent movements was more expedient than putting out a state ticket. Factional strife soon divided it into the "Lily Whites" and the "Black and Tans." Beginning in 1886, strengthened by northern supporters moving to Alabama as a result of the industrial boom, Republicans ran unsuccessful tickets in three consecutive elections. They entered the decade of the '90's still factionalized on the state level.

The boom in the mineral region of northern Alabama10

9 Moore, op. cit., p. 582
10 The city of Birmingham grew from a population of 3,086 in 1880 to one of 26,178 in 1890. During the same period Anniston increased from 942 to 9,998. Population growth in the mineral counties was also tremendous. Between 1880 and 1890 Jefferson County population increased from
also contributed to internal party strife. First, agrarians argued with the urban groups over the issue of the value of mining and industrial development. Going suggests that this difference "assumed the form of a contest between traditionalists and progressives with the former on the defensive."\textsuperscript{11} Secondly, the new wage-earner class\textsuperscript{12} demanded that the political parties recognize their interests, promote the tariff, and revoke the state policy of leasing convict labor to industry.\textsuperscript{13}

Rise of Agrarian Discontent

In addition to political disagreements, agrarian discontent contributed to the third party movement. The farmers of Alabama, having no money and little credit, were forced to accept the crop lien system, a credit arrangement peculiar to the South.\textsuperscript{14} Moore reports that between 23,277 to 88,501 while Calhoun County reported growth of from 19,649 to 33,835. \textit{Abstract of the Eleventh Census, 1890, pp. 13, 34, 35.} 

\textsuperscript{11} Going, \textit{Bourbon Democracy in Alabama}, p. 45.

\textsuperscript{12} With the growth of the cities came an increase in the number of wage earners in manufacturing of 10,019 in 1880 to 33,821 in 1890. \textit{Abstract of the Eleventh Census, 1890, p. 110.}

\textsuperscript{13} Birmingham \textit{Age-Herald}, June 12, 1889.

\textsuperscript{14} B. B. Kendrick, "Agrarian Discontent in the South: 1880-1900," \textit{Annual Report of the American Historical Association, XXVI (April, 1921), 430.
eighty and ninety per cent of the cotton growers of Alabama used this system.\(^15\) In 1877 the Alabama legislature passed a crop lien law which "gave the landlord the exclusive right to take liens from his tenants and two years afterward the landlord's lien was made paramount to all mortgages or liens on the crops of his tenants and on property advanced to them."\(^16\) When a farmer signed a lien he was not allowed to trade with any other merchant except for cash. In order to protect his loan the merchant required the farmer to grow cotton to the neglect of normally grown food crops. Since he supplied the farmer with goods at greatly inflated prices, the merchant profited from twenty to fifty per cent and in some cases as much as two hundred per cent.\(^17\)

One student of Southern agrarian history says:

When one of these mortgages has been recorded against the Southern farmer, he has usually passed into a state of peonage to the merchant who has become his creditor. With the surrender of this evidence of his indebtedness, he has surrendered his freedom of action and his industrial autonomy. From this time until he has paid the last dollar of his indebtedness, he is subject to the constant oversight and direction of the merchant. Every mouthful of food that he purchases, every implement that he requires on the farm, his mules, cattle, the clothing for himself and family, the fertilizers for his land, must all be bought

---

\(^{15}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 567.


\(^{17}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 566.
of the merchant who holds the crop lien, and in such amounts as the latter is willing to allow.\(^{18}\)

When the farmer gathered the cotton crop, he had to sell it immediately at the prevailing local price, thus glutting the market and forcing prices down. Often he found that his crop was insufficient to pay his indebtedness. George K. Holmes wrote in 1893: "Every crop of cotton is mostly consumed before it is harvested, and after the harvest the farm owner or tenant has to place a lien on the next year's crop, often before the seed goes into the ground."\(^{19}\) As large farms were broken up and sold, the small farmers grew in numbers, thus increasing the number dependent on the crop lien system.\(^{20}\)

The burden of taxation rested upon the land, and the farmer paid tax out of all proportion to the value of his land and his ability to pay.\(^{21}\) The tax law favored the larger farmer. To be certain that the Negro paid some tax, the law did not exempt mules and horses. Going notes that "some wealthy Black Belt planters exempted property worth


\(^{19}\) George K. Holmes, "The Peons of the South," *American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, IV (September, 1893), 267.

\(^{20}\) The average size of the Alabama farm fell from 347 acres in 1860 to 126 acres in 1890. *Abstract of the Eleventh Census: 1890*, p. 95.

\(^{21}\) Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 570.
$5,000 or more, while small farmers, mechanics, and laborers could not exempt even $500 worth of property."22

The value of land decreased from $9.20 per acre in 1860 to $4.09 per acre in 1880.23 Farm implements and machinery valued at an average of $135 per farm in 1860 were worth only nine dollars per farm in 1890.24 Caught by the crop lien system, unfair taxation, falling land prices, and poor crops, the farmer concluded that the economy conspired against him. One historian comments that "Under such circumstances it was not difficult to recruit Southern farmers in radical movements."25

Growth of Farmers' Organization

An important result of the agricultural distress was the rise of various farmers' organizations. The first of these, the Patrons of Husbandry, commonly called the "Grange,"26 came into Alabama in 1872 and within a few

22 Going, Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, p. 99.

23 Abstract of the Eleventh Census: 1890, p. 95.

24 Ibid., pp. 95, 99.


26 The National Grange was organized by a government clerk, O.H. Kelly, who had been sent by President Johnson on an inspection tour of the South. Kelly was struck with the distressing conditions of the farmers and their apathetic attitude. He decided that these were caused by the lack of social opportunity which made the existence of the farmer a dreary monotony so that he became practically incapable of
months it had local groups in all sections of the state.\(^{27}\)
The Alabama State Grange advocated cooperative ventures in buying and selling as a panacea for the farmers' economic plight.\(^{28}\) It attempted to eliminate the middle man through establishment of cooperative warehouses and stores which bargained directly with the corporation.\(^{29}\)

Grange meetings served as educational and social gatherings. An elected leader directed the lecture hour, receiving instructions from the national organization which included some basic principles of public speaking and program planning. These were:

1. To carry out a program at every meeting;
2. Every program should give the members information, something worth knowing;
3. Every program should afford something which all will remember;
4. Every program should express itself to the eye changing his outlook on life or his attitude toward work. Kelly concluded that a national secret organization resembling the Masonic order might serve to bind the farmers together for purposes of social and intellectual advancement. The order was made more attractive by the admission of women to membership. Solon J. Buck, *The Agrarian Crusade* (Vol. 45, *The Chronicles of America* Series, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), p. 3.

\(^{27}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 571.


\(^{29}\) Moore, op. cit., p. 571.
as well as the ear; 5. A program succeeds in proportion to the number of persons having a part in it. 30

Thus members gained training in public speaking and parliamentary practice at the local Grange meetings. 31 One newspaper commented as follows:

Many an old clodhopper, unskilled in speaking learned to talk, rise to a point of order, and venture a few remarks. This is education. Many an uncouth country boy and coy lassie have learnt something of the social graces and amenities of life, and this too is education. 32

Paid lecturers often talked on crop diversification and the wage system of labor. Large granges offered other educational benefits such as the libraries and reading rooms and the sponsorship of schools. 33 They also encouraged members to subscribe to newspapers and magazines which discussed the latest agricultural knowledge and methods.

The grange in Alabama began to decline in the mid-seventies, and after 1880 it was no longer a potent force. It failed to solve the farmers' problems, refused to enter politics and thus lost to the more aggressive Farmers'


31 Buck, op. cit., p. 75.


33 Rogers, op. cit., pp. 109, 110.
Alliance. However, it was significant in the following ways: (1) in spite of its non-partisan policy it secured the passage of trespass laws, laws against the burning of woodlands, and laws making theft a felony; the establishment of the State Department of Agriculture; and formation of the State Agricultural Society; (2) it unified the farmers as an economic and social class; (3) it trained farmers in aspects of farming other than production; and (4) it encouraged reading.

Concurrent with the grange movement the State Department of Agriculture and the State Agricultural Society influenced the Alabama farmer. The Commissioner of Agriculture, who was appointed by the Governor for a two-year term prepared an Agricultural Handbook to advertise the resources of Alabama and administered the functions of the department. The Department of Agriculture analyzed soils and fertilizers, protected the farmers against spurious fertilizer sales, encouraged immigration, and published information relating to crops and agricultural work. By 1886, within three years after the creation of the department, the Commissioner's office reportedly received two hundred

---

34 Rogers, op. cit., p. 115; Clark, op. cit., p. 58.
35 In evaluating the movement Solon Buck writes that the grange movement would have been worth while if it had done nothing else than create a desire to read. Buck, op. cit., p. 76.
letters daily and furnished thirty-six thousand to fifty thousand farmers regular circulars, bulletins and reports of experimental work.

In 1889 a legislative act authorized Reuben F. Kolb, the Commissioner of Agriculture, to conduct Farmers' Institutes and to employ qualified lecturers as assistants.37

DuBose reports:

Commissioner Kolb employed for the prescribed institutes lecturers Professor J. S. Newman of the A & M College and Dr. N. T. Lupton of that College; Professor T. J. Carlisle, a school teacher and farmer of Troy, Pike County; Professor J. B. Oliver, a school teacher and farmer of Dadeville; and A. B. Brassell, a cotton planter of Montgomery County. He attended many of the meetings in person and addressed them.38

Each institute elected a president and secretary so that a local person always presided and helped conduct the discussion period. One of the early institutes was described as follows:

The third institute was held at Moulton, Alabama and there were a large number of intelligent farmers present. Hon. O. D. Gibson was chosen president of the meeting and Mr. J. White, secretary. The different modes of cultivating corn was studied, and the lecturer enlarged on the injurious effects of breaking the roots of corn by deep plowing... Mr. P. R. Harris asked as to the value of pea vines as a feed and restorative of lands. The lecturer replied that growing peas was valuable in two particulars—lots as to the shading of the land and as depositors of nitrogen to the soil.39

38 John Witherspoon DuBose, Article No. 82, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 2, 1913.
39 O. Percy South, "Farm Organizations in Alabama
Commissioner Kolb said of the institutes:

The only alternative (since farmers couldn't go to school) therefore is to carry the school to them. The only practical way of doing this is through the agency of the farmers' institutes, by means of which those capable of instructing in the sciences relating to agriculture are brought face to face with the farmers to whom they impart such information as is desired and needed. . . . While only a beginning has been made in the State and while, in some localities, they met with partial indifference the first day, interest has invariably grown with the progress of the meetings. The experiment thus far made indicates that great good will result in the future from an earnest, intelligent prosecution of the work. 40

In 1884 the State Agricultural Society was organized as an adjunct of the Department of Agriculture to unify local agricultural clubs with the state organization. 41

The society enjoyed a favorable press and from its beginning it exercised a strong influence through annual meetings which were attended by delegates representing the various farmers' organizations on both state and national levels and by visitors from other states. Besides being of educational value the society served as a unifying influence on the other organizations within the state. 42

Writing in 1889, W. A. Peffer observed: "There is a feeling of unrest among the farmers of this country, from 1872 to 1907" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Auburn University, 1940), p. 86.

42 Moore, op. cit., p. 574.
and they are forming local, State, and National associations with secret work of discipline and other oath-bound pledges, in a common effort to improve their condition."\(^43\)

In 1887 the Louisiana Farmer's Union and the Texas State Alliance became the National Farmers' Alliance and Cooperative Union.\(^44\) A lodge of this order formed in Alabama in March 1887. The "Farmers' Alliance", as it was called, spread so rapidly that a state organization was perfected the same year and incorporated by the legislature as a non-partisan, agricultural body. S. M. Adams, a Baptist preacher-farmer, was elected president.\(^45\)

At about the same time that the Farmers' Alliance entered Alabama, another organization called the Agricultural Wheel, also established lodges in the northern counties. These two orders consolidated in 1889 under the name of the Alabama Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America.

By 1889 the Alliance had an estimated membership of more than 125,000 members. Its purpose was to promote better farming and to find relief for economic distress. It proposed to eliminate the middleman, improve home life,


\(^45\) Clark, op. cit., p. 72.
promote education, build factories, and procure needed legislation.^46

The organizational structure of the State Alliance included district, county, and local or sub-alliances. In each of these, besides the usual officers, there was a lecturer whose duty it was to suggest subjects for discussion and to take the lead in expounding them. Often travelling lecturers with some "scientific" knowledge of agriculture also addressed the lodges. Meetings were usually held in churches, schoolhouses, or Alliance warehouses. They opened with prayer and singing of familiar hymns and Alliance songs, often set to hymn tunes.

---

^46 Appleton's Annual Cyclopedia 1890, p. 299.

Formal purposes were given for the organization as follows:
To labor for government in a strictly non-partisan spirit, and to bring about a more perfect union of all classes. To demand equal rights for all and special privileges for none; to approve the motto: "In all things essential, unity; in all things, charity;" To develop a better State, mentally, morally, socially, and financially; to strive constantly to secure harmony and goodwill to all mankind and brotherly love among ourselves. To suppress personal, social, sectional and national prejudices, all unhealthy rivalry, and all selfish ambition. To visit the home where lacerated hearts are bleeding to assuage the sufferings of brother or sister, to bury the dead, care for the widow, educate the orphan, exercise charity towards offenders, construe words and deeds in their most favorable light, grant honesty of purpose and good intention to others, and protect the principles of the Farmer's Alliance and Industrial Union until death.

During the summer, these gatherings were usually all-day affairs with the lecturer taking the morning session "to instruct the farmer in the problems of the day . . . . In the afternoon the members attended to the general business.\textsuperscript{48}

The lecturer helped educate the members to current socio-political problems. In his study of populism in Virginia, Sheldon says:

These were the men who made speeches at rallies and picnics and later in numerous instances they became orators for the Populist ticket. Varying according to individual temperament they might be primitive exhorters of the type still worshipped in the back-country or more modern and suave expositors. Through their efforts many farmers were acquainted, from the agrarian outlook, with fundamentals of the economic and political situation in the early 'nineties'.\textsuperscript{49}

As a first reform, the Alabama Alliance proposed to eliminate the middleman. In 1889 a legislative act incorporated the Farmer's Alliance Exchange with power to engage in commercial or industrial ventures.\textsuperscript{50} Under this act the Alliance established a State Exchange headquarters in Montgomery and instituted a number of commercial and business projects. Although these never prospered, several were moderately successful on the county level.

\textsuperscript{48} Covington Times, June 15, 1889.


Entrance of Farmers' Organizations into Politics

In addition to agricultural matters Alliancemen found themselves discussing reforms and how to bring them about. They adopted the following plan of action:

First to agree upon a needed reform, and then endeavor to persuade each political party to use its influence to legislate to that effect, and if all the parties fail, it will devise ways to enforce it. The order recognizes that reform must come through legislation but it does not necessarily place a separate ticket in the field. If legislation cannot be shaped in any other way, it will nominate its own candidates.\(^51\)

By 1889 there were distinct indications that the Alliance aspired to political power. In May, the Alabama Alliance participated in the business meeting of the National Alliance which met in Birmingham to protest against the trust which furnished jute bagging for wrapping cotton bales. Delegates decided to use cotton bagging which they could manufacture themselves at a lower cost than they were paying for jute. They did not have to carry out their threat because the jute trust, convinced that the Alliance meant business, lowered prices.\(^52\) By bringing the jute trust to terms the Southern cotton growers saved themselves two million dollars annually. Local Alliances celebrated their victory over a "formidable monopoly," and Alliance speakers

\(^{51}\) Appleton's Annual Cyclopedia, 1890, p. 298.

\(^{52}\) J. D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1931), p. 140; Birmingham Age-Herald, May 22, 1889.
made frequent reference to what "they could do by working together." 53

Later in 1889 at the meeting in Birmingham, the National Farmers' Congress passed a resolution which called upon the "farmers of the United States to assert their power at the ballot box and otherwise, to right the wrongs and injustice of discriminations against them." 54 S. M. Adams, President of the State Alliance, urged Alliancemen to control county elections and fill all offices with Alliance members. 55

At the annual session in August 1889, the State Alliance took a step which finally put it into the political arena. It adopted a resolution complimenting Commissioner of Agriculture, Reuben F. Kolb, for his efficient management of his office. In effect the resolution was an endorsement of him for the office of Governor. This meeting also accepted the action proposed by the National Alliance to use cotton instead of jute bagging. In an editorial meant to be friendly the Montgomery Advertiser suggested that the season was already too far advanced to change from jute bagging. In response, the Alliance passed resolutions condemning the Advertiser and refused to accept the paper's explanation of its intent. This conflict launched a long

53 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 24, 1889.

54 J. W. DuBose, Article No. 79, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 16, 1913.

55 Montgomery Advertiser, February 5, 1890.
and bitter enmity between the Alliance and the Advertiser. Clark suggests that the August session of the Alliance was noteworthy:

At least four major events transpired there, namely: (1) the Alliance's resolution against the use of bagging; (2) its resolution against the Advertiser, an early attempt at boycotting, which spread to many local Alliances; (3) the ratification of the constitution of the Farmer's and Laborer's Union as submitted through the Meridian meeting eight months earlier; (4) the definite plunge of the Alliance into politics.\(^{56}\)

Two weeks after the State Alliance meeting, the Southern Inter-State Farmer's Association met in Montgomery under the leadership of the prominent editor of the Progressive Farmer, L. L. Polk of North Carolina. Adding to the already boiling political pot he advised "the farmers to have a care to the election of lawmakers friendly to them and their industry."\(^{57}\) In August, a third farmer's convention, the Ninth Annual Farmer's National Congress met in Montgomery and elected Reuben F. Kolb its president.

The number of national and regional conventions held in Alabama suggests in a measure the tremendous vitality of the farmer's movements in the state. Almost every white farmer and a large percentage of the Negro farmers belonged to at least one and in many cases to all of the farmer's organizations.

\(^{56}\) Clark, op. cit., p. 83.

\(^{57}\) J. W. DuBose, Article 79, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 16, 1913.
The farmers blamed themselves for lack of crop diversification and scientific agriculture. They also blamed others for their troubles, namely, the merchants, bankers, manufacturers, railway directors, speculators, and middlemen. "They assailed the tariff and trusts, and the State's delegation in Congress spoke, and when occasion arose, voted their sentiments." The farmers on a national level complained about land, transportation, and money. They suffered, or at least thought they suffered, from "railroads, from the trusts and the middleman, from the money lenders and the bankers, and from the muddled currency." Although differing in degree of intensity, agrarians in Alabama voiced these same grievances.

In his study of railroads in Alabama, Doster says:

Public opinion toward railroads in the state was made up of a mixture of attitudes. The thievery and mismanagement of the era of military occupation were fresh in mind and bitterly resented, and new financial manipulations were taking place in the late 1880's but there was an intense public desire for better facilities and more railroads, especially in the areas having none. Industrial interests had little to complain of, and commercial interests had adjusted themselves fairly well to the vagaries of the Southern rate system.

58 Moore, op. cit., p. 575.

59 Hicks, op. cit., p. 95.

The complaints against the railroads led to the creation of a Railroad Commission in 1881.

Moore states that the scarcity of money and its greatly appreciated value led the Alabama farmer to believe in the quantity theory of money; that is, that the value of money, like that of other commodities, depended upon its volume. The more money in circulation the less would be its value, or the higher would be the prices of things that money could buy. . . When silver became the chief hope of currency expansion, the farmers of Alabama joined the general clamor for its free and unlimited coinage.  

When the farmers failed to solve their grievances in a non-political way, they concluded that direct political action was necessary to bring social and economic reforms.  

The National Convention of the Farmer's Alliance held in St. Louis on December 6, 1889, advanced a formal plan. Here the National Farmers' Alliance and the Knights of Labor joined forces in the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union.  

The new Alliance passed a comprehensive series of resolutions to be used as a "Yardstick" to measure candidates for office. Acting within the existing party framework, the Alliance was the nucleus of a third party movement. It proposed to vote only for men who

---

61 Moore, op. cit., p. 575.


63 Hicks, op. cit., p. 121.
promised to support the policies outlined in the St. Louis demands: free and unlimited coinage of silver; abolition of the national banks; government ownership of the means of transportation and communication; reclamation from the railroads of lands held by them in excess of actual needs; prohibition of alien ownership of land; reduction and equalization of taxation; and laws to prevent the dealing in futures of all agricultural and mechanical productions. Besides the formal demands, the convention adopted a plan of rural credit known as the Sub-Treasury Plan which was to provide the farmer with much-needed credit and an opportunity to market his produce more judiciously.

Summary

The political and economic climate of Alabama in 1890 thus was ripe for a farmers' revolt. Sectional differences existing between the Black Belt and white counties before 1860 were intensified after the Civil War. The Alabama farmer, seeking relief from distressing economic and social conditions, joined various agricultural organizations which pledged to better his life. In these groups he enjoyed the society of his friends, learned the reasons for

---

64 Ibid., p. 125.


66 Moore, op. cit., p. 606; Hicks, op. cit., pp. 186-204.
his plight, developed pride in being a farmer, and became convinced of the strength in organization. Farmers were now ready for whatever political action necessary to improve their welfare. As Moore observes, "When the farmers of the State decided to rescue themselves from the clutches of poverty and class inequality by cooperative political action, a new epoch in the political history was at hand."67

67 Moore, op. cit., p. 576.
CHAPTER III

THE THIRD PARTY MOVEMENT

Although agrarian reformers in the nineties campaigned for all political offices, the emergence, growth, and decline of the third party movement can be studied in the gubernatorial campaigns of 1890, 1892, and 1894.

The Campaign of 1890

After the St. Louis Convention the Bourbon press\(^1\) pointed out that the "St. Louis platform" was not acceptable to conservative Democrats and called upon the Alabama delegates to explain their part in the "St. Louis Affair." One of these delegates was Commissioner of Agriculture Reuben F. Kolb. Upon his return in December, 1889, he announced his candidacy for the governorship and began his campaign trying to explain what had happened at the convention. In January, 1890, Thomas G. Jones announced, and by late February, Joseph F. Johnston, William Richardson, and

---

\(^{1}\) "Bourbon" was the term which the Radicals originated during the Reconstruction period to label Democrats as anti-progressive and ultra-conservative. It was applied by third party members as a derogatory term to the Democratic papers who opposed the Alliance and the third party.

33
James Crook added their names to the list of candidates. Kolb and Jones were the only aspirants who "took the stump." Lines were quickly drawn when Bourbon Democrats, afraid that the new Kolb-Alliance group could gain control of the party, began a campaign aimed at Kolb, who was to them the symbol of the "radical farmer." The powerful Democratic newspapers led by the Montgomery Advertiser united against Kolb.

In January, 1890, S. M. Adams, President of the State Alliance, crushed any hopes of cooperation between the Alliance and the Advertiser when, in a circular letter, he advised Alliancemen to boycott the Montgomery newspaper, "to cease to subscribe to that paper, to desist from reading it, and under no circumstances to borrow a copy from a neighbor."  

The Advertiser also continued to denounce the St. Louis resolutions, now called the "St. Louis platform." On January 5, 1890, it published an address to the Alliance, from five of the delegates, declaring that they were good

---

2 William Richardson was Probate Judge of Madison County in North Alabama. Joseph F. Johnston was a popular banker of Birmingham, formerly of Selma. "Honest" James Crook was a gentleman farmer-politician of Calhoun County. Thomas G. Jones was a prominent lawyer of Montgomery and had the support of the Advertiser. All five candidates were prominent Democrats, all were Confederate veterans, and all had taken an active part in redeeming Alabama from Radical rule in 1874.

3 J. W. DuBose, Article No. 87, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 9, 1913.
Democrats, that they had not voted for the resolutions, and that no third party action was intended at St. Louis.\textsuperscript{4} Besides the address, the newspaper also carried a letter from Kolb, who attested to "his good Democracy" and reiterated that he did not approve of all of the resolutions, particularly the one which "looked to disobedience of the party caucus."\textsuperscript{5} Considering these letters unsatisfactory, the Advertiser accused Kolb, Adams, and other Alliance leaders of seeking to establish a third party. Thus the paper sought to decide who was a Democrat, reading out of the party those who disagreed with it as "traitors, disruptionists, broilbreeders, and concocters of treasonable plots."\textsuperscript{6}

Two events early in January gave the Advertiser additional reasons for alarm and for intensifying the attack on the Alliance and the St. Louis resolutions. First, Benjamin Terrell, National Lecturer of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, began a month's speaking tour in Alabama.\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{4} Montgomery Advertiser, January 5, 1890.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{6} Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama (University, Alabama: University Supply Store, 1934), p. 608.
\textsuperscript{7} J. W. DuBose, Article No. 82, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 2, 1913.
In his speeches Terrell defended the St. Louis resolutions, he endorsed Kolb for governor, and he claimed that the attack of the Advertiser on Kolb was really directed at the Alliance. Second, the Advertiser interpreted a Labor Sentinel article as a "threat" by the Alliance to use Negro votes to overthrow "white supremacy" and restore radical rule in Alabama.

The Advertiser lost no opportunity to assail Kolb and his associates. For instance, when a church member complained that the churches were being used for agricultural meetings, the Advertiser headlined, "Kolb Charged With Church Desecration." The paper gave Terrell similar treatment. After a speech in Marion, Alabama, it scolded him for using words "bordering on profanity--rough expressions such as cussed, dog-gone, by golly, and the like." It is unlikely that the members of the audience were shocked by this language until the reporter suggested that good Democrats did

---

8 Montgomery Advertiser, January 10, 1890.

9 The Labor Sentinel wrote: "The Bourbon Democracy have used the negro vote successfully in keeping their supremacy over us, and By our Lady! we propose to use him in turn to down them for the good of white and blacks alike." The Birmingham Labor Sentinel, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, January 8, 1890.

10 Montgomery Advertiser, February 16, 1890.

11 Ibid., January 19, 1890.
not listen to such "profanity." Even though DuBose sympathized with the views of the Advertiser, he reports:

The Advertiser seemed to have set before it the one task, the defeat of the aspirations of Kolb . . . . Without variableness or shadow of turning, day followed day, the Advertiser struck back at the oath bound allies who were preparing to seize the machinery of the party of rescue of Alabama.12

The Democratic papers attacked Kolb as "Free Pass Reuben" and declared that he had swindled the state by riding on railroad passes and charging his fare to the state at the same time.13 The Advertiser also demanded that Kolb explain his accounts and urged Governor Seay to order an audit. The governor not only ignored this request but also reappointed Kolb as Commissioner. Having a field day, the conservative press charged that Kolb was dishonest and that he was afraid to have his records inspected. Summersell proposed that Governor Seay did not request an audit of the accounts because he was at that time a candidate for the United States Senate and wanted Kolb's support.14

Continuing to dig into Kolb's past, the Advertiser reported on March 9, 1890, that in 1866 Kolb had avoided paying a fellow farmer a debt by taking advantage of the

12 J. W. DuBose, Article No. 87, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 9, 1913.


14 Summersell, op. cit., p. 25.
bankruptcy law. The Mobile Register asked, "Is it to be said that this imperial State . . . shall be governed by a man who stands branded by the Supreme Court of Alabama as an unconvicted felon who was saved from the penitentiary by the statute of limitations?" Hereafter this incident was known as the "McRae Affair," and Kolb was denounced because of it.

Finally, even though Kolb had declared that he did not approve of all the St. Louis proposals, the Bourbon newspapers still asserted that he was not a good Democrat. When the Tuscaloosa County Alliance passed resolutions declaring openly for Kolb and the entire St. Louis platform, the Advertiser responded: "Evidently the members of that Alliance have not informed themselves, and when they understand the situation, they will probably reconsider their hasty action. The Alliance at large cannot be held accountable for the entry in the political arena by one of the county organizations."

Thus the conservative press worked to weaken Kolb's following through severe attacks on his character and

\[15\] Report of the Supreme Court of Alabama, Vol. 58, p. 535, Case of McRae et. al. versus Newman. Kolb sold mortgaged property to one J. C. McRae. When Kolb did not pay, the holder of the mortgage, Colonel Newman, sued the purchaser, McRae. Kolb was saved from criminal prosecution by the statute of limitations.

\[16\] Mobile Register, April 27, 1890.

\[17\] Montgomery Advertiser, January 12, 1890.
reputation. The Advertiser camouflaged its denunciation of Alliance political activities as an expression of benevolent interest in the welfare of that organization and at the same time declared any Alliance act or member to which it objected "a threat to white supremacy." Kolb's problem was to keep the support of the farmers.

At last all counties had selected delegates to the state convention. As the date for that meeting approached, the Bourbon press grew wilder. For example, the Mobile Register asked,

Has Alabama fallen so low that among all her thousands of farmers she can find no man with a decent regard for private obligation or official duty? Look at your bright boys, who watch your acts and strive to imitate your example. Look at the blooming girls who make a paradise of your home. Shall we say to them, 'Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die?'

Every day the Advertiser devoted two columns to criticism of Kolb.

Some counties sent two contesting delegations to the state convention. The Advertiser estimated the number of delegates pledged as follows: Kolb, 21\textsuperscript{2}; Crook, 53; Jones, 50; Johnston, 100; Richardson, 87; uncertain, 14. These estimates indicate that Kolb had more delegates than any other two men.\footnote{Mobile Register, April 1, 1890.}

\footnote{Montgomery Advertiser, May 25, 1890.}
At convention time, Montgomery was crowded with delegates, politicians, and curiosity seekers. Kolb set up a headquarters in the Alliance warehouse and the other candidates established themselves at the Exchange Hotel. The State Executive Committee, with a majority of old line Democrats who opposed Kolb, seated the delegations favoring Kolb's opposition. The chairman of the convention, Henry Clay Tompkins, a strong party man, ruled against Kolb forces whenever possible. When the convention was called to order, the roll call revealed that two-thirds of the delegates were farmers. On the first ballot Kolb won a large majority which he continued to hold for two days. After thirty-three ballots, the other candidates united to "beat Kolb." They found that Jones could not deliver his delegates to any other man. If Jones retired, his delegates would go to Kolb who could then win the nomination. For this reason, Jones became the candidate of the anti-Kolb organization. On the thirty-fourth ballot, Jones received a majority over Kolb. In a short address, Kolb pledged himself to support the party nominee and offered to campaign for Jones. The press thought that Kolb's speech was "magnanimous action" and it declared him a "staunch farmer and Democrat." The

Mobile Register was the only important paper that did not praise him for "returning to the Democratic fold." The Selma Mirror summarized the whole affair:

In fact the farmers of the state were pitted against the politicians of the state and were beaten. The numerical strength of the farmer's candidate in the convention was greatest, but they left gaps in their rear which brought about their defeat... Captain Kolb did indeed capture the convention, and not only the convention, but the democratic party of the state by his manly and patriotic speech.  

DuBose thought that national politics had affected the campaign. He wrote:

Political conditions outside the State actually separated the Farmers' Alliance of Alabama from control of the State government. Political conditions outside the State drew the line deep and immutable between Kolb and the field in the convention of 1890. 

Although DuBose referred to the St. Louis convention, another "force outside the State," a bill introduced in the United States House of Representatives by Henry Cabot Lodge, influenced conservative Democrats in 1890-91. Labeled the "Force Bill," its provisions for federal control of elections "caused more alarm and excitement in the South than any Federal measure since 1877." A coalition of Southern

---

21 Selma Mirror, quoted in Montgomery Advertiser, June 7, 1890.
22 J. W. DuBose, Article No. 92, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 28, 1913.
and Western silver senators defeated the bill in January 1891. However, the Democrats pointed to the Force Bill throughout the third party movement. Over a year after the Senate defeat of the bill, the Birmingham *Age-Herald* quoted Adlai E. Stevenson as follows: "If you desire the enactment of the force bill, with its train of evils, cast your vote for the republican party or by standing with the third party, remain idle spectators to the great struggle." This story was subcaptioned in quarter-inch type, "Read What He Says of the Force Bill and Then Vote Against the Democracy If You Can."

In the election Jones received a three-to-one majority over his Republican opponent. Superficially viewed, the campaign looked like a fight between the *Advertiser* and the Alliance leaders, but Moore believes that it was a "struggle between the conservative-machine element and the farmer-progressive element for the control of the party." Smouldering since the war, intra-state sectionalism broke out anew between the Black Belt and the white counties. The Alliance-led reformers emerged from the 1890

---

24 Birmingham *Age-Herald*, September 16, 1892.

25 Ibid.

campaign as a powerful political force.\textsuperscript{27} They were actually the embryonic stage of a third party. It remained for the divergent forces within the Democratic Party in 1892 to bring the third party movement into full flower.

The Campaign of 1892

Early in December, 1890, the Alabama Alliance, along with delegates from the Colored Alliance and the Knights of Labor, participated in a convention of the National Farmer's Alliance and Industrial Union, held in Ocala, Florida. In spite of Southern Alliance opposition to a break with the Democratic Party, this convention set a date to consider plans for a third party and adopted a platform similar to that made at St. Louis in 1889. The major difference was that the Ocala platform substituted government control for government ownership of railroads and the means of communication, and demanded a tariff revision.\textsuperscript{28}

In February, 1891, S. M. Adams "proclaimed that the Ocala demands were binding on all Alliances."\textsuperscript{29} Kolb as the Alliance champion thus had to defend the action at Ocala.

\textsuperscript{27} In the State legislature "sixty-nine of the one hundred members of the House and eleven of the thirty-three members of the Senate were Alliance men." John B. Clark, Populism in Alabama, 1874-1896, (Auburn: Auburn Printing Co., 1927) p. 112.

\textsuperscript{28} J. D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1931), p. 430.

\textsuperscript{29} Anniston \textit{Weekly Times}, March 12, 1891.
The meeting scheduled by the Ocala convention, held in Cincinnati in 1891, provided for the formation of the People's Party. A platform was drawn up, but nomination of candidates was postponed until it met in St. Louis in 1892. The national third party which had been talked about for so long thus became a reality.

Kolb warned the State Democratic Executive Committee that he would be heard in 1892. In a speech at Eufaula, he said that "he had been stolen out of the nomination." In December, 1890, he finally requested an examination of his accounts as Commissioner of Agriculture. After an investigation of several months, the auditor reported that from 1887 until 1890 there were discrepancies amounting to only $43.72. To most people this amount seemed trifling, but theAdvertiser was not satisfied and accused him of misusing state funds. As a result of this publicity the Legislature made the office of Commissioner of Agriculture elective instead of appointive.

In December after hearing reports of the Ocala convention conservative Democrats intensified their charge that the Alliance was moving toward a third party. Kolb defended

---

30 Hicks, op. cit., pp. 213-214.

31 Clark, op. cit., p. 111.

32 Montgomery Advertiser, December 3, 1890.

33 Birmingham Age-Herald, May 20, 1891.
the Alliance and again faced accusations that he was not a good Democrat.

Kolb defied party tradition which would have allowed Governor Jones a second term unopposed by announcing on July 21, 1891, that he would run for governor. He immediately began speaking at summer outings of the Alliance and at the regularly scheduled meetings of his department until September when his term as Commissioner expired. Governor Jones appointed anti-Kolbite Hector Lane to fill the post until November elections.

In 1891 supporters of the Alliance who were not farmers, and therefore barred from membership, organized groups called Citizens' Alliances which worked closely with the Alliance and were in effect political clubs. Ministers and lawyers who joined these citizens' groups were among the most active speakers for Kolb.

The political activity in 1891 indicated that 1892 would be a lively year. The Marion Standard wrote: "Next year is going to be the all-firedest campaign that the country has ever witnessed. You fellows that can't stand pressure had better have your baggage checked through to another clime." The Hartselle Enquirer answered: "Yes brother, you had better see that your ticket bears the straight Democratic stamp."

---

34 Marion Standard and Hartselle Enquirer, quoted in Tuscaloosa News, October 19, 1891.
In January, 1892, although the state democratic convention was six months away, the counties selected their delegates. Jefferson County, the first to act, used beat primaries and a prorate system, while Madison County, the second to select delegates, employed beat primaries but refused to prorate the delegation. In the Madison convention both Kolb and Jones forces claimed a majority. The dispute was settled by dividing the delegates equally between the candidates. At this time the State Democratic Committee became alarmed by the apparent trend to either prorate or divide delegations. Composed of fifteen Jones men and seven Kolb men, this committee formulated rules which provided that in elections in the remaining counties no prorating should be used, that primaries should be announced at least thirty days in advance, and that a man's past voting record determined his Democracy. Summersell analyzes this move as "the referee changing the rules in the middle of the game." As a result of the ban on prorating, the counties in which there were close votes sent two full delegations. Kolb realized that the Executive Committee would probably seat the disputed

35 Montgomery Advertiser, January 10, 11, 12, 13, 1892.

36 Montgomery Advertiser, January 10, 12, 13, 1892.

delegations in Jones' favor. In March, 1892 he said,

I am going to have my rights in the next State Convention. They are sending up contesting delegations from every county, almost, to get up confusion, and in order to swindle me again, but if I am entitled to a majority of the delegates I tell you I am going to have them! 38

As the campaign progressed, it became evident to Kolb that he would not be nominated. In April he commented on the situation as follows:

I have secured 142 delegates and the governor only 141. When asked how he made it out that way he said: 'The count of the opposition is based on contested delegations from several counties. These contested delegations have no earthly right, and if the convention is fairly run they cannot secure seats. When asked how that could be prevented he said, 'It may result in two conventions, for they are determined to beat me by fair or foul means.' 39

As Kolb had predicted, the Executive Committee seated Jones' delegates.

The Kolb forces proposed to solve the differences within the party by holding a state primary to select the nominee for governor. Rejecting this conciliation attempt, the regular convention proceeded to nominate Jones. Feeling that the "machine" had out-maneuvered them again the Kolbites bolted the party and went into separate convention where they nominated a full slate of state officers including Kolb for governor. Although they called themselves "Jeffersonian Democrats" they were in reality a formal third party. For the first time the "Democratic redeemers of the State" were

38 Montgomery Advertiser, March 27, 1892.
39 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 20, 1892.
challenged by native white Southerners in open revolt. The Birmingham *Age-Herald* called the Kolb group the "most memorable convention in the history of Alabama since Houston was nominated" and editorialized:

For the first time since 1878 the Democratic party is confronted with a faction whose strength it admits and whose personnel can cause alarm. . . . There is full appreciation of the fact the devil is to play in Alabama and the only way to conquer the forces of that gentleman of ancient renown is to fight. TIME IS UP! FALL IN!\(^\text{40}\)

Kolb's bolt resulted in a reshuffling of political alliances. He lost some followers who refused to leave the regular party and gained new followers who believed that a break was better than submission to machine tactics.\(^\text{41}\)

The regular convention drew up a platform which advocated state rights, better schools, and the popular election of railroad commissioner. It endorsed both the state and national administrations, free silver, and a primary election by secret ballot. It opposed the Force Bill, the tariff, monopolies, and government ownership of railroads and telegraphs. It also decided that representation in future state conventions should be based on population rather than upon the vote for governor in the preceding election.\(^\text{42}\)

This last measure was the only attempt to

\(^{40}\) Birmingham *Age-Herald*, June 15, 1892.

\(^{41}\) Montgomery *Advertiser*, July 26, 27, 29, 1892.

\(^{42}\) Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 132; *Appleton's National Cyclopedia*, 1892, p. 4.
meet the criticisms of the Kolb party.

The Jeffersonian Democrats drew up a platform favoring free silver, fair elections, popular election of the railroad commissioners, and protection of the legal rights of Negroes. It opposed convict leasing, monopolies and trusts, and national banks. It advocated better schools, just taxation, and improvement of agriculture and industry and contained a resolution that in future campaigns, the nominations for state offices be made at a primary election.\(^4\)

The two platforms disagreed most violently over the Negro vote. The thirteenth plank of the Democratic platform read:

We favor the passage of such election laws as will better secure the government in the hands of the intelligent and the virtuous and will enable every elector to cast his ballot secretly and without fear or constraint.\(^4\)

The twelfth plank of the Jeffersonian platform stated:

We favor the protection of the colored race in their legal rights and should afford them encouragement and aid in the attainment of a higher civilization and citizenship, so that through the means of kindness, fair treatment, and just regard for them, a better understanding and more satisfactory condition may exist between the races.\(^4\)

Typical of the reaction of the Democratic press to this latter plank, the Butler Choctaw Advocate commented as

\(^4\) Birmingham Age-Herald, June 15, 1892.
\(^4\) Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia, 1892, p. 4.
\(^4\) Birmingham Age-Herald, June 15, 1892.
follows: "Who can look upon the fair and lovely women of this land and endorse this principle and the man who maintains it?"\textsuperscript{46}

The Populist Party which had been organized in Alabama in April, 1892, endorsed Kolb as did a number of Republicans. This support along with the stand of the Jeffersonian Democrats on the Negro vote led to the charge that Kolb had fused all forces opposed to the Democratic Party in order to bring about the return of Negro rule. Each side accused the other of soliciting Negro votes.

When the campaign opened, Kolb suggested to Jones that in the interest of fair elections they arrange to have an adequate number of watchers and officials at the polls.\textsuperscript{47} Jones answered that he trusted the election officials and resented any implication that any of them were dishonest. Kolb was caught in his own trap in this matter. Legally there was one watcher at the polls from each party on the ticket. Since he claimed to be a good Democrat he could not challenge the watchers appointed by Jones.

Kolb and his speakers accused Governor Jones of misusing his pardoning power, of forgetting his campaign promise to take the convicts out of the mines, and of spending

\textsuperscript{46} Butler Choctaw Advocate, July 13, 1892.

\textsuperscript{47} R. F. Kolb to Thomas G. Jones, June 23, 1892, Thomas Goode Jones Papers, The Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.
money rashly to form another state regiment. They implied that Jones favored big business, pointing out that he had been a corporation lawyer for the Louisville and Nashville railroad and that he was actually on leave from that job.

When they discovered that Jones rode with his employers in a Republican parade, in 1877 while he was clerk of the State Supreme Court, the Jeffersonians accused him of being a Republican and a rider in "nigger parades."

After an intense campaign the voters gave Jones 126,959 and Kolb 115,522 votes. The entire Jeffersonian ticket was defeated. Kolb claimed a majority of from 25,000 to 40,000 votes, charging that he was counted out through the manipulation of the Negro vote in the Black Belt. His request for an investigation of the election was denied because of the absence of a contest-of-election law. Kolb's leaders in the legislature tried unsuccessfully to introduce a contest law.

---

48 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 24, 1892.
49 Clark, op. cit., p. 121; Birmingham Age-Herald, September 9, 1891.
50 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 17, 20, 21, 25, 29, 1891.
51 Montgomery Advertiser, August 2, 1892.
The question of whom the Jeffersonians would support in the national election in November now arose. Jones and his supporters realized that defeat of the Democratic Party was possible in Alabama. Analyzing the situation, the *Age-Herald* wrote:

For many years there has been growing and breeding a feeling of resentment against the Black Belt because it took advantage of the situation to hurl a solid mass of Negro votes against the North Alabama white man in the nominating convention of the party. This feeling was not confined to the men who recently voted for Kolb, but was general. The issue of Negro domination in the Black Belt was used for all it was worth in the campaign just closed, and saved some votes to the regular party. The enormous negro majorities which met the North Alabama white majorities at the edge of the cotton plantations on August 1, has killed the issue in this edge of the State so far as the men who voted for Kolb are concerned. On the general principle that they are Democrats some of the men who voted for Captain Kolb will stand by Cleveland. General opposition to the principle of federal interference in State affairs will save some more. But the reversal of the popular verdict in Pike and Conecuh (counties) and the stories that will be retailed about the election in the Black Belt counties, will be the means of gain to the other side, and there is no way to prevent it. In short, the November battle will be fought on the issue of August 1, will be forced to that issue by the opposition.

The regulars now attempted to win Jeffersonians back to the party. The State Executive Committee put the "come back to the fold" attitude in resolution form:

Be it resolved, That all persons who are in accord with the principles of the democratic party, and who propose to act in harmony with it and support

---

53 *Birmingham Age-Herald*, August 17, 1892.
its nominees in the approaching presidential
election, are entitled to participate and vote
in all primaries and conventions of the party
and are eligible for nomination for office.54

Some Jeffersonians returned, but the majority waited
for Kolb to lead. They received direction at the State
Alliance meeting held in Cullman on August 9. Here P. G.
Bowman, chairman of Kolb's state committee declared:

That Kolb men would accept no compromise of any
character, except the surrender by the regular
democracy of Governor Jones' re-election; that the
Kolb men were not afraid of the Militia and gatling-
guns at Montgomery; that they proposed to see Kolb
made governor, and that they would hold a convention
in September to put out candidates for congress in
every district and an electoral ticket, and that if
Kolb was not declared elected governor of Alabama on
August 1st, that they would beat Cleveland by
75,000 majority.55

The Cullman convention renewed its allegiance to the Ocala
platform, charged fraud in the recent elections, and de-
clared that the Alliance was now "independent of the old
tricky machine." Denouncing both the state administration
and President Cleveland, the resolutions concluded:

We believe that the political followers of Grover
Cleveland in Alabama aided and abetted, and are
still aiding and abetting in the frauds herein
before mentioned, and there again reiterate our
opposition to the electoral ticket put out in his
interest by the so-called organized Democracy in
this State, and we call upon all liberty-loving
citizens to join with us in compassing the defeat
of said electoral ticket.56

54 Eufaula Times and News, August 18, 1892.
55 Eufaula Times and News, August 18, 1892.
56 Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.
When the regular party refused to "surrender Governor Jones' re-election," the Jeffersonians, Populists, and Republicans formed a fusion party on September 15, 1892. They adopted a platform and selected a slate of presidential electors and nine candidates for congress. In a platform similar to that of the National Peoples' Party the fusionists demanded the following: a fair vote and an honest count, protection of the rights of citizens, free silver, increase of money circulation to fifty dollars per person, a graduated income tax, control of transportation and communication facilities in the interest of the people, reduction of the tariff to the lowest possible amount consistent with economical government, abolition of the national banks and provision of a means to issue money directly to the people, American ownership of the land in preference to aliens.57

The Birmingham Age-Herald reported in a humorous vein "There was a political marriage at Lakeview park, Birmingham, yesterday. The Farmers Alliance and the third party were united in the bonds of wedlock, the republican party acting as best man and Harrison's wraith officiating." In a more serious note the paper continued:

The third party convention of Alabama met at Lakeview yesterday. It was one of the largest political conventions yet held in the state, there being about 600 delegates present. All but a few of the counties

were represented. The number of the delegates and their desperate earnestness startled the many demo­crats who gathered to see the show. Those men are in earnest, the delegates to the convention, and they have finally broken away from the democratic party. . . . These are the plain facts concerning the salient features of this most extraordinary convention. The democratic party is face to face with a revolu­tion which has swept away many of its own children, and our party—the only real and honest party—must know these facts in order to promote its own patriotic purposes.

The Advertiser belittled the convention;

When the Pratt Mines band struck up Dixie not a voice was raised to cheer the National Southern anthem, except that of a reporter. When the tune had been played, there was silence still, until out of it came a voice saying: 'The war is over; play Yankee Doodle.' The reporter looked for the voice and found that it belonged to a white­bearded, red-faced octogenarian whose general air and appearance was strikingly like that of a Pennsylvania farmer.

Present at the fusion conference to encourage the organiza­tion of a third party were General James B. Weaver, Populist candidate for President; General James G. Field, Populist candidate for Vice-president; and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Lease, a leading Populist orator.

---

58 Birmingham Age-Herald, September 16, 1892.
59 Montgomery Advertiser, September 16, 1892.
60 James B. Weaver of Iowa was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1833. He received a good education, graduating from the Cincinnati law school in 1854. He settled in Iowa where he practiced law. He enlisted in the Union army during the Civil War and attained the rank of Brigadier General. After the war he ran into difficulty with his prohibitionist views and quit the Republican party winning a seat in the 1878 Congress as a Greenbacker. In 1880 he was the Greenback presidential candidate. He was an ex­perienced campaigner with a special appeal for the old
These national figures spoke primarily on economic distress of the day, and of the ability and desire of the Populist Party to improve these economic conditions. 61

Because the Jeffersonian-Populist ticket named two Republicans and the Lily-Whites supported the fusion ticket, the conservative press suggested that a deal had been made with the Republican Party. Chris Magee, a prominent Republican from Pennsylvania confirmed the accusation. He visited Alabama and arranged to give financial help from the national party in return for a promise that the fusion party electors would vote for Harrison if their votes would give him the election. The Democratic press called this "deal with the soldier vote. National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Vol. 16, p. 146.

James G. Field was born in Virginia in 1826. He received a classical education, taught school and was admitted to the bar in 1852. He served as a major in the Civil War, was wounded twice and lost a leg. His title of "General" was a courtesy title. After the war he engaged in a prosperous law practice and took an active interest in the farmers' movements. In 1892 he was widely known and respected as an able lawyer and speaker. Ibid., Vol 12, p. 485.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Lease of Kansas became a popular orator in 1888 when she spoke for the Union Labor Party. Though a mother of four she studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1885. She was in constant demand as an Alliance speaker. She was reported to have said, "What you farmers need to do is raise less corn and more hell." Hicks, op. cit., pp. 159-60.

Republicans' Kolb's major crime. The Age-Herald, mildest of the papers asked,

Will the people of Alabama submit to the plans of this set of political manipulators? Will the honest men who followed Kolb in August permit themselves to be traded off in secret conference to the enemies of their state and homes?62

Each party on the fusion ticket attempted to maintain identity by having separate state chairmen. However, the conservative press allowed no individuality and treated Jeffersonians, Republicans, and Populists as one party.

The contest in Alabama was a Democratic landslide, resulting in the election of Cleveland and nine Democratic congressmen. The popular vote for Cleveland was 138,123; for Weaver, 85,128; for Harrison, 8,387; and for Bidwell, 239.63 The 36.6 per cent given Weaver was significantly higher than that cast for the People's Party in any other Southern state.64

Campaign of 1894

The Assembly of 1892-93 contained thirty-seven Kolb men in the house and seven in the senate. At the joint session called to witness the counting of the votes in the state election, Senator Albert Taylor Goodwyn, a Kolb leader, protested the counting of the votes in certain

62 Birmingham Age-Herald, September 16, 1892.
63 Montgomery Advertiser, November 12, 1892.
64 Hicks, op. cit., p. 263.
Black Belt counties. The Speaker of the House, Frank L. Pettus of Dallas County [a Black Belt county], ruled him out-of-order. Later Goodwyn managed to get passed a motion which amended the journal to show:

That the speaker as presiding officer of the joint convention ruled; 1st. That no member of the general assembly had a right to enter a written protest against the counting of the votes from certain counties; 2nd. That no member had a right to appeal from the decision of the chair; 3rd. That no member had a right to enter a protest against the rulings of the chair.55

The passage of this motion indicated that Speaker Pettus, a Black Belt conservative, had employed machine tactics against the Kolb forces.

The General Assembly considered two measures which had particular bearing on future campaigns. First, Speaker Pettus introduced a resolution proposing a constitutional convention to revise the 1875 document and include a plan to disfranchise the Negroes. Pettus wrote, "Let us go before them with a call for a Constitutional Convention... and adopt, substantially the Mississippi system."66


66 Pettus to the Age-Herald, December 27, 1892. Quoted in McMillan, op. cit., p. 249.

Mississippi was the first Southern State to revise its constitution after Reconstruction to include a provision for Negro disfranchisement. By the famous "grandfather clause", the Mississippi plan permitted the registration on voting lists of those persons who had served in the armies of the United States or the Confederacy, or who were descendants of such soldiers or who had had the right to vote in the state of their residence before 1867. Those who could not
Ultra-conservative Democrats and Populists joined to defeat the proposal, the former fearing to disfranchise the Negro as long as the Populists were strong and the latter fearing that a new suffrage system would disfranchise poor white voters as well as Negroes.

The second measure, the Sayre Election Law, which was considered to be the embodiment of the thirteenth plank of the Democratic platform contained the following provisions: voters were to register only in May within the precinct where the vote was to be cast; the Governor was to appoint a registrar in each precinct; all candidates would appear on a common ticket, arranged alphabetically without distinction of party, under the office for which they were running; a voter must show his registration, enter an isolated booth, and mark his ballot within five minutes; if illiterate, a voter might be aided by a proper election official.

Leading the Jeffersonian attack, Goodwyn declared that the Sayre Law would disfranchise thousands of white

---

register under this clause were required to pay poll tax; read, write, and understand any section of the state or federal constitution; and submit proof of a property possession. Louise M. Hacker and Benjamin B. Kendrick, The United States Since 1865 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949), pp.56,57.

67 Cf. Chapter III.

voters and would lead to turmoil and bloodshed in the next election. In one speech he said, "An election in Alabama under Sayre election law is an absolute farce if the manager desired to make it a farce. I denounce it as the most villainous bill ever put on any statute book."69

Other opponents pointed out that the time set for registration in May was inconvenient for the farmers; that the Governor could appoint strongly partisan registrars; that the registrars could set up inconvenient places for registration; that officials marking the ballots of the illiterate voters could mark the ballot as they pleased.70 Giving credence to objections to the Sayre Law, Russell M. Cunningham, president of the State Senate, defined it as "the best and cheapest method of swindling the white people ever devised for the maintenance of white supremacy."71 Third party speakers quoted Governor Jones as saying before he signed the Sayre Bill, "Let me have that bill. I want to sign it before my arm is paralyzed; it does away with Kolbism in Alabama."72


70 McMillan, op. cit., p. 239; Senate Miscellaneous Document No. 67, Fifty-third Congress, Third Session.

71 McMillan, op. cit., p. 225.

Any person thinking that Alabama might have a rest from politics after the 1892 election found that he was wrong. The Populists called mass meetings in January to discuss the political situation. In a speech to a Jefferson County group, J. C. Manning criticized the administration, demanded a fair election law, and promised that in the next election the game of ballot box stuffing would be played by both sides. He predicted that the "fight in the next campaign would be made on a 'free ballot and a fair count.'"

While Populist speakers were making an issue of the election procedures, the panic of 1893 exerted another force on Alabama voters. Woodward writes:

> Conditions and prices that were bad enough in the eighties to provoke the angry protest of the Farmers' Alliance movement grew considerably worse in the nineties. 'The outlook here is gloomier than anytime since 1873 on account of crop failures and crop prices,' wrote an Alabamian in the fall of 1892.

In his discussion of the period Moore says,

> Land, livestock, and farm staples became almost valueless. Cotton sold for four cents a pound, potatoes at ten cents a bushel, and livestock would not pay the cost of transportation even a distance of a few hundred miles... Farm hands toiled twelve to fifteen hours a day for forty cents and dinner, or forty-five cents when they furnished their own dinners.

---

74 Woodward, op. cit., p. 269.
75 Moore, op. cit., p. 630.
R. A. Moseley, chairman of the Republican State Executive Committee, wrote Governor Jones describing the distress of the people and asked him to convene the legislature to pass a "stay law" to "prevent the property of the debtor class being sold by officers of the law. There is no money, and unless relief is thus given, you will hear the cry for bread from many parts of our beloved State."76

Organized labor fared little better than the farmer. When miners in north Alabama joined the national coal strike and threatened violence against the convicts working in the mines, Governor Jones sent state troops to the scene. Convict labor kept coal production up and doomed the strike to failure. During the railroad strike of July 8 the Governor again sent troops to Birmingham to prevent mob violence and to protect the rail companies which hired men to replace the strikers. As soon as the troops were sent home, the miners used force to prevent the hiring of Negroes as "strikebreakers." State troops and Pinkerton detectives, combining forces, made large-scale arrests and forced strikers back to work on company terms.77 The labor groups accused the state administration of being against the working man, and they became strong backers of Kolb. During the strikes a Kolb club was even organized among miners

76 R. A. Moseley to Governor Thomas G. Jones, August 1893, Scrapbook 64, Alabama Room, University of Alabama, Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library.

77 Woodward, op. cit., p. 266.
imprisoned in the Birmingham jail.

When Alabamians looked to the national government for relief from their distress they became more discouraged; they were convinced that President Cleveland had betrayed them. Woodward summarized the situation as follows: "One unpopular act followed another: the repeal of the Silver Purchase Act; the first gold bond issue; Cleveland's veto of the seigniorage bill; and the series of gold bond issues that followed." Criticism of Cleveland and his money policy became a popular subject in reform speeches.

The Jeffersonians and Populists continued political activity, holding a joint convention in May 1893. The Jeffersonian committee headed by A. T. Goodwyn offered to the Democratic Party a compromise which called for a state white primary to be held in 1894, recognizing the eligibility of all white electors to vote, and opposition to all legislation which might limit white suffrage. The Democratic State Committee rejected this attempt to reconcile the two groups, holding to their ruling that only those who had voted for Cleveland should participate in the primary.

With the rejection of the peace proposal, the Jeffersonians and Populists began an active campaign. Some

---

78 Ibid., p. 72.
79 Birmingham Age-Herald, May 12, 1893.
80 Montgomery Advertiser, June 6, 1893.
leaders of both parties thought that a new gubernatorial candidate would be stronger than Kolb, but the average third party member would consider no one else to head the ticket in 1894. In fact, Kolb was already canvassing the state. In August, his son reported, "We will have a right lively campaign next year. Father is speaking almost every day over the state. He is stumping it thoroughly and has crowds everywhere."81

In September under the urging of Chairman Goodwyn, the Jeffersonian Party in a second attempt at reconciliation with the Democratic Party proposed a primary with only white voters who claimed to have been Democrats before 1892 eligible to participate. The Kolbites seemed willing to renounce both the Negro and the Republicans in order to bring about unity. Rogers comments, "Jeffersonians, despairing of obtaining a fair count of the Negro vote, had proposed the illiberal but effective remedy of doing away with it altogether and at the same time retaining the small white farmer votes."82

The Populists continued an active program. Beginning in October, county conventions were held to name delegates to the state convention. Indicative of the temper of the times, a speaker advised his listeners at a meeting in

81 Alexander City Outlook, August 4, 1893.
Cullman to "get their shotguns ready and use them if they were not properly registered and if any effort was made to swindle them." Reflecting the desperate plight of the farmer the Sand Mountain Signal wrote, "If we fail to free ourselves from the bossism of these unprincipled demagogues in 1894, we shall never be anything but hewers of wood and drawers of water." 

In November the state Senate and House Committee on Privileges and Elections held a hearing on a contest law. They gave Kolb, who favored a law, an unsympathetic hearing and heard Goodwyn speak in favor of Kolb's contentions and accuse them of treating Kolb with lack of consideration.

In January, 1894, the Democratic Executive Committee formulated a new plan for the election of delegates to the state convention, stipulating that all beat meetings and county primaries were to be held the same day, May 12, and that all county conventions were to be held on May 16. This simplification of the election machinery provided some relief to candidates who in the past had to travel about the state when counties held elections.

83 Alexander City Outlook, October 20, 1893.
84 Sand Mountain Signal, November 3, 1893.
85 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 29, 1892.
86 Montgomery Advertiser, January 23, 1894.
Jeffersonians and Populists followed the pattern set in 1892, calling party conventions for the same time and place in 1894. The middle-of-the-road Populists who desired a Populist ticket objected to a joint convention and urged the Jeffersonians to stop masquerading as Democrats and accept the name of People's Party. The simon-pure Populists who desired a fusion with the Kolb group were in the majority; consequently they joined the Jeffersonians. The two parties, meeting together nominated a ticket including Kolb for Governor and adopted a platform. Moore suggests, "This candidate, now clothed in the habiliments of a political martyr, much persecuted and much maligned, was their Moses, their savior." The platform, which reflected the demands of the masses, included a free ballot, honest count, and a contest-of-election law for state officers. It also included demands for free coinage of silver on the ratio of sixteen to one, expansion of the currency volume to fifty dollars per person, a tariff for revenue and for protection of labor, and elimination of the control of the circulating medium by corporate enterprises. Five demands for social reform included the following: removal of the convicts from the mines, a more liberal education system, lien laws for miners, creation of the

87 Moore, op. cit., p. 631. S. M. Adams was nominated for Commissioner of Agriculture, and Warren Reese for Attorney General.
office of State Inspector of Weights and Measures, barring of children under thirteen years of age from mine work, and invitation of capital to invest in Alabama. 88

Third party speakers kept the convention in an uproar. Manning, who had just returned from a speaking tour of the West, brought greetings from General Weaver and Western Populists. The delegates went wild as he concluded a speech, "Like hired hounds, we cling at the feet of plutocracy and democracy. Shall we do it any longer? ... In the language of Patrick Henry, 'Let us have Liberty or Death.' Kolb is our Patrick Henry." 89 In his speech, Kolb told the delegates that they represented the true democracy as expounded by Thomas Jefferson. After discussing the platform he called on all members to organize for an active and aggressive campaign, observing that "a canvass of the State would be necessary before May registration under the Sayre law in order to educate the people in all details of the villainous law." 90 The Democrats were mainly concerned with selecting a candidate "Who can beat Kolb?" By January, 1894, two men in the race for the Democratic nomination were Captain Joseph F. Johnston, Birmingham banker who had strong support

88 Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894; Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia, 1894, p. 45.
90 R. F. Kolb, Convention Speech, Birmingham Age-Herald, February 14, 1894.
from north Alabama, and Congressman William C. Oates of Henry County, who was the choice of the Black Belt. Sectional rivalry was evident in the lively contest. Johnston declared for free silver and criticized the Cleveland administration while Oates was a solid Cleveland supporter. In the May elections Oates won more delegates than Johnston and therefore won the nomination of the Democratic State Convention. Although he believed he had been cheated in the Black Belt counties, Johnston accepted defeat gracefully. In the opinion of Moore the platform adopted was "an old-fashioned Democratic platform, which endorsed the Jones administration and made unconvincing pledges upon some of the issues of the day. It straddled on the silver question."91 It included a commendation for the Sayre Law, a promise for increased appropriations to public schools, and a demand for reform in the convict system.92

Heading a battery of Jeffersonian-Populists speakers, Kolb attacked Oates, the state administration, and President Cleveland. They paraded Oates's record of opposition to the Hatch Act and the Blair Educational Bill. They quoted him frequently from a speech in which he said:

91 Moore, op. cit., p. 633.
92 Clark, op. cit., p. 154.
It is not the duty, nor is it to the interest of the state, to educate its entire population beyond the primaries. Universal experience teaches that if a boy, without regard to his color, be educated beyond this point, he declines to work another day in the sun. A high education may do for New England whose laboring peoples are chiefly engaged in manufacturing, but how would it work in Alabama where 75% of the people are engaged in Agriculture? 93

Because of this statement, third party speakers accused Oates of being an enemy of education. For example a speaker said:

In voting for Colonel Oates, you endorse his record against the education of your sons beyond the primaries, while you are taxed to foster institutions in which he and the wealthy class can educate their sons in a collegiate course free of tuition, but from which your sons are debarred on account of poverty. 94

They also criticized Oates for campaigning when he should have been in Congress. They said that if he was elected his administration would be run by Negroes. 95

In bringing the state administration under fire, the reform speakers charged Jones with calling out troops unnecessarily during the strikes. They blamed the Governor personally for an increase in taxes and the passage of the Sayre Law.

Attacking the national administration, third party orators described Cleveland as an unprincipled breaker of promises. One speaker said: "His [Cleveland's] course is heartless, cruel, and without parallel in history except

93 Birmingham Age-Herald, May 6, 1894
94 Troy Jeffersonian, July 27, 1894.
95 Sand Mountain Signal, May 25, 1894.
when Nero fiddled while Rome burned. He arrogates to himself monarchical powers, by refusing to execute the laws for the purpose of carrying out his individual views of finance." Manning called Cleveland the "greatest enemy of the present civilization." In their speeches Democratic speakers attacked Kolb, defended the party by relating the history of progress made under Democratic administration, and predicted the return of Reconstruction in case Kolb was elected. They still questioned Kolb's integrity and denounced him for consorting with Republicans. The Advertiser labeled Kolb as the real Republican boss of Alabama, the State Mahone. In newspaper fillers, it took such digs at Kolb as, "As Kolb and Skaggs refuse to work for a living, they would join Coxey's army in the East" and "Yancey, the grandfather-in-law of Bill Skaggs, never went North for money to fight his political battles--he had brains."

The campaign became violent. In Birmingham,

---

96 Tuscaloosa Times, July 19, 1893.
97 Birmingham Age-Herald, February 9, 1894.
98 Montgomery Advertiser, March 28, 1894. William Mahone of Virginia had become the Republican boss of the state during Reconstruction. Southerners considered him a traitor.
99 Montgomery Advertiser, June 28, 1894.
Peyton G. Bowman killed a man in an argument over political issues. He was tried for murder but released on the grounds of self defense.\(^{100}\) In Calhoun County, Kolb men beat a Negro who had organized an Oates club and advised him to leave the county.\(^ {101}\) Bowman made the news again when he threatened to "cowhide" the editor of an opposing newspaper.\(^ {102}\)

The bitterness extended into schools, homes, and churches. Church members deserted ministers of opposite political view.\(^ {103}\) A man teaching summer school reported he spent more time breaking up fights over the gubernatorial election than he did teaching.\(^ {104}\) One paper questioned, "Our schools and churches are conducted more like they are political machines than institutions of learning and religion. . . . When will our churches be permitted to serve God and let the devil and politics alone?"\(^ {105}\) Throughout the state Negroes and whites organized Kolb and Oates

\(^{100}\) Birmingham Age-Herald, June 16, 1894.

\(^{101}\) Ibid. August 1, 1894.

\(^{102}\) Ibid. August 4, 1894.


\(^{104}\) Ibid.

clubs displaying corn cobs and oats as campaign buttons.

By the middle of July the campaign had become "a crusade for justice and popular government on the one hand and a fight for order and efficiency on the other." 106 The Oates forces, avoiding the economic issues, substituted a plea for "law and order versus mob rule and anarchy." 107

Just before the election the *Age-Herald* editorialized:

The supreme issue in this campaign is not the tariff nor silver, but law and order and good government, against that spirit of disorder and incendiarism which finds its highest development in the speeches of Mr. Bowman... Are the good people of Alabama going to hand their government over to an organization whose parts make one disjointed and disorderly whole, opposed in utterance and act to all that we have ever believed and lived in our American system of government?" 108

On August 6, the Alabama voters went to the polls to save the state. They gave Oates 109,160 votes to Kolb's 83,394, or a majority of 25,766. 109 A roar of protest went up from the third party members, and Kolb declared that his whole ticket had again been the victim of fraudulent returns from the Black Belt. He described some of the fraudulent

---

107 *Birmingham Age-Herald*, July 22, 1894.
108 *Birmingham Age-Herald*, August 1, 1894.
109 *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 19, 1894.
practices and called a meeting of the fusion candidates. \(^{110}\) They decided to call mass meetings in each county to "ascertain the wishes of the people with reference to the late frauds upon the suffrage."\(^{111}\) By the time for the meetings the voters had calmed down and not many of them attended. The fusion ticket committee then issued a call for a state assembly of county delegates which met on November 12 and made two important decisions: (1) that they would not try to seat Kolb as Governor; and (2) that they would drop the name "Jeffersonian Democrat" and become the People's Party. \(^{112}\)

The November congressional campaigns were animated but poorly reported. Many speaking occasions where Democratic and third party candidates debated were listed but few speech texts were given. The total vote in the November election was slightly more than half that of the Kolb-Oates election. Democrats were victorious in all but one district where Populist M. W. Howard defeated Congressman W. A. Denson. Three Populists, A. T. Goodwyn, T. H. Aldrich, and W. F. Aldrich, successfully unseated their Democratic opponents. \(^{113}\) In the investigations, many election frauds

\(^{110}\) Birmingham Age-Herald, August 8, 1894.

\(^{111}\) Ibid., November 21, 1894.

\(^{112}\) Haneyville Citizens Examiner, November 15, 1894; quoted in Rogers, "Agrarianism in Alabama," p. 491.

\(^{113}\) McMillan, op. cit., p. 219.
were discovered. These gave credence to Kolb's contention that he was counted out in the state election.

As the joint session of the house and senate convened to count and publish the votes of the August election, Goodwyn tried to present a petition signed by forty-four legislators protesting the counting of the votes in fifteen Black Belt Counties. As in 1892, he was ruled out of order, and Oates was declared officially elected. Kolb then issued a manifesto in which he declared:

In view of existing conditions in Alabama, I have determined to discharge my full duty to the people of Alabama. I will not fail to respect the pledges which I made to the people who have given me their confidence and stood by me so heroically and devotedly during the past four years. You, fellow citizens, have twice elected me governor of this state, and this time, by the Grace of God and the help of the good people of Alabama, I will be governor. . . . I appeal to my friends and supporters from all parts of the state to be in Montgomery on the first day of December, 1894, there and then to give me their aid and support in a lawful and peaceable manner to vindicate their liberties. 114

On December 1 the candidates of the fusion ticket took the oath of office before a justice of the peace in Montgomery, then with a group of followers marched to the Capitol grounds. Refused permission to speak at the Capitol, Kolb proceeded to the street just outside the Capitol grounds where he delivered his inaugural address from a wagon. As the "rightful Governor," he promised that he would pursue every legal means to have Oates' election set

114 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 21, 1894.
aside; he asked his followers to press the legislature to pass a contest-of-election law but to use moderation and only lawful means.115 When Kolb ended his address his followers pulled him in the wagon down a side street, while the inaugural procession "escorting Governor-elect Oates moved up the broad avenue toward the Capitol."116

This scene ironically symbolized the beginning of the decline of the third party. The agrarian group had not been able to get their "political wagon" into an inaugural procession. Kolb's withdrawal down a "side street" signaled his dropping the reins of active leadership of the party.

After 1894

Politics in Alabama attracted national attention. Senator Allen of Nebraska was one of several United States Congressmen who introduced bills proposing investigation of the 1894 election. He suggested that a committee be appointed:

To make inquiry into whether there is, and for the last two years and a half just past has been, a republican form of government in the State of Alabama, and inquire into the manner of the election of United States Senators and Members of Congress from said State, and whether there was any fraud, force, intimidation or other unfairness in the election in said State.117

115 Ibid.
116 Ibid., December 2, 1894.
As the year 1895 approached, all parties began marshalling forces. Populists saw hope of electing both a governor and president in 1896. Republicans noted the possibility of electing a president, while the Democrats realized that they must take drastic measures to hold the party together on both state and national levels.

The Democrats attracted many of the Jeffersonians back to the party by adopting a platform of free silver and declaring an open door policy, welcoming any person who would promise to vote for the Democratic nominee. More important to the Democratic cause, Kolb refused to run again. Many of his followers refused to support another candidate and returned to the regular party. Thus began the rapid disintegration of the third party in Alabama.

By including Populists' demands in their platform and by waving the banner of white supremacy, the Democrats marshalled sufficient forces to give their candidate, Joseph F. Johnston, a majority of 39,291 over his Populist-Republican opponent, A. T. Goodwyn. They won a majority in the legislature with only nine Populists in the senate and twenty-three Populists and four Republicans in the house. In the November election, the state voted Democratic majorities for Bryan and Sewell, while seating seven congressmen.

\[\text{Allen J. Going, "Critical Months in Alabama Politics, 1895-1896,"}\textit{Alabama Review,} V \text{ (October, 1952)} 275.\]

With the Democratic party securely in power again the political upheaval of the nineties came to an end.
CHAPTER IV

THE SPEAKERS

This chapter discusses the family background, speech education, reputation, and delivery of eleven of the third party leaders. An exhaustive coverage of all reform speakers is not made since there were hundreds who spoke in the third party movement. Detailed study of representative speakers shows what type of men participated as leaders and their methods of influence.

Reuben Francis Kolb

"He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His background was not that of a small farmer," I said Kolb's granddaughter, Mrs. Rubye Richardson Hume.

Reuben F. Kolb, son of David Cameron and Emily Frances (Shorter) Kolb, was born at Eufaula, Alabama, on April 15, 1839. Two years later Kolb's parents died and the maternal grandfather, Reuben C. Shorter, a prominent physician-planter reared the boy. Young Reuben received his education in the public schools of Eufaula and graduated at the age of twenty from the University of North

---

1 Mrs. Rubye Richardson Hume, Conversation with the author on August 22, 1962, Mobile, Alabama.  
78
Carolina. He married Mary Cargile in 1860 and settled down to become a Southern planter with large plantations, first at Selma, and later at Eufaula. He prospered as a planter and took an active interest in politics. As the youngest member of the Secession Convention in 1860, he voted for secession. He joined the army, rose to the rank of captain, and achieved recognition for his command of Kolb's Battery.

After the war he returned to Eufaula and resumed farming. He was active in the Farmer's Alliance, the State Agricultural Society, and the National Farmer's Congress, twice serving the latter group as president. Appointed Commissioner of Agriculture in 1887, he worked to develop and expand his department. The farmers chose him as their spokesman and nominated him in 1890, 1892, and 1894 to lead the third party state ticket.

---

2 Ibid.


4 Kolb was elected president at the Chicago meeting in 1887 and the Montgomery meeting in 1889.

5 As the third party movement declined he returned to the Democratic Party and successfully ran for Commissioner of Agriculture in 1910. In 1914 he was once more a candidate for governor. He died on March 23, 1918, in Montgomery in his eightieth year.
Speech Education

As a boy Kolb heard the speech of educated people who moved in the upper strata of southern society. It was traditional for the men of his family to acquire college educations and to participate in politics. Dr. Shorter, Kolb's grandfather, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and served in both houses of the Georgia legislature before settling in Eufaula. His great-uncle John Gill Shorter graduated from the University of Georgia, served in the Alabama legislature, and was one of the war governors.6 A second great-uncle, Eli Sims Shorter, graduated from Yale College and represented Alabama in the United States Congress where he made "several speeches marked by a defiant boldness."7

Kolb graduated from the University of North Carolina on June 1, 1859, a few months after his twentieth birthday.8 He took the classical curriculum, including courses in Greek, Latin, mathematics, French, ancient and modern history, natural philosophy, chemistry, and rhetoric and logic. In the first term of the sophomore year Kolb wrote compositions


7 Ibid., p. 617.

which were carefully criticized. In the second term he attended lectures on the "Origin and Growth of the English Language."\(^9\) In the junior year he received additional training in composition and speaking when he listened to "lectures on the habits and writing for the proper conduct of the Understanding, Forms and Tribunals of Taste and Criticism, Elocution and the different kinds of Oratory. The class had occasional exercises in extemporaneous speaking and debate."\(^10\) As a senior, Kolb had two recitations weekly in Whately's *Logic* and *Rhetoric*. At the close of the term along with his eighty-five classmates he delivered an original oration. Reverend John Thomas Wheat, D. D., the Professor of Rhetoric and Logic, carefully corrected and supervised this senior speech.\(^11\)

From these studies Kolb acquired a liberal education. His exposure to speech theory of composition and delivery, and practical training in extemporaneous speaking and debate helped to prepare him for the rough and tumble political stump speaking.

**Reputation**

Kolb had outstanding ability to inspire loyalty of the farmers of Alabama. He enjoyed the reputation of being


a "true-blue-blooded Southerner." He was a member of the planter class, a secessionist, and served with distinction as a Confederate officer in campaigns in Kentucky, Eastern Tennessee, and Georgia, receiving a leg wound at the battle of Atlanta. He displayed special heroism in the battle of Chickamauga where a memorial to Kolb's Battery still stands today. After the war he took an active part in making life unpleasant for the carpetbag-scalawag regime. "On one occasion he is said to have taken a handful of whites and routed a large number of riotous Negroes." 12 Kolb also won respect through his own success as a farmer. He started his farming career as a cotton planter. When the panic of 1873 made cotton farming unprofitable, he turned to other crops, developed a prize watermelon which was called the "Kolb Gem," and did a flourishing business shipping melons and seeds to all parts of the country. By 1883 he developed peach and pear orchards and shipped fruit and cuttings. He also furnished seed houses with a variety of vegetable seed. One paper referred to him as the "greatest farmer in Alabama" and held him up as an example to other farmers. 13

As a farmer, Kolb attracted attention throughout

12 Interview with Mrs. Rubye Richardson Hume, from newspaper clippings in her possession.

the South. He used day labor exclusively and made money on fruit and truck crops, while around him cotton farmers were going deeper in debt. Kolb personally dramatized the move against growing cotton to the exclusion of other crops. Farmers had reason to be proud of him when he was elected to the presidency of the National Farmer's Congress.

As Commissioner of Agriculture, Kolb worked to improve the welfare of the farmers. As the second person to be Commissioner, he made the office important in state affairs. DuBose describes him as an active officer and as a "model letter writer" who "had sixty thousand correspondents through the mails... He traveled in every county of the State talking in public on the affairs of his office and in person attending the secret sessions of county and beat Alliances."^^

Kolb greatly extended the activities of the department and in various ways advertised the resources of the state. He outfitted a railroad car, furnished by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, with Alabama products and exhibited this "Alabama on Wheels" to a quarter of a million people in the Mid-West. As a direct result

---

14 Southern Cultivator and Dixie Farmer, quoted in Rogers, "Reuben F. Kolb; Agricultural Leader in the South," p. 118.

of "Alabama on Wheels" Kolb claimed that over a thousand new citizens and investments of a million dollars came to the state. When the Act creating Farmer's Institutes was passed, Kolb set up an active program. He selected able and popular men to do the Institute work and promoted crop-diversification and scientific agriculture. C. L. Newman, a co-worker, believed that in "many ways Kolb was ten decades ahead of his time in interpreting the trends of agriculture." His activities as Commissioner of Agriculture and his participation in the Farmer's Alliance and State Agricultural Society brought him into contact with hundreds of Alabama farmers where his "democratic and affable manner won friends by the thousands...He knew more people personally and was known by more than any other man in the State."18

Personality

His traits of friendliness and good nature won for Kolb the title, "the Genial Reuben." In explaining this nickname, a Democrat who worked against Kolb in 1890 said,


"Kolb was a likable man. Although he was not fat he had the
good nature that we commonly associate with stout people."19
Another contemporary described him as "a gentleman of fine
presence and most engaging manners. He is commonly described
as 'genial' but the word hardly does justice to his cordial
air, his quickness of repartee, and his unassuming direct-
ness."20 Alliance members gave Kolb unusual adulation.
DuBose writes, "at every village his coming was eagerly
anticipated by alliance men and at every board his presence
was a sign of cordial hospitality."21 Miller describes
Kolb as remembering names easily and being the "best hand-
shaker in Alabama."22 In 1891 the Birmingham Age-Herald
referred to him as a "man of magnetism" and quoted a
farmer who said Kolb had "a lovable personality."23
Through his reputation and personality Kolb con-
vinced the small farmers that he represented their cause.

19 J. J. Willett, conversation with the author, July
8, 1953, Anniston, Alabama. Judge Willett was campaign
manager for Crook in the 1890 campaign and participated in
the "Beat Kolb" caucus which nominated Jones.

20 Memorial Record of Alabama, Vol. II (Madison,
Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1893), p. 706.


22 L. D. Miller, History of Alabama (Birmingham:
Roberts and Son, 1900), p. 284.

23 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 22, 1891.
When the Democratic press attacked his character in 1890 the farmers rallied to him. Kolb counter-attacked with the slogan, "A fight against Kolb is a fight against the Alliance." Illustrative of his hold on the people is a statement that a farmer made at a rally in 1892: "I came and brought Katie and the baby to hear the great champion of the people against the bosses."24 Despite two defeats and other disappointments Kolb still held magnetism for his followers in 1894. Even the Montgomery Advertiser admitted that many worshiped him "as the black heathen in the swamps of Africa bend the knee to their wooden idols."25

Appearance and Delivery

A contemporary described Kolb as a "medium sized, nice looking man."26 A reporter saw Kolb as "a man of easy grace, good looks, and excellent oratorical ability,"27 A full black mustache set off his ruddy complexion.

Although Kolb spoke to gatherings ranging in size from fifty to three thousand, there are no reports of an audience being unable to hear him. Commenting on the

24 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 2, 1892.
25 Montgomery Advertiser, April 24, 1894.
27 West Alabamian (Carrollton), July 1, 1891.
Alliance picnic at Midway where Kolb spoke to three thousand people, a reporter wrote, Kolb "spoke in a plain and distinct manner." 28

J. J. Newman observed that "Kolb was a good speaker but not what you would call a fire-brand orator." 29 Another listener agreed, writing, "Kolb is a very earnest, pleasant speaker, making few attempts at oratory, but impresses his audience with the fact that he is in earnest and has full mastery of the subject before him." 30 A third reporter thought that "Captain Kolb improves daily in his public address as his canvass advances in the county; and awakens much enthusiasm." 31

On the majority of occasions Kolb apparently spoke extemporaneously. For example at Clayton it was reported that "he used no manuscript and told his anecdotes with marked effect." 32

Even when speaking extemporaneously, he might carry a stack of papers to the platform and read quotations from newspapers, letters, and former speeches. At Mt. Pinson,

28 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 22, 1891.
30 Monroe Journal (Monroeville), July 26, 1889.
31 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 20, 1891.
32 Birmingham Age-Herald, March 30, 1892.
the reporter observed:

The article in question, an editorial from the Gadsden Leader, was most fulsome in its praise of Captain Kolb, lauding him enthusiastically, and Captain Kolb read the resonant periods with much effect. The next thing read by Captain Kolb was an editorial from the Montgomery Advertiser praising his manly course after his defeat.33

At some formal occasions and before large audiences Kolb read his speeches from manuscript.34 To one audience Kolb said about his manuscript:

Excuse me if I read you my address from manuscript. I have prepared it for this occasion to be delivered before this club. You are probably aware that I have been slashed and maligned and misrepresented as to what I said from every stump almost in this state. I do not desire any prevarication on this occasion and in this place, so you will hear just what I do say!35

33 Ibid., November 21, 1891.

34 For example at the Alliance picnic in Talladega, Kolb "spoke from manuscript." Birmingham Age-Herald, September 25, 1891. At the "Bolters Convention" in 1892, "he read his speech accepting the nomination." Ibid., June 15, 1892. At the Jeffersonian-Populist State Convention in 1894, "Captain Kolb produced a roll of manuscript from which he read his speech." Ibid., February 14, 1894.

35 The Alliance News, October 17, 1891.
At twenty-two years of age, Joseph Columbus Manning, the boy orator, founded the People's Party in Alabama.

Manning, the son of a merchant-preacher, was born May 21, 1870, at Lineville, Alabama. He received his early schooling in Ashland, Alabama, and attended the State Normal College at Florence, graduating in 1888. While in Florence he lived with his brother-in-law, a Methodist preacher. After graduation he went to Texas to manage a book syndicate. He then relocated in Atlanta, Georgia, where he became editor of the American Press Association's news service. After a year in Atlanta he resigned his position in order to return to Alabama for the specific purpose of forming the People's Party. By April, 1892, he established his headquarters in Birmingham. In 1894 he entered the primary election of Clay County as a candidate for the legislature and won. When the People's Party ceased to exist, he joined the Republican Party and moved to New York City.

Speech Education

The early influence of his ministerial upbringing under his father and brother-in-law and later contacts with

liberal journalists and politicians formed a major part of Manning's speech training. In his autobiography Manning described himself as "just the average student"\(^{37}\) at Florence State Normal College. In college he participated in the compulsory weekly exercises in composition and elocution. During the first two years he studied reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and grammar. In the third year he took composition, civil government, Latin, and methods of teaching. In his final year he studied geometry, elocution, English literature, chemistry, Latin, and history of education.\(^{38}\) Concerning these subjects, Manning said, "My mind turned most to literary studies, and to keeping posted on what was going on in the world. I was an outstanding member of the LaFayette Debating Society. I made a great hit in a speech at the annual debate before a large audience."\(^{39}\) In college Manning learned the importance of two techniques which he employed throughout his campaigning: first, he discovered how to mix with and observe people; and secondly, he read widely about the points of view of both Northern and Southern politicians.

---

\(^{37}\) Manning \emph{op. cit.}, p. 24.


\(^{39}\) Manning, \emph{op. cit.}, pp. 24-25.
W. R. Whatley, a lawyer-Baptist preacher-journalist, influenced greatly young Manning who recalled, "He [W. R. Whatley] had a charitable vision toward the human family. He was neither narrow nor bigoted." Whatley's success in defeating the organized Democrats of Clay County in a legislative election encouraged young Manning to do independent political thinking.

Reputation

Manning won admiration for his sincerity, oratorical ability, and belief in his party. After an interview with the boy orator an Age-Herald reporter said: "He was caught by the idea of relief of the people and no doubt conscientiously believing that relief is to be had through the Ocala and St. Louis demands, he went his way. He is very much in earnest..." Manning himself said, "The strength of the movement in this state will shake it from one end to the other when the People's Party supporters arise and put their armor on." Explaining his intensity, he said, "I preached the gospel of human brotherhood until I became known as the 'Clay County Evangel.'"
Manning's earnestness combined with youthful appeal helped to foster his reputation as a speaker. Many reports refer to his boyishness: "Mr. Manning, Populists' boy apostle;"\(^45\) and "Mr. J. C. Manning is a young man... A Clay County boy."\(^46\) Some opponents derided Manning for his youthfulness; one said, "the County does not want a mere boy to represent the people in the Legislature."\(^47\)

Despite his immaturity Manning brought a considerable reputation as an orator to the 1892 canvass. In his autobiography he recalled that "he had found himself" as an orator when he "brought down the house"\(^48\) in a speech in Atlanta. The Birmingham papers labeled him the "People's Party Orator"\(^49\) early in 1892. They further confirmed his reputation by such reports as Manning "in a half-hour speech clearly demonstrated that his fame as a reform orator was well earned."\(^50\)

The national leaders recognized the value of utilizing Manning's talents. He nominated James B. Weaver for President at the National People's Party Convention

\(^45\) *Birmingham Age-Herald*, April 20, 1892.
\(^46\) Ibid., April 13, 1892.
\(^47\) Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
\(^48\) Ibid., p. 27.
\(^49\) *Birmingham Age-Herald*, April 13, 1892.
\(^50\) Ibid., April 20, 1892.
in 1892. In 1893 he toured the West for the Party. A Parsons, Kansas, poster billed him as follows: "Hon J. C. Manning, the best known Alabamian of today and the most noted political orator and statesman in our time, will deliver his famous lecture, 'Alabama Politics, Why and How the State Goes Democratic'; at the opera house. . . ."51

Manning became popular for youthfulness and sincerity. He was adept at putting on a good performance in debate with a large repertory of stories which listeners requested again and again.

Appearance and Delivery

Because he was small, Manning appeared to be younger than he really was.52 As trademarks, he wore a Prince Albert coat and a white ten-gallon hat. However, one newspaper commented that his "voice and manner were anything but youthful," and that he was "expected to revive the drooping spirits of the lonesome Weaverites."53

51 Birmingham Age-Herald, January 26, 1893.
52 Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.
53 Birmingham Age-Herald, January 5, 1893.
He was evidently vigorous and active, or as listeners described him, "a youthful political acrobat" with "regular old-fashioned whoop and hurrah type" delivery. What Manning thought of as being at ease on the platform was regarded by his opponents as "arrogant spirit." However, he impressed both friend and foe. One reporter wrote that he was "irrepressible in his line," and that "his language was as clear-cut and his attempts are as logical as was possible for a third party talk to be."57

There are no reports which indicate that Manning used notes for his speeches. Since he was primarily a stump speaker, he probably spoke extemporaneously.

54 Ibid., January 8, 1893.
55 Ibid., April 20, 1892.
56 Alexander City Outlook, July 13, 1894.
57 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 20, 1892.
Peyton G. Bowman was one of the most controversial figures in the Kolb group. He was the only speaker reported to have appealed directly to Negro voters in a mixed audience. In the campaigns, he served as campaign manager for Kolb.

Bowman was the son of a Methodist minister, born November 9, 1859, in Barnwell County, South Carolina. He attended Wofford College from October 1870 to June 1871 and afterward taught school, while reading law. He moved to Texas where he was admitted to the bar. Upon returning to South Carolina he practiced law until 1888 when he settled in Birmingham, Alabama, to become a partner in the firm of Bowman, Harsh, and Beddow. He gained a reputation as a criminal lawyer.


59 B. L. Scoggins, Registrar and Director of Admissions, Wofford College, Spartanburg, South Carolina. Correspondence to the writer, May 10, 1963.

60 In later life he left Birmingham in 1913 and returned to South Carolina. Shortly after his arrival in Camden he was caught in a hotel fire and jumped from a second story window. The resultant paralysis confined him to a wheel chair the remainder of his life. He died in 1939 in abject poverty. C. M. Stanley, "A Turbulent Leader in Turbulent Times," Montgomery Advertiser, October 22, 1950.
Bowman's varied background as self-made man, teacher, and lawyer influenced his speaking style. During his first semester at Wofford, Bowman took courses in Horace, Demosthenes, Latin and Greek exercises, plane trigonometry, ancient history, and rhetoric. During the second semester, he studied Tacitus, Terence, Euripides, Sophocles, Latin and Greek prose, composition and antiquities, spherical trigonometry, surveying, analytic geometry, ancient history, and rhetoric. In addition he participated in the literary societies. From this list of courses it is evident that Bowman probably received a liberal arts background which contributed to his speeches. After leaving Wofford, he taught school and read law in order to pass the Texas bar examination. He combined his two years of classical training with his practice in the criminal court to develop into a poised speaker, a master of sarcasm and ridicule. He was reported to be a strange mixture of a self-made man and an educated gentleman.

61 Scoggin, op. cit.

62 At Mt. Pinson a reporter described one of his performances as being "skillfully done, he ringing all the changes on 'colored', 'black', 'niggers', and 'coons', and convulsing the audience with laughter." Birmingham Age-Herald, November 17, 1891.
Reputation

C. H. Stanley, a reporter on the Age-Herald during the 1890's, referred to Bowman as a "turbulent leader in turbulent times." He further called him a "dictatorial and opinioned man who had gained the place he attained in his profession and in public life by exceptional ability."\^3 Bowman's outstanding characteristics were his popularity, courage, and arrogance. By his refusal to run for office he created the image of a fighter for farmer's rights. Bowman enjoyed popularity which few speakers shared. One reporter wrote that "his sharp thrusts, his witty speeches and his general way of saying things raised the wildest applause."\^4 At the 1892 Jeffersonian-Populist convention the Age-Herald noted Bowman raised "the most extraordinary storm." It continued, "There is no use denying it . . . but this man Bowman aroused his hearers to a frenzy of excitement and enthusiasm. Hats were waved in the air, and the tumult of applauding and shouts made one's ears to ache."\^5 Among his friends Bowman was considered a man of great courage; among his opponents, he was thought of as "being a bulldozer."\^6

\^3 Stanley, op. cit.
\^4 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 17, 1891.
\^5 Ibid., September 16, 1892.
\^6 The Republican, June 16, 1894.
In June, 1894, he shot and killed Eugene Jeffers, but he was released on the grounds of self defense. Typical of the publicity given this matter, the Age-Herald declared, "Bowman's local reputation is that of a turbulent man when in liquor, and he has had many encounters." Another report reminded the readers that he "first gained notoriety as an anti-railroad lawyer, prosecuting many damage suits against railroads. An effort that was made to disbar him from practice on account of his alleged shady methods failed." In August of the same year Bowman was placed under a peace bond when he threatened to "cowhide" a Birmingham newspaper editor. When he was served the summons, Bowman tore and threw the paper away, explaining later that he did not know what it was. Exemplifying the feeling Bowman aroused is the following account:

In the wild Kolb-Oates days, in the Eufaula Courthouse, he faced a hostile crowd with calmness, when he knew that right behind him was a man armed with a large knife, ready to plunge it into his back, and with pistols drawn all around him and pointing at him. Said a Eufaula citizen to this writer: 'I hate him, but he is the bravest man I ever saw.' He did not flinch when many whites were rushing out of the

67 Birmingham Age-Herald, September 16, 1894.

68 The Republican, June 16, 1894.

69 Birmingham Age-Herald, August 9, 1894.
courthouse, and a number of negroes were going out of the second-story windows. He did not take back a word he had said, and he denounced some Eufaula men unsparingly. 70

Appearance and Delivery

Bowman apparently was a man of impressive physique; the tall South Carolinian usually dressed in a "shining Prince Albert and a soft felt black hat." 71 A listener described him as "tall, well-proportioned, with a fine head and eye; but he did not impress us as being a man of more than ordinary ability. If his features were softened down a little by goodness, he would pass very well for a popular city clergyman." 72 Stanley wrote that Bowman "was a man of very engaging manners and handsome to an unusual degree.... The Bowman spade beard was neat beneath ruddy cheeks." 73 While speaking Bowman frequently gave unruly performances. Once he struck at a Democratic opponent with a water pitcher. 74 At several Democratic rallies, he demanded that he be given time to speak. 75 He particularly enjoyed satire and invective.

70 Montgomery Advertiser, October 29, 1950.
71 Ibid., October 22, 1950.
72 Piedmont Inquirer, October 6, 1894.
73 Stanley, op. cit.
74 Montgomery Advertiser, July 11, 1892.
75 Birmingham Age-Herald, December 5, 1891.
Bowman evidently adapted his language to his audience. Stanley reported that "he could be a most finished orator but he spoke the language of the man in the street as well." The Republican noted that "Bowman's influence among the farmers and laborers was great because he appealed more to their passions and prejudices than to reason. He was an orator of ability and regarded as a dangerous man." Comparing Bowman with other speakers, the Age-Herald wrote that "Most of the other Kolb orators were merely Bowmans on a lesser scale, imitators without his dash and wit and knack of saying things to catch the imagination of the mob."

There is no record of Bowman's using a manuscript in delivery, although he did read portions of newspaper articles. On the stump he probably spoke extemporaneously.

76 Stanley, op. cit.
77 The Republican, June 16, 1894.
78 Birmingham Age-Herald, August 1, 1894.
Albert Taylor Goodwyn

Albert Taylor Goodwyn represented the Southern-planter gentleman in the Kolb group. Goodwyn was born at Robinson Springs, Alabama, on December 17, 1842, the son of Albert Gallatin and Harriet (Bibb) Goodwyn. His father was a physician-planter. Goodwyn received his early schooling at the Robinson Springs Academy and in 1859 enrolled at South Carolina College. When the Civil War interrupted his education he served first with the South Carolina Cadets and later as a lieutenant with the 58th Alabama Infantry Regiment. He fought at Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, and was captured at the battle of Missionary Ridge. While a prisoner at Johnson's Island he received promotion to the rank of Captain. He was decorated with the Confederate Cross of Honor. After the war he attended the University of Virginia, graduating in 1867 in the School of Moral Philosophy. Upon his return to Alabama he began farming. In 1869 he married Priscilla Cooper, grand-daughter of ex-President John Tyler. The Democrats elected him State Inspector of Convicts, 1874-1880; and state representative, 1886-1887. He joined the Populist Party and served as


state senator, 1892-1896, and as United States repre­
representative, 1895-1897. He ran unsuccessfully as Populist
candidate for governor in 1896, and for representative to
congress in 1898. When the Populist Party declined, he
returned to the Democratic Party. 81

Speech Education

Goodwyn's planter-aristocracy upbringing and school­
ing formed major influences of his speech education. In the
home of his planter-physician father, he probably learned
the aristocratic attitudes which later marked his career.
His grand-daughter wrote that,

Albert believed that to labor with the hands in
the fields was degrading. He had grown to manhood
in a social condition which left all manual labor
for slaves and he could not quite readjust to the
new era. 82

During his two years at South Carolina College he
was active in the Euphradian Literary Society and made
outstanding marks in Greek and mathematics. He also studied
history, political philosophy, political economy, elocution,
chemistry, moral philosophy, sacred literature, Latin, and
logic and rhetoric. 83

---

81 In 1928 he served as Commander-in-Chief of the
United Confederate Veterans. Goodwyn died on July 2, 1931.
Ibid.


83 Maximilian La Borde, History of the South Carolina
College (Charleston: Walker, Evans and Cogswell, Printers,
1874), p. 447.
Reputation

Although he never inspired the loyalty from Alabama farmers which Kolb enjoyed, Goodwyn brought to the campaigns many of the same elements of reputation which distinguished the genial Reuben.

Like Kolb, Goodwyn belonged to the planter class; he was a decorated Confederate veteran, worked to restore white supremacy, and aligned himself with state Democratic Party leaders.

However, his reputation differed from Kolb's in several ways. First, Goodwyn never readjusted to the new agricultural era. When he failed as a farmer, he was forced to sell all but 250 acres of his plantation, placing him on an equal footing with other farmers who suffered from hard times. Nevertheless, he never forsook the image of himself as a "planter."

A second facet of Goodwyn's reputation was his political connections. Kolb never held an elective office. Goodwyn held several and in the minds of many farmers was a former member of the "Democratic machine" who could not completely be trusted.

Appearance and Delivery

Goodwyn "was around six feet in height, wore a
full mustache, and bore himself with dignity." A reporter described Goodwyn as having a "pleasant bearing and impressive voice." On occasion, "Goodwyn made a rather passionate speech in favor of Captain Kolb's contentions." He impressed another listener as "loaded for blood... and looked savage enough to take it at once...." A third person described Goodwyn as an orator who "whipped the audience to a frenzy of applause."

Kolb, Manning, Bowman, and Goodwyn are major figures in the Alabama third party movement. In actions and characteristics they were probably mirrored by the other Populist speakers.

Minor Speakers

Samuel Memory Adams

Samuel Memory Adams, Baptist minister, was born the son of Alford A. and Elizabeth (McGough) Adams, on December 10, 1853, at Summerfield, Alabama. He attended the county

84 Mrs. Louise Goodwyn Mustin Faircloth, conversation with the writer, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, March 1958.
85 Sand Mountain Signal, July 12, 1895.
86 Prattville Progress, December 2, 1892.
87 Montgomery Advertiser, April 12, 1894.
88 Ozark Banner, June 14, 1893.
89 Clipping from Troy Messenger, July 25, 1889, in the Pike County folder, Alabama State Department of Archives and History.
schools, and Howard College for a few weeks, but he received most of his education from private tutors. 90

After ordination into the Missionary Baptist Church in March, 1881, Adams served churches in Autauga, Bibb, Chilton, Dallas and Perry Counties. In contrast to those Populists who received training in classical rhetoric and participated in debating societies, Adams gained his speaking experience in the pulpit. He represented Bibb County in the "Grange Legislature" of 1888-89 as a Democrat. He settled in Chilton County in 1890, joined the Populist Party, and became county probate judge from 1899-1905. He was president of the Alabama State Farmer's Alliance from 1887-1893. 91

Adams was a stocky man, wore a full beard and mustache. Because of his red hair, he earned the title "the red-headed parson." 92

Alliance leader Adams enjoyed the respect and loyalty of the Alabama farmers. He used the power delegated to his office of State Alliance President to order boycotts of anti-Alliance newspapers. 93 He frequently


91 He served in the Alabama State Senate from 1919-1923. He died on March 30, 1932.

92 Montgomery *Advertiser*, July 14, 1894.

93 Cf. Chapter III.
quoted scripture and reminded listeners that he was a minister and "would say nothing that he would not say in the pulpit." 94

In one speech he said that he would rather "burn his arm off at the shoulder" than vote for incumbent U. S. Senator John Tyler Morgan. Thereafter, he was called "Burn his arm off at the shoulder" Adams. 95

Newspapers criticized Adams as a repetitious speaker. 96 They also chided him for lack of accuracy when he suggested that "Cleveland and John Sherman were doing the South more harm than the latter did when he went through Georgia, killing people and destroying their property." Since the Sherman to whom Adams referred was not the one who marched through Georgia, a paper commented that he needed "posting in the history of the 'late unpleasantness.'" 97

William H. Skaggs

William H. Skaggs, a member of "an old Alabama family" and young Democrat who left the party after the

94 Piedmont Inquirer, July 14, 1894.
95 Ibid.
96 Examples are:
"Mr. Adams then made the same familiar argument, often quoted in these columns." Birmingham Age-Herald, June 1, 1892.
"Captain Kolb and Mr. Adams spoke here today. They made the regulation speeches." Ibid., July 27, 1892.
97 Piedmont Inquirer, July 14, 1894.
election frauds of 1892, was born in Talladega County, Alabama. Left fatherless, he assumed almost complete support of his mother, thereby limiting the time he could spend in the public schools. At the age of twenty-four he became mayor of Talladega, inaugurated a progressive administration which encouraged fire companies, and established a city water system, public school system, and bank. In 1888 the Birmingham Age-Herald thought that "Mr. Skaggs is a very progressive young man" and that such young men ... must shape [the South's] course. Those who live only in the past cannot." By 1892 Skaggs created a statewide reputation as a politician and speaker. The Age-Herald declared him to be "one of the finest impromptu orators, on any subject, in Alabama," and predicted that "he would be more prominent before the people."100

In 1892 the producers of the play Alabama invited Skaggs to represent the state and to speak at Palmer's Theater in New York City on the occasion of the first performance. "His speech was well received."101

98 Nashville [Tennessee] Banner, 1896. This clipping is in the Skaggs family folder in the Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

99 Clipping from the Birmingham Age-Herald, 1888, in the Skaggs family folder.

100 Ibid., 1892.

101 Unidentified clipping in Skaggs family folder.
When Skaggs, appalled by the 1892 election frauds, joined the Kolb group in 1894, the conservative papers resented his leaving the Democratic Party; consequently they never reported favorably his speeches. Both the Birmingham Age-Herald and the Montgomery Advertiser labeled his speaking as "harangues." The reform press defended Skaggs' reputation as a speaker. The Ozark Banner wrote that during a three hour and twenty minute speech, "Not more than twenty or thirty went to dinner till the close of the speech. This fact shows that Mr. Skaggs is an entertainer from way back. His audience would have remained there till night overtook them if Mr. Skaggs had continued to talk to them."  

In 1896 Skaggs spoke before the Hamilton Club of Chicago on "The Passing of the Solid South" in which he advanced the theme of abolishing "all political considerations that have grown out of past conditions, to create what he calls 'the American South.'"  

The Chicago Sunday Times-Herald, said of the speech: Many voices from the southland have stirred Northern listeners of late years with messages of fealty to the flag. The silver-tongued Grady, the heroic Gordon, the scholarly Watterson have touched

102 Montgomery Advertiser, July 31, 1894.; Birmingham Age-Herald, August 5, 1894.  
103 Ozark Banner, July 5, 1894.  
Northern hearts with a sense of the willingness of the South to forget the bitterness of the past and take up the issues of the present, which vitally concern our national prosperity and in the solution of which must apply a patriotism that is bounded by no section but is as wide as the continent. The speech of Mr. Skaggs adds another to the many forceful appeals from the South to the North to cease scolding the conquered and reconstructed, and help the vanquished work out the destiny of a country rich in industrial and commercial possibilities.

Warren Stone Reese

Warren S. Reese joined the third party forces as one of the founders of the Citizens' Alliance. Born to well-to-do parents at Sylacauga in 1842, he had a background similar to that of Kolb and other Populist speakers. His father was a Virginia physician who had served as Mayor of Selma before the War of Secession. Reese attended country schools and completed his education at Marion Institute, Marion, Alabama.


106 Owen, op. cit., Vol. IV, 1422.
Serving with distinction during the Civil War, Reese received promotion to the rank of Colonel for gallantry on the field of Chickamauga. He was the youngest colonel in the Army of the Tennessee. After the war he settled in Montgomery, Alabama, as a planter and cotton merchant. From 1885 until 1889 he was mayor of Montgomery and attended the 1887 Paris Exposition as a commissioner for President Cleveland.  

Reese attempted to identify the members of the Citizens' Alliance with the farmer. He analyzed the critical economic conditions and advised his farmer audiences that "everybody must stick together and work together for a better life." His reputation as a Confederate veteran, his Southern heritage, and his political background probably enhanced his effectiveness. Defeated as third party candidate for United States senator in 1896, he spent a fortune contesting the election. He died in Montgomery in 1898.

E. T. Taliaferro

E. T. Taliaferro, popular lawyer who refused to bolt the Democratic Party with Kolb in 1892, was born in

107 Ibid.

in Paris, Tennessee, in 1848, son of Edwin T. and Jane B. (Pope) Taliaferro. Moving his family to Madison County in Alabama in 1866, the elder Taliaferro combined his practice of medicine with service in the state legislature. Young Taliaferro completed a common school education and attended Manchester College, Manchester, Tennessee, for two years. In 1868 he began to study law under John C. Brown of Pulaski, Tennessee, who later became governor of the state. Three years later Taliaferro passed the bar examination and practiced law in Pulaski until 1883. He built a reputation as a capable lawyer and politician. Elected to the Tennessee legislature in 1876, he served as speaker of the House of Representatives. He was permanent president of the judicial convention to nominate five Supreme Court Judges. He received the honor of serving on a committee of the twelve outstanding lawyers of the state. In 1885 he moved to Birmingham and joined the Kolb group in 1891.

"Colonel Taliaferro in person presents a striking figure. Over six feet tall, erect as an Indian, and with a high intellectual cast of features, he commands attention at a glance." Taliaferro's height and carriage earned him the title "the tall sycamore of Jefferson."

---

109 Owen, op. cit., p. 1642.
110 *Jefferson County and Birmingham, Historical and Biographical* (Birmingham: Teeple and Smith Publisher, 1887), p. 341.
111 Troy *Messenger*, March 10, 1892.
He had the reputation of an orator in both Alabama and Tennessee. One reporter described his delivery as being a "most impressive and oratorical style." A second reporter wrote that Taliaferro's speech was "so forceful, yet so chaste and dignified, that it excited continuous applause and laughter." He was respected as an orator and enjoyed a favorable press. Taliaferro's failure to follow the Kolb group out of the Democratic Party was a loss to the Jeffersonian cause. In 1893 he moved to New York City after which there is no record of his activities.

Adolphus Parker Longshore

Adolphus Parker Longshore is a second example of the local politician who made good with the backing of the Farmers' Alliance. Born on September 16, 1854, near Hickory Flat, he received his early education in the public schools of Chambers and Coosa Counties. He attended Washington and Lee University but failed to graduate because of lack of funds. Longshore read law and was admitted to the bar in 1878. He received the support of the Farmers' Alliance and was elected to the state legislature four times. In 1898 he was elected probate judge of Shelby County and held that office until 1917.

112 Ibid.
113 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 29, 1891.
114 Owen, op. cit., p. 1069.
Longshore pulled no punches in his speaking. In his 1894 campaigning he demonstrated this characteristic by severe attacks on the national and state administrations. One of his listeners described him in retrospect as being a "fire-eating southern orator."

Frank Baltzell

Frank Baltzell, editor and Alliance leader, was born at Oak Hill, Florida, June 3, 1850. His father, General Frank Baltzell, was active in politics and served during the war as receiver of the western division of Florida.

Young Frank received his education at Marianna and Knox Hill, Florida. He left school in 1867 and became editor-proprietor of the Courier at Marianna. He studied law and was admitted to the bar to practice before the Supreme Court of Florida in 1872. In 1873, he received a complimentary vote for United States senator but, being under age, could not be a candidate. Moving to Alabama in 1874, he edited the Troy Enquirer and served in the state legislature. When the Alliance established the Alliance Herald, Baltzell became its editor.

\[115\] Longshore Family Folder, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

\[116\] Newman, op. cit.

\[117\] Memorial Record of Alabama, (Brant and Fuller Co., Madison, Wisconsin), Vol. II, 636.

\[118\] Owen, op. cit., Vol. III, 86.
As a lawyer-editor Baltzell earned the admiration of the third party and the bitter enmity of the Democrats. His opposition admitted that he "wielded a trenchant pen" and that he could "make even error look plausible."\textsuperscript{119}

Baltzell's speeches followed his journalistic practice of attacking the Democrats. He was particularly effective in creating images of the political and social conditions and placing the blame for all wrongs on the Democrats.

Oliver Day Street

Oliver Day Street exemplified the third party politicians who were successful on the local level. He was born December 6, 1861, at Warrenton, Alabama, son of Thomas A. and Julia Ann (Beard) Street. The elder Street was probate judge of Marshall County and major of the 49th Alabama Regiment in the Confederate Army.

Oliver Street graduated from the Guntersville public schools and attended the University of Alabama where he received his L.L.B. degree in 1888. While in law school he was associate editor of the \textit{Tuscaloosa Times}. He was an active member of the third party, speaking frequently throughout Marshall County. In a debate with Governor Jones in 1892, he earned a name for himself as a debater.

Street seemed to enjoy debating, frequently entertaining his audience by the skillful handling of opponents' arguments. 120

At the end of the Populist movement he became a Republican and received several political appointments from national Republican administrations. 121

Summary

Each of the eleven men considered represented a particular group who spoke for the reform cause. J.C. Manning, boy orator with a national reputation, led the Populist Party speakers. P.G. Bowman, fire-brand emotionalist, spoke as one of the lawyer group who joined Kolb. A.T. Goodwyn personified the planter group who shared the economic distress of the small farmer. S.M. Adams was representative both of the ministers who were active for reform and of all the Alliance officers who talked in the agrarian revolt. W.H. Skaggs, successful local politician and idealist, was one of the "new-South" advocates who left the Democratic Party to protest fraudulent election practices. W.S. Reese, lawyer-planter, led non-Alliancemen into the Citizen's Alliance. E.T. Taliaferro, extremely capable lawyer, symbolized those

120 O.D. Street Papers, Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library, University of Alabama, University, Alabama.

who spoke for Kolb as Democrats but refused to become Jeffersonians. Frank Baltzell was representative of the reform press editors who were also speakers. A. P. Longshore and O. D. Street, successful office holders as Democrats and Jeffersonians, exemplified the local politicians who succeeded with the backing of the Farmers' Alliance. Reuben F. Kolb, successful farmer-planter, led the farmers as a "political Moses." He was the only third party leader who remained in the political spotlight after 1896. Other speakers were popular but never received the respect and loyalty given Kolb.

Seven of the speakers were in the twenty-two to forty year age bracket and four in that of forty-four to fifty-three, indicating the probability that while persons of all ages spoke in the third party movement, the younger speakers were in the majority. Although they spoke for the small farmers, the leaders were not of that class. They were all members of "old families," six being from families who had some degree of formal education. Seven attended college and the other four educated themselves. Seven had held office as Democrats and five were successful Jeffersonian office seekers. Three were members of the southern planter class, had been Confederate officers, and had helped overthrow the Reconstruction government.
CHAPTER V

OCCASIONS AND AUDIENCES

In 1890 Kolb and his supporters campaigned within the Democratic Party at Farmers' Institutes and Alliance meetings held at places convenient for farmers to gather, outdoors when weather permitted, otherwise at the courthouse, school, church, or cotton warehouse. Institutes were often all-day affairs with socializing during the noon period. At the regularly scheduled meetings of sub, county, or district Alliances, political speakers talked after the adjournment of the secret session of the group.¹

In 1890 the contest was waged mainly between the conservative newspapers and the Kolb speakers. In 1892 a battery of speakers joined the Democratic papers in challenging the third party. A few days after Kolb announced for governor the Age-Herald reported:

A member of the democratic state executive committee said yesterday; 'Applications for democratic speakers are pouring in upon the committee and it will be difficult to supply the demand. Clubs are being organized in many counties and the people are clamoring for men who can give them information upon the great questions of the hour.'

¹ Alliance rules forbade discussion of any non-Alliance matter at the regular session. Also, the secret meeting was adjourned in order to allow non-Alliancemen to hear political speeches.
It has been many years since so much interest was manifested in party questions and if it keeps up we may look for the organization of a hundred or two clubs throughout the state.2

The Bourbon papers publicized one hundred and sixty-three rallies at which eighty-five Democratic speakers delivered a total of three hundred and three speeches. Both factions admitted and an actual count of listed speeches suggests that the anti-Kolb groups put a large speaking force into the field. In July, 1892, Kolb told an Attalla rally that "at that very moment there were 100 speakers addressing the people of Alabama and denouncing him."3 In later describing the opposition Kolb said that "over five hundred speakers of the organized democracy were on the stump day and night, and on the last day of the campaign over 1000 speeches were made in Alabama against us."4

Newspapers reported that thirty-five Kolb speakers delivered a total of one hundred and forty speeches at eighty-six places. Kolb, Bowman, Adams, and Taliaferro made ninety-six of these appearances, while national third party leaders delivered three.5

---

2 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 26, 1891.

3 Ibid. July 20, 1892.

4 People's Reflector, n.d., September, 1892.

5 National Party leaders were in Alabama to attend the Birmingham Jeffersonian-Populist Convention in September, 1892, cf. Chapter II.
Speaking Occasions

1892 Campaign

Occasions for speaking in 1891, like those of 1890, were usually the scheduled meetings of the Department of Agriculture and Alliance outings and conventions.

Annual summer outings were usually planned as all-day picnics or barbecues under the sponsorship of local, county, and district Alliances. The grand rally of the season was the annual meeting of the State Alliance. Traveling on foot, by horse-back, buggy, wagon, and train, many families gathered for this outstanding social event. Those coming from long distances frequently arrived the night before and camped in tents or on the ground under their wagons. They enjoyed the food, socialized with their friends, and listened as the orators extolled the cause of the Order. Groves, springs, and school and church yards served as areas for the gatherings. The programs included a round of speeches in the morning, the noon meal, and a second round of speeches in the afternoon. The orator of the day usually spoke at the morning program so that he could move on in the afternoon to another engagement. Kolb made an outing speech on each of four

6[Birmingham Age-Herald, August 7, September 25, 1891.]
successive days.\textsuperscript{7} This arrangement also insured that all listeners, even those from long distances, who had to leave soon after the noon meal, would hear the principal speaker. Since many had to leave in time for evening chores, the afternoon session seldom lasted over two or three hours.

Preliminary arrangements consisted most often of little more than selecting the largest area of shade and providing a makeshift platform such as a wagon bed or table. Sometimes speakers utilized steps of churches or schoolhouses. Listeners either stood, or sat on whatever seats they could find. More elaborate preparation was to be expected for the meeting of the State Alliance. At Brundidge the local Alliance constructed a brush arbor to shade the onlookers, and the ladies "Prepared the speaker's stand and wreathed it with the products of these splendid farms."\textsuperscript{8} Those who came enjoyed themselves and expected to be entertained and stimulated at these festive outings.

Whenever possible, bands or musical groups entertained. At a Brownsville Alliance barbecue the summer singing school provided two hours of what was reported as "delightful music."\textsuperscript{9} At an Alliance picnic at Bessemer a "brass band and a committee met Kolb at the train."\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., July 22, 24, 25, 26, 1891.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., August 12, 1891.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., July 25, 1891.
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., May 3, 1891.
At the State meeting the crowd marched in a procession to the speaking area.

There were 3,200 men in the procession which was headed by S. M. Adams, riding in a cart drawn by a single spotted ox. The cart was ornamented by ears of corn around its body and a shelter of oats on top. Just in front and on top of the cover of oats was a solitary and upright corn cob. This was typical of the popular belief that in the next campaign, Captain Kolb will surmount Colonel Oates. In front suspended over the ox, was a pretty ornamented red banner with the motto, "My first plow horse." Quite a number of ladies marched in the procession.\footnote{11}{Ibid., August 13, 1891.}

In some instances the Alliance outing, similar to the protracted church meeting, extended over several days. People camped at the site, and different speakers presented a variety of Alliance-related subjects each day.\footnote{12}{Ibid., August 19, 1891.} Speaking conditions were not the best. Listeners were likely to be hot and annoyed by flies and mosquitoes. Children, made to sit, were restless; those allowed to play were noisy. The size of the gatherings made it necessary for the speakers to strain to be heard, although evidently they were audible since no reports mentioned difficulty in hearing. Because the gatherings were not political, speakers had to exercise some care in relating their subjects to Alliance activities.

After he announced his candidacy, Kolb campaigned to win delegates to the Democratic State Convention. A
group of lawyers including P. G. Bowman, J. J. Altman, E. T. Taliaferro, W. F. Reese, and Augustus Hobson gave him their support. Local friends arranged speaking engagements at county beat meetings, Alliance gatherings, rallies, and conventions. Just prior to county elections, speakers canvassed to win delegates to the state convention. In Tuscaloosa County, Jones and Kolb spoke "to large audiences at the appointed times and places as arranged by their friends."

At the Labor Day celebration in Birmingham, Kolb rode in a parade from the city out to Lakeview where he spoke in a pavilion to a large audience of laborers. Colonel Everett, Georgia Alliance leader, and Kolb also spoke at the last Alliance barbecue at Talladega. Ladies made special preparation for a speaker's platform on which "Kolb [was] spelled out in ears of corn."

Political rallies began in November, 1891, and continued until the state convention in June, 1892. According to the reports, Kolbites made six speeches in court rooms, three in city opera houses, one each in a church, school, cotton compress shed, depot platform, Alliance warehouse, porch of a land office, and four in various halls around Birmingham. Although in most instances the speakers

13 Ibid., February 24, 1892.
14 Birmingham Age-Herald, September 6, 1891.
15 Ibid., September 25, 1891.
themselves were the sole attraction, at Erswell Hall in Birmingham a band played "Dixie" after the speeches.\textsuperscript{16} Following a rally in the mining camps, the speaker of the evening and the wife of one of the mine officials customarily led a dance. At the end of one of these dances, Jones kissed his partner. A week later in the same location Kolb led the dance and kissed his partner twice. The papers reported this as the "kissing contest."\textsuperscript{17}

The Democrats scheduled joint appearances to gain Alliance listeners. R. H. Clark, a prominent Democrat, wrote to Governor Jones:

\begin{quote}
A discussion excites the partisan Alliance spirit of even moderate men of the order, influenced and crowded on by the extremists. I don't see how any good can be accomplished without getting at the ears of those we wish to influence. \textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

Eight months after Clark's letter to Jones the governor remarked that the only thing he regretted about an Opelika speech was "that he did not have more Kolb men to speak to."\textsuperscript{19} The 1892 newspapers recorded six debates. Frequently both factions competed for listeners. In Tuscaloosa County, Jones supporters charged that Kolb men

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., December 12, 1891.
\textsuperscript{17} New York Tribune, December 26, 1891, quoted in Birmingham Age-Herald, January 1, 1892.
\textsuperscript{18} R. H. Clark to Governor Jones, September 21, 1891, Thomas Goode Jones Papers, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.
\textsuperscript{19} Birmingham Age-Herald, April 28, 1892.
arranged dates specially to interfere with Governor Jones' appointments. The Kolbites replied "that they had not been consulted in the making of the Governor's appointments and they preferred to attend to their own dates."^20

After the state convention, Jeffersonians sought to win voters first in the state election and then in the national election. At third party rallies Kolb and two other party leaders usually spoke, and audience spirit ran high. In several instances riots were barely averted. At Tuscaloosa the Populists placed a wagon bed with a stand and a pitcher of water in the street near the courthouse and provided a brass band to "drum up the crowd."^21 At Opelika a reception committee met the speaker at the train and escorted him to the courthouse. A reporter described the arrangements at Attalla:

A farmer's wagon was driven under a live oak that formed half of a natural arch and this wagon was a speaker's stand. The crowd stood in the shade of the big oak and other trees. No seats were provided and the bolters stood for hours with wonderful patience, seeing the weather was intensely hot and there was no water or other refreshment near at hand.^22

At Guntersville, Alliancemen erected an arbor with a seating capacity of two thousand for the Jones-Street debate.

---

21 Tuscaloosa *Gazette*, July 28, 1892.
22 Birmingham *Age-Herald*, July 20, 1892.
Led by a brass band, citizens marched from town in a procession. At the Talladega Alliance rally, the only occasion of its type reported, a Negro was included among those speaking to the white audience.23

After the state election, the Jeffersonian-Populists held a fusion convention in Birmingham at a resort hotel to nominate congressional candidates and presidential electors. Generals James B. Weaver and James G. Field and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Lease24 spoke for the People's Party, and Kolb and Manning spoke to consolidate attitude against the state and national Democratic Party. They delivered their speeches from the steps of the hotel. A brass band played "lively tunes" and People's Party campaign buttons were "hawked among the crowd."25

1894 Campaign

During the 1894 campaign, newspapers reported that thirty third party speakers delivered 365 speeches at 186 occasions while Democratic orators gave 316 speeches at 263 occasions. These reports indicate considerable increase over the 1892 speech activity for both groups.

The principal third party occasions for speech-making were political conventions and rallies.

23 Ibid., July 20, 1892.
24 Cf. Chapter II.
25 Montgomery Advertiser, September 16, 1892.
They were advertised at Alliance meetings, in the newspapers, by handbill, and word of mouth. At the county conventions, Jeffersonians elected delegates to the state convention which in turn chose the party slate. Speeches on these occasions usually affirmed briefly the national third party doctrine and dealt at greater length with specific Alabama campaign issues. Both Populists and Jeffersonians, singly and jointly, sponsored rallies. The Tuscaloosa Journal announced such a meeting as follows:

The candidates of the Jeffersonian Democratic ticket of Tuscaloosa will address the people on the political issues of the day at the following named dates and places. We respectfully invite the people of all political parties to come out and hear us. The ladies are especially invited to be present: . . .

Some rallies met in conjunction with the Farmers' Alliance. Kolb clubs and party committees on local, county, and state levels sponsored others. Frequently a third party affair was scheduled as, or became, a joint discussion or debate with Democratic speakers. For example, a "joint discussion" was advertised for Woodlawn and Mary Lee and a debate

26 The Montgomery Advertiser reported, "Letters and circulars were flooded over the county and each Kolbite appointed himself a committee to arouse interest in the speakers." April 24, 1894.

27 Tuscaloosa Journal, July 11, 1894.

28 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 31, 1894.

29 Ibid., July 15, 1894.
When Jeffersonians turned down requests for joint speakings, the "Regulars" often scheduled competing meetings. Such was the case at China Grove where the Democrats and Jeffersonians both met within a few hundred yards of each other. In like manner the Selma Democrats called in one of the party leaders to speak at the same time that Kolb was scheduled to appear.32

Speechmaking occurred in a variety of places, including courthouses, opera houses, school buildings, and town halls.

Both parties planned summer rallies at groves, schoolyards, and street corners to provide room for large audiences. Barbecues and basket dinners drew large crowds.37

30 Ibid., July 5, 1894.
31 Troy Messenger, July 25, 1894.
32 The Jeffersonian, July 27, 1894.
33 Montgomery Advertiser, March 18, 1894.
34 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 3, 1894.
35 Piedmont Inquirer, October 6, 1894.
36 Birmingham Age-Herald, January 8, 1894.
37 Outdoor occasions were advertised for Oates and other Democrats at York, Foster's, Sulphur Springs, Attalla, and Ashville; Birmingham Age-Herald, July 10, 19, 20, 14, 15; August 3, 1894. Jeffersonians advertised outdoor meetings at Mt. Pinson, Mary Lee, Catalpa, Dothan, Munford, Birmingham; Birmingham Age-Herald, July 7, 13, 15, 27, August 4, 5, 1894.
Preliminary arrangements provided bands, decorations, and a stand for the speaker as at Wetumpka where "a splendid brass band from Dadeville spiced the regular proceedings with good music." At the speaking at China Grove the crowd was "stirred by the thrilling notes of 'Dixie' from the Union Springs Brass band..." "Lumber from the mills of the Tuscaloosa Lumber Company hard by, furnished ample material for temporary seats and tables" for a barbecue in a Tuscaloosa County rally. Some committees provided for the comfort of the speaker while others made no arrangements for speaking platforms. When Kolb and Oates debated in Limestone County, "they spoke from a little stand under an immense white oak tree which shaded the crowd." At Selma "Captain Kolb, under the shade of an oak near the bridge entrance, had his say..." Sometimes goodnatured horseplay was included in the arrangements:

A procession of about seventy-five people came into Clayton early this morning headed by two snow-white horses as fat as butter balls covered with corn cobs and brought up in the rear by one

---

38 Montgomery Advertiser, July 10, 1894.
39 The Jeffersonian, July 27, 1894.
40 Tuscaloosa Times, July 19, 1893.
41 Birmingham Age-Herald, August 1, 1894.
42 The Jeffersonian, May 4, 1894.
of the worst looking specimens of horseflesh ever beheld by human eyes with oats tied to his tail. Soon after arriving in town this jaded animal was led around the square and exhibited to the many spectators with the oats still dangling from his tail. 43

An added attraction in mining communities was the dance which followed the speaking. 44 Democrats at the edge of the crowd, livening up the meeting at Lewisburg, paraded with signs such as "Say neighbor, White Man or Republican?" and "Negro, Republican, and Snolligoffer--Three of a Kind." 45

Third party speakers addressed Alliance meetings, political rallies, and conventions held both indoors in whatever hall was available and outdoors at picnics and barbecues. They competed with Democratic speakers for audiences, sometimes scheduling conflicting meetings in the same area. They also arranged joint speakings and debates. Corn cobs became a badge for Kolb supporters. Both Democrats and third partyites made visual puns on speakers' names.

Audiences

General Audience Attitudes

Before analyzing any specific audience it is well to mention that conditions common to third party groups

43 Ozark Banner, June 14, 1894.
44 Birmingham Age-Herald, October 21, 1894.
45 Ibid., October 20, 1894.
throughout the movement were poverty, belief in white supremacy and states' rights, and a previous connection with the Democratic Party.

The poor economic status of the average farmer was an important force operative in the speaking situation. The farmers, debt-ridden by the one-crop, crop-lien economy, were susceptible to appeals which promised to improve their conditions.46 A second common characteristic was a fixed favorable attitude of the listeners toward white supremacy and states' rights. Reconstruction had left Alabamians with a distrust of the national government, antipathy toward the "Yankee," and a feeling of ill will ranging from scorn to hatred toward the Negro.47 The traditional "white supremacy" was perhaps the most difficult attitude confronting

46 Cf. Chapter II.

47 This antipathy toward the Yankee and the Negro spread throughout the South. Writers pointed to the South's humiliation under Negro rule, the passage of Jim Crow Laws, and the union of Southern factions against Northern influence.

speakers who advocated a break with the old party. Woodward comments:

A generation of white-solidarity indoctrination had heightened the emotional content of that issue until it was the most explosive question Southerners had faced since 1861. Changing one's party in the South of the nineties involved more than changing one's mind. It might involve a falling-off of clients, the loss of a job, of credit at the store, or of one's welcome at church. It could split families and it might even call in question one's loyalty to his race and his people.48

In his study, Rogers quotes the Montgomery Advertiser to show the conservative newspaper feelings toward the Alabama third party: "It was all right to curse corporations and protest against high tariffs but the paramount question—one . . . 'we do not forget for onw moment, that is white supremacy.' reduced all others to insignificance."49

A final common characteristic was that many listeners had previously been loyal members of the Democratic Party. Exceptions were found in the Republican counties of Lawrence and Winston and in the Eighth Congressional District where some adherents of the old Greenback Party remained.50 Occasionally a few former members of the Prohibition Party attended rallies.

48 Woodward, op.cit., p. 244.


50 Cf. Chapter II.
1890 Audiences

The farmers composing the 1890 campaign audiences possessed in addition to characteristics previously noted a religious trait expressed in the following ways: the meetings included prayer and hymn singing; there were not Sunday meetings; speakers frequently quoted scripture to support their points; Alliance lyrics were set to hymn tunes; and a common audience response was a loud "Amen." Alabama farmers felt a common bond through their membership in various agricultural organizations, particularly the secret society of the Farmer's Alliance.\(^5^1\) Although Farmer's Institute gatherings were usually male, both men and women attended Alliance meetings. Alabama had both colored and white Alliances. Reporters made no mention of the presence of Negroes at an Institute, while they reported their attendance at other meetings. It was probably not popular for Negroes to attend Institutes.

1892 Audiences

Commissioner Kolb's audiences ranged from eight thousand at the State Alliance meeting at Brundige\(^5^2\) to

---

\(^{51}\) Cf. Chapter II.

\(^{52}\) Birmingham *Age-Herald*, August 12, 1891.
seven hundred at a barbecue at Brownsville. At Midway three thousand people partook of the noon meal while at DeArmanville "one thousand people were present at the barbecue." Hargess Springs and Aurora attracted two thousand and fifteen hundred respectively. White, Democratic Alliancemen and their families attended summer outings. They gave orators close attention and an enthusiastic response, including calls for speakers, cheers, and applause. When Kolb spoke at Midway "the huge crowd yelled themselves hoarse." At the Labor Day rally in Birmingham the listeners called for Kolb and "on being formally presented . . . he was repeatedly and heartily cheered."

After Kolb announced his candidacy for governor he and his friends worked to win delegates to the state convention. During this period a speaker might draw several

---

53 Ibid., July 25, 1891.
54 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 22, 1891.
55 Ibid., June 26, 1891.
56 Ibid., July 19, 1891.
57 Ibid., July 24, 1891.
58 Ibid., July 22, 1891.
59 Ibid., September 6, 1891.
hundred at the courthouse or fifty out in a county beat. 60

In contrast to the unrestricted out-of-doors Alliance meet-
ings, rallies were almost always indoors and limited by the
size of the auditorium. For example, at Birmingham so many
people came to hear Kolb that "the city courtroom was
crowded to its utmost capacity. There were many who could
not secure seats. The doorways were packed to almost
suffocation." 61 At Opelika the "courthouse was filled to
its capacity," 62 while a meeting in Ashland brought out
such a crowd that Kolb had to speak from "the piazza in
front of Colonel Lackey's land office." 63 In soliciting
votes in county beats, speakers encountered small audiences
in sparsely populated areas. At Jennifer the crowd numbered
one hundred and fifty 64 and at Gravelly Springs and Center
Star only fifty people were present. 65 The attendants at
rallies were predominantly Democrat, but there was a de-
cided difference between the Alliance Democrat who believed
that the farmers must take over the party in order to bring
about reforms and the Democrat who believed and supported

60 Ibid., April 19, 21, 1892.
61 Ibid., October 17, 1891.
62 Ibid., April 24, 1891.
63 Ibid., April 11, 1892.
64 Anniston Weekly Hot Blast, April 7, 1892.
65 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 20, 1892.
without question the existing party machinery. Phrases like "wool hat boys versus the silk hats," "white county against black county," "the county against the city," and "political tricksters" became familiar campaign expressions.

Newspaper reporters often mentioned the composition of the audiences. At Mt. Pinson "pretty girls" and 'rosy cheeked boys' from the school nearby attended the gathering at the Salem Baptist Church to hear Kolb. At Clayton a writer reported a crowd "mostly of farmers, but few of the townspeople turning out." At Bush the listeners were "composed almost entirely of farmers and their wives and children." At Jennifer "the sturdy yeomanry of the hills greeted Kolb." There was "a large and appreciative audience of the working people of the vicinity" at Pratt Mines.

Reporters also attempted to estimate the number of Kolb and Jones men present. For example, at Oxford Kolb spoke to "about three hundred in which Kolb and Jones men were about equally divided."
Both speakers and reporters commented on the presence of ladies. At Blue Creek, Kolb was "glad to see so many ladies present."72 At Henderson and Bush, newspapers reported that ladies attended.73 From these special recognitions and the usual labeling of the audience as "workers," "laborers," and "voters," it can be concluded that the political rallies were usually all male.

The reports of meetings held before the state convention made no mention of Negroes. When the Negro vote became a campaign issue papers made careful mention of Negro attendance.

Response to the speakers urging Kolb's nomination was in proportion to partisanship toward the speaker. The laborers at Pratt Mines greeted Kolb with "wildly enthusiastic cheering."74 Taliaferro speaking at the same place a week later "had to wait for the applause that greeted his appearance to subside before he could proceed."75 At Erswell Hall in Birmingham, Taliaferro was interrupted forty-two times by applause and cheering.76 When Kolb spoke to farmers at Clayton, "he was listened to with

72 Ibid., November 20, 1891.
73 Ibid., April 2, 1892; Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.
74 Birmingham Age-Herald, November 17, 1891.
75 Ibid., November 29, 1891.
76 Ibid., December 14, 1892.
flattering attention and the great majority . . . appeared to be thoroughly enraptured with the speaker." 77

Reporters pointed out that lack of applause did not necessarily indicate apathy. Such was the case at Jennifer when Kolb spoke to "the sturdy yeomanry of the hills":

The crowd stood or squatted with open mouths gazing at Kolb as if perfectly lost in admiration and curiosity. . . . Their rigidly set intensely earnest features and the unflagging attention paid the speaker left no question of their un­flexible determination to stand by Kolb regardless of everything.78

Groups divided in partisanship evidenced less enthu­siasm for the speaker. At Oxford Kolb "was interrupted by applause only three times by actual count."79 On two other occasions reporters wrote that "no enthusiasm was aroused and that those who were present went more to see the man than to listen to his talk."80 The most unusual response to a speaker occurred at Collinsville when Kolb's followers discharged dynamite to express their enthusiasm.81

The greatest response occurred at joint speakings or debates. A Eufaula crowd applauded so frequently that

77 Ibid., March 30, 1892.
78 Anniston Weekly Hot Blast, April 7, 1892.
79 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 17, 1892.
80 Ibid., April 17, 1892.
81 Montgomery Advertiser, May 8, 1892.
Jones and Kolb requested their friends "to desist as they were limited in time." At the Kolb-Stallings debate at Henderson when Kolb interrupted Stallings to challenge a statement and called him a liar, a fight was almost precipitated because "many of the Kolb men drew their knives and made ready for trouble." Kolb partisans cheered and made noise to heckle Stallings until Kolb requested that they give the speaker a fair hearing.

Listeners frequently interrupted to ask a question or to make a comment in support of something said. At both of the debates previously mentioned all of the speakers were interrupted for questions. At Clayton, hearers asked Kolb to repeat a funny story which he had related previously. As he concluded a speech in Birmingham, his following requested him to repeat a portion of his address.

Audiences usually reacted to deliberate appeals for response. At Pratt Mines, Taliaferro questioned, "Was I a demagogue when I entered the canvass last year and raised my voice for the election of Thomas G. Jones for governor of this State? (cheers and cries of no, no, no,)"

---

82 Birmingham Age-Herald, April 1, 1892.
83 Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.
84 Birmingham Age-Herald, October 17, and March 30, 1892.
85 Ibid., November 29, 1891.
At Opelika he demanded, "Name a single act of your governor that entitles him to a renomination." 86

The crowd at Jennifer became excited when Kolb displayed a bottle of whiskey purchased from the "blind tiger" of a Negro who had been pardoned by Governor Jones. Several members "came up and took the bottle of liquor and examined it closely." 87

After the dramatic withdrawal of Kolb and his followers from the State Democratic Convention to organize the Jeffersonian Democrats, speakers attempted to secure votes for the Jeffersonian ticket. They spoke at rallies which varied in size from two hundred and fifty at Selma to two thousand at Guntersville. 88

To Jeffersonian Democrats and regular Democrats were added at some occasions Populists and Republicans. The Black Belt counties, city dwellers, and farmers with large acreage were usually anti-Kolb, while the white counties and farmers with small farms were pro-Kolb. At Selma in the Black Belt, Kolb attracted only two hundred and fifty people "of whom one hundred were white Jones men," 90 while

86 Ibid., April 24, 1892.
87 Anniston Weekly Hot Blast, April 7, 1892.
88 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 27, 1892.
89 Alliance News, August 3, 1892.
90 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 27, 1892.
in Walker County, a white county, there were Populists, Republicans, "Kolb people" and Democrats in the crowd.\textsuperscript{91}

In Birmingham the newspaper account stated that "the greater portion of the crowd was, of course, composed of residents of this city, but a portion of the number were evidently farmers who had gathered to attend the rally."\textsuperscript{92} In only one instance did a reporter write that an audience "was composed of all sorts and conditions of men."\textsuperscript{93}

Regardless of political affiliation these groups can be fitted into the categories of pro-Kolb and anti-Kolb factions. In the majority of instances rallies were all-male with one exception at Talledega, where there was a "large concourse of ladies present."\textsuperscript{94}

Jeffersonian meetings attracted both whites and Negroes. Speech reports always noted the presence of Negroes. One report commented that "there was a small sprinkling of coons in the back of the hall."\textsuperscript{95} Reporters who opposed Kolb emphasized the number of Negroes, as when the Tuscaloosa Gazette estimated that Bowman spoke in Tuscaloosa to "six or seven hundred people about half of whom were Negroes."\textsuperscript{96} At Selma a crowd of "two-hundred

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., July 24, 1892.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., July 21, 1892.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., July 20, 1892.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., July 15, 1892.
\textsuperscript{96} Tuscaloosa Gazette, July 28, 1892.
and fifty voters of whom one hundred were Negroes" assembled
to hear Kolb.97 A writer reported an Opelika rally as
"two-thirds Negro."98

Jeffersonian listeners were highly partisan. Anti-
Kolbites asked speakers leading questions, but otherwise
showed little enthusiasm. Pro-Kolb groups and equally
divided factions were quite responsive. When Kolb attempted
to divide time with a Democrat in Marshall County, the
Democrat met with cheer after cheer for Kolb so that he was
"forced to desist."99 A reporter recorded a similar in-
cident in Walker County where the Democratic speaker was
"met with every form of insult a crowd of hoodlums could
invent. They hissed, made remarks, yelled, howled, and
did everything except to openly pull him down."100 When
the Democratic speaker challenged his opposition, "There
was intense excitement and commotion during the incident
and a general fight was barely averted. The crowd was ex-
cited, turbulent, and spectators expected every moment a
scene of bloodshed."101

97 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 27, 1892.
98 Ibid., July 20, 1892.
99 Guntersville Democrat, n.d., 1892.
100 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 27, 1892.
101 Ibid.
In a speech at Tuscaloosa, Bowman attempted to hit Major Gorman, Jones' campaign manager, in the head with a water pitcher. This "created a great excitement for the time being. Several men jumped up on the platform and for a time it seemed that a riot was eminent [sic]." Jones and Kolb factions habitually tried to out-cheer each other. At the Attalla rally Bowman answered a questioner in an abrupt and sarcastic manner. This pleased the crowd but caused a tumult "as the cheering of the Kolb men was met with counter cheering of the Jones men. Hats were thrown in the air and things threatened to become serious but they quieted down." On other occasions listeners, although divided in partisanship, remained in a good humor. As Governor Jones proceeded to the speaking grounds at Guntersville the Kolb men greeted him "with deafening cheers for Kolb, while the Jones men sent up equally as enthusiastic cheers for the governor."

1894 Audiences

Jeffersonians and Populists entered the campaign of 1894 "keyed to a high pitch by election frauds, . . . and by the hard times attending the panic of 1893." Third

102 Tuscaloosa Gazette, July 28, 1892.
103 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 20, 1892.
104 Alliance News, August 3, 1892.
party speakers kept alive the resentment and hatred toward the Democratic Party engendered by the 1892 election. Joseph Parsons, speaking at a Populist rally in January, 1893, "denounced the late election as a farce and said that it was a crime against popular government. He urged the necessity of organizing clubs in every beat in the county to keep the matter agitated." Two pieces of campaign literature also helped to keep the "matter agitated." J. C. Manning published Politics in Alabama, a campaign handbook in which he described how Black Belt politicians controlled elections. This document kept the election fraud issue before the voters. The National People's Party distributed Coin's Financial School, a populist-compiled handbook of lectures on the ills of the financial system and the need for free coinage of silver at the ratio of sixteen to one. M. B. Garrett relates that in the political campaign of 1894 someone distributed copies of Coin's Financial School in his community. He writes,

Nearly everybody thumbed through the book, even the children. I (fifteen years old at the time) could not follow the argument; I boggled down in the statistics; but I could understand the pictures. Here was a picture of an immense cow superimposed upon the map of the United States. Her head was in Kansas and her hindparts in New England. Energetic Western farmers were feeding the cow great quantities of hay and grain, while a disconsolate Southern farmer sat nearby on a bale of cotton labeled '7 cents!' At the other end

106 Birmingham Age-Herald, January 8, 1893.
of the cow pigfaced gentlemen in top hats and long coats milked the cow and carried away the milk in huge pails labeled with dollar marks . . . Now here was something concrete and comprehensible: The farmer and the industrial laborer did all the work, but those pig-faced gentlemen up North got all the gravy. 107

Of course the average farmer needed no reminder that times were hard. Caught in the panic of 1893 he was ready to smite the money kings, corporations, and corrupt politicians.

Audiences at indoor meetings ranged in size from 200 at Pratt Mines 108 to 700 at Clayton. 109 The giant third party rally held in Birmingham in the Winnie Davis Wigwam drew a crowd of over 2,000. 110 The outdoor gatherings attracted the largest groups. At an all-day meeting at Catalpa in Pike County, Townsend and Reese spoke to "six to eight hundred people" 111 while Kolb and Goodwyn, according to reports, attracted over 3,000 at a Fourth of July picnic at Dothan. 112 Skaggs drew a crowd of "at least one thousand people" 113 in Dale County, and reporters estimated

108 Birmingham Age-herald, January 8, 1893.
109 Ozark Banner, June 14, 1894.
110 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 29, 1894.
111 The Jeffersonian, July 27, 1894.
112 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 7, 1894.
113 Ozark Banner, July 5, 1894.
over 3,000 listeners attended the Kolb-Oates debate at Salem.\textsuperscript{114} At the courthouse in Ozark there was "standing room only after the speakers began to warm up."\textsuperscript{115} At the Populist speaking in Alexander City where "every faith was represented ... Democrats outnumbered the mixture for a time but no actual count was made, as both sides kept getting reinforcements."\textsuperscript{116} During the final rallies of the campaign on August 4, the Democrats and the Jeffersonians met on street corners in downtown Birmingham one block apart. The crowds, which consisted of Jeffersonian Democrats, Regular Democrats, Populists, and Republicans, attempted to outshout each other and there was a constant flow of people from one to the other.\textsuperscript{117} At Piedmont, Longshore spoke to "Democrats, Republicans, and Jeffersonians, but mostly the latter of course."\textsuperscript{118} At Scottsboro, Adams had a "fair sized audience of Populists and Democrats."\textsuperscript{119} It was not unusual to find Negroes in attendance and reporters were careful to designate the composition of the gatherings. At Salem there were "over 1000 voters and over 2000 people, more than half for Oates."\textsuperscript{120} At Tuscaloosa

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{114} Birmingham \textit{Age-Herald}, July 25, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Ozark \textit{Banner}, May 17, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Alexander City \textit{Outlook}, July 13, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Birmingham \textit{Age-Herald}, August 5, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Piedmont \textit{Inquirer}, April 21, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Birmingham \textit{Age-Herald}, July 20, 1894.
\item \textsuperscript{120} \textit{Ibid.}, July 25, 1894.
\end{itemize}
there were "six or seven hundred people about half of whom were negroes" and at Minersville "about 100 negroes and twenty-five whites assembled to hear a speaker." Some meetings had an all-male audience, while others had men, women, and children. At Wetumpka "the ladies and children were out in large numbers and enjoyed the day to the highest degree." "Ladies gave the grace of their presence to the meeting" at Mt. Pinson, and after the speeches the orators were presented "gay bouquets by little boys and girls of the audience." Although there were several Negro Democratic rallies there was only one reported instance of a Negro third party rally. Held in Birmingham, this rally presented both a Negro and a white speaker to "several hundred, mostly negroes."

121 Tuscaloosa Gazette, October 28, 1894.
122 Birmingham Age-Herald, October 18, 1894.
123 Montgomery Advertiser, July 10, 1894.
124 Birmingham Age-Herald, July 13, 1894.
125 At Tuscaloosa, "James S. Ross, the colored orator, addressed 700 citizens at the opera house last night." Birmingham Age-Herald, August 2, 1894. At Trussville, two Negroes from Birmingham, G. S. Evans and E. E. Carlisle, spoke "in the interest of the Democratic ticket." Ibid., July 27, 1894.
126 Ibid., August 4, 1894.
Audiences at the third party speech occasions in 1894 applauded, cheered, and laughed enthusiastically. On some occasions their extremely partisan attitude produced some unusual responses. At a joint speaking at Berry Station, after the last Populist speech, all of the Kolb people walked out, refusing to hear the last Democratic speaker.\(^\text{127}\)

At York, where fifteen hundred people had gathered for the speaking-barbecue, a fight between Kolb and Oates men caused the speaker to stop and wait until order was restored.\(^\text{128}\)

When the Kolb men at Munford "kept up a continual effort to howl him [the speaker] down" the *Age-Herald* commented that "Kolbism is very demoralizing."\(^\text{129}\) In Calhoun County the Kolbites prevented the performance of the Democratic speaker by "howling him down."\(^\text{130}\) A speaker at Belgreen argued with one of his hearers and when they both drew guns, those "that could find a window or door got out of the building in which the speaking was being held. . . . Peace was finally restored and the speaking was resumed at a spring a few hundred yards away."\(^\text{131}\)

Other responses included calls for speakers, questions directed at the speaker, comments


to agree or disagree with the speaker, and requests for certain anecdotes.

Audiences ranging from 100 to 8,000 were mostly white Jeffersonian, Populist farmers with some miners, laborers, city-dwellers, women, Negroes, Republicans, and Democrats reported present. Partisans cheered, laughed, and applauded and in general were unrestrained in response. In groups of mixed partisanship, rivals tried to outdo each other in support of their favorites. Ill temper of both speakers and listeners sometimes led to fights, with knives drawn, guns waved, and mass confusion and unruliness.
CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE SPEECHES

This chapter examines selected speeches of representative third party orators in order to answer the following questions: (1) Did speakers argue from sound basic premises? (2) What contentions did speakers raise? (3) How effective were their means of persuasion? The arguments are analyzed and evaluated without a division into "logical" and "emotional" proofs because the writer subscribes to the theory as stated by Braden and Brandenburg that "In spite of the efforts to establish the mutual exclusiveness of logic and emotion, there is good evidence to show that the two are inseparably intertwined and extremely difficult to tear apart."\(^1\) The ethical proof of each speaker was discussed in Chapter Four. However, a unit on ethical proof is included here to demonstrate the methods that speakers employed within speeches to establish their intelligence, character, and good will.

Reform speakers based their arguments on four basic premises: (1) the farmers could obtain relief for their

ills only through control of the state and national governments; (2) failure to gain such control within the Democratic Party might necessitate a split with the old Democratic Party and fusion with other political groups; (3) the Agrarians were strong enough to obtain control of the state and join reformers of other states to gain control of the national government; (4) the Negro vote must be considered in any election.

1890 Speeches

The Alliance-oriented speakers, representing an embryonic third party, fought their campaign in 1890 as a wing of the Democratic Party. The basic issue was whether the agrarians or the conservative-machine group should run the Democratic Party and hence the affairs of the state.

Early in 1890 Kolb appeared before farmer groups, reminded them of hard times and announced his candidacy. After the St. Louis convention when the Bourbon newspapers attacked his loyalty to the Democratic Party and his character, Kolb and his followers advanced the proposition that Kolb should be elected. Their supporting arguments may be briefed as follows:

Kolb should be elected, for
I. He is a good Democrat, for
   A. His voting record is that of a Democrat.
   B. He was a leader in the overthrow of Reconstruction,
   C. He has held official party positions.
D. Participation in the St. Louis Convention was not undemocratic.

II. Kolb is a man of good character, for
A. The press attacks are not really meant for him but the Alliance.
B. He did not charge railroad fares to the state while riding on free passes.
C. There is precedent for campaigning while holding a state office.

III. The *Advertiser* is unprincipled and inconsistent.

What was Kolb's strategy? He had little choice at this time but to conduct a defensive campaign because the Democratic press attack could damage his chances to obtain the nomination. To keep his Alliance following intact he had to reassure his listeners that he was a "good man." In other words he had to maintain his ethical appeal. Below is an analysis of how this task was pursued.

Kolb and the Alliance are Democratic

To prove that he was a good Democrat, Kolb frequently cited specific instances of his voting record as a Democrat, of his leadership in over-throwing Reconstruction in his home county, and of his official party positions both state and county. It seems doubtful if Kolb had much difficulty establishing his loyalty with Democratic listeners.

---

However, the newspapers questioned not his past allegiances but the part he played in the St. Louis Convention. Kolb could not deny his participation in that convention; consequently to defend himself and shift attention from the argument he called attention to the published statements concerning the Alabama delegation's voting against the resolutions. He then attempted to prove that the St. Louis resolutions were Democratic because they had received endorsement of southern newspapers and southern delegations; he said: "The Atlanta Constitution had endorsed them from A to Izzard [sic] and the New Orleans Times-Democrat and a number of others see nothing wrong in them." Although these two examples seem insufficient to support his conclusion, Kolb obviously tried to present an argument which may be cast in the following hypothetical syllogism:

1. Major premise: If the St. Louis resolutions are unDemocratic, they will not receive endorsement of southern newspapers.
2. Minor premise: They have received endorsement of southern newspapers.
3. Conclusion: The St. Louis resolutions are not unDemocratic.

This syllogism is valid in form but untrue in substance, since Kolb offers no evidence or explanation as to what

---

3 Reuben F. Kolb, Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1890.
"endorsement" by the newspapers meant and fails to mention that some southern papers had objected to the St. Louis platform. This argument may have been effective because Kolb named two well-known, respected papers of large southern cities. About the support of southern delegations he stated:

The state of Texas . . . and the delegates from Arkansas, Georgia, Texas, and Louisiana voted for them. Alabama delegates . . . voted against them, and the delegates from Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and a few from Florida voted against part of them.5

Kolb implied that the resolutions were Democratic because delegates from southern states supported them; at the same time he suggested that the Alabama delegates were good Democrat because they had voted against the resolutions. His opposition failed to note this inconsistency. Kolb then suggested that the Advertiser criticized the resolutions not because they were Democratic or un-Democratic but only to make war on the Alliance.

Terrell asserted that the Alliance was not unethical for going into politics, saying on one occasion, "Has any man in this free country got a patent right on politics?"6 and on another, "The farmers of the country have a right

5 R.F. Kolb, Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1890.
6 Benjamin F. Terrell, Report of Speech at Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, January 1, 1890.
to meet and take action." His emotional appeal to tradition and freedom of action probably convinced farmers, who had been denied participation in politics, that they were now exercising a fundamental American right as participants in the Democratic Party.

The available reports indicate that Kolb adapted his presentation of the St. Louis Convention to each particular audience. For example, in South Alabama where objections were strongest, he "explained the important phases of the St. Louis convention." At another meeting he said that "all of the resolutions but two met his approval." In North Alabama white counties where support of the St. Louis ideas was strongest he simply "read the articles of confederation agreed to in St. Louis." Speakers made effective choice of materials to prove that Kolb and other Alliancem en were good Democrats. Kolb's political record provided strong evidence to establish that he was a loyal Democrat. That the St. Louis resolutions had the approval of some southern newspapers and delegations established with partisans the democratic nature

7 Benjamin F. Terrell, Report of Speech at Scottsboro, Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 1890.
8 Love, op. cit., p. 17.
10 Florence Banner, quoted in the Montgomery Advertiser, February 22, 1890.
of the resolutions and supported the suggestion that the real motive of the Advertiser was to attack the platform in order to harass the Alliance. Informing audiences about the St. Louis resolutions seemed wise since those farmers who had not read them needed the information and would have been favorably impressed with the economic relief which the resolutions offered.

Kolb is a Man of Good Character

To answer attacks on his integrity, Kolb shifted the argument from himself to the Alliance by declaring that the criticism of him was intended for the Alliance. Although during the campaign the Advertiser took at least one paragraph a day to assure its readers that it was not against the Alliance, but against those leading it into politics, both Kolb and Terrell advanced the slogan, "A fight against Kolb is a fight against the Alliance," Kolb asked, "How could they attack 100,000, all alliancemen except their leaders?" Terrell accused the Montgomery

11 "Kolb's supporters in defending him against personal abuse frequently pointed out that much of the venom was intended for the Alliance. One much-used phrase was 'The fight against Kolb is a fight against the Alliance.' Summersell, op. cit., p. 392. Use of this idea was reported in the following instances: Tuscaloosa Gazette, March 20, April 3, May 1, 1890; Tuscaloosa Times, May 14, 1890; Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, January 1, January 18, 1890.

12 Reuben F. Kolb, Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1890.
paper of inconsistency:

The Advertiser still claims that it is a friend to the Farmers' Alliance. He had heard men say that they loved a certain man but they hated his ways: It seems that the Advertiser would have us believe that it loves the Alliance while it is hating the ways and what is the Alliance if you take away from its ways? 13

To prove the Advertiser's negative attitude toward the Alliance, Kolb declared: "Major Screws, the editor of the paper said to me in the presence of a dozen witnesses, 'Your d--n Alliance is playing hell in this state' ." 14 The implication that he was the victim of attacks really against the Alliance made him a martyr and increased his identification with the small farmer. 15

13 Benjamin Terrell, Report of Speech at Scottsboro, Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 1890.

14 Reuben F. Kolb, Report of Speech at Scottsboro, Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 1890.

15 Summersell writes: "In the campaign of 1890 Kolb learned the pose of martyr which he was to wear so well in succeeding campaigns. This was easy to do because of the feeling of his supporters that the Alliance was the real target aimed at in the attack against Kolb." Charles G. Summersell, "Kolb and the Populist Revolt as Viewed by the Newspapers," Alabama Historical Quarterly, XIX (1957), 393. Moore concludes: "Such reproaches in no way shook the faith of Kolb's friends. They took them as vicious attempts on the part of the 'ring' to discredit their beloved leader...." Moore, op. cit., p. 612. A writer signing his name "farmer" declared that the "attack on Kolb is a mere reckless and determined attempt of shameless politicians to down the Farmers' Alliance." Tuscaloosa Gazette, April 3, 1890. Another partisan wrote, "Undoubtedly the same men who were holding up their hands in horror at an error committed twenty-five years ago also had tender spots in their history." Tuscaloosa Gazette, April 3, 1890. The latest evaluator of the agrarian movement in Alabama says: "The belief that (Kolb) represented the dirt farmers and the common laborers
Kolb did not attempt to defend himself directly. To excuse the McRae affair he explained his bankruptcy was unavoidable and further commented that others had taken similar action, including the editor of the *Advertiser*. To minimize the attack he called attention to the fact that the *Advertiser* had gone back twenty five years to involve him in scandal.

Kolb used *reductio ad absurdum* to answer the free-pass accusation and suggested that it was foolish to think that he would wreck his character for a mere three hundred dollars, the amount of his railroad fare vouchers. He dismissed the charge of his campaigning while in office by accusing Governor Seay, who had announced for the United States Senate, of doing the same thing. Since the Governor was a respected Democrat, Kolb's analogy was a well chosen associational technique.

*and was fighting their battle goes far to explain the unswerving loyalty that Kolb commanded.* — Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 557.

16 *Cf. Chapter IV, p. 86.*


18 *Reuben F. Kolb, Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser*, March 14, 1890.

There was some truth in the accusations which the Democratic press advanced against Kolb's character. Seemingly Kolb chose personally to avoid lengthy excuses and instead allowed his supporters to answer charges against him. Pointing out that these attacks were really meant for the Alliance was probably wise strategy in light of the intense loyalty which the farmers had for the Alliance. In response to these attacks they rallied to defend Kolb as well as the organization. To turn his "persecution" from himself to all Alliancemen was a strong counterattack.

The "Advertiser" is Unprincipled and Inconsistent

Third party speakers accused the Advertiser of being a paper with little regard for facts. That paper had reported that at the St. Louis Convention the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance had formed a union. Kolb questioned the word "union," and he asserted that the two orders through their representatives merely agreed to stand together on all things affecting those conditions of the working man and the farmer. The Advertiser's whole story of the St. Louis resolutions is a falsehood from one end to the other."20 Kolb denied the report of the Advertiser that he was responsible for the resolutions adopted by the state alliance meeting in August, 1889.

He also said that the Democratic papers published his department accounts to create the impression that he was extravagant and corrupt.

In his speeches Kolb denounced the Advertiser. A reporter called his speech to the Geneva Alliance "thirty-five minutes fertilizer and one hour and ten minutes Advertiser."\(^{21}\) The Florence Banner said that in all his speeches he "takes occasion to throw a few hot shots into the Advertiser."\(^{22}\)

Third party speakers employed name calling and sarcasm against their press opposition. Adams referred to the Advertiser as "obscene literature;" Kolb regularly referred to Major Wallace Screws, editor of the Advertiser, and Joseph Hodgson, editor of the Mobile Register, as "the old scoundrels."\(^{23}\)

Terrell provoked laughter at the expense of the Advertiser by suggesting that Alliancemen could keep the paper happy if they would "call around every morning and receive instructions as to what they should do."\(^{24}\) In concluding a speech Kolb said that there would have been

\(^{21}\) Reuben F. Kolb, Report of Speech at the Geneva Alliance, Montgomery Advertiser, March 13, 1890.


\(^{23}\) Tuscaloosa Gazette, February 6,16, 1890.

\(^{24}\) Benjamin F. Terrell, Report of Speech at Scottsboro, Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 1890.
no war on the Alliance if the St. Louis Convention had passed an additional resolution reading: "that no Alliance-man shall ever run for or accept any office at the hands of the people of the state and no Alliance-man shall vote for any candidate for Governor without first consulting the Montgomery Advertiser." \(^25\) Since the Alliance and the Advertiser had been at war since the "Jute bagging affair" in 1889,\(^26\) the Kolb speakers could employ sarcasm and humor as a light touch to remind the audience of its pre-existent antagonism toward the Montgomery newspaper.

1892-1894 Speeches

The third party, emerging after 1890, fought the 1892-1894 campaigns as an extended debate. The Populist arguments may be briefed as follows:

The Democratic Party should be removed from power in favor of the third party

I. The record of the Democratic Party does not warrant its continuance in power.

A. The Democratic party is guilty of fraudulent practices, for

1. Democratic leaders stifle the will of the people.
   a. They violated the will of the people in the 1890 Convention.
   b. Elected leaders are arbitrary in exercising authority.

2. The Democratic machine stole the elections of 1892-1894.

3. The Democratic Party attempts to disfranchise poor whites and Negroes by

---

\(^{25}\) Reuben F. Kolb, Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1890.

\(^{26}\) Cf. Chapter II.
the Sayre Election law.

B. The state administration is unworthy of support, for
   1. They approve the convict lease law.
   2. Democratic gubernatorial candidates are unworthy of support.
      a. Thomas G. Jones has an undesirable record.
      b. William C. Oates has an undesirable record.

C. The national administration is unworthy of support, for
   1. Congress is unworthy of support.
   2. President Cleveland is an undesirable President.

II. Third Party Agrarians are Democratic

   A. The Ocala demands are based on Democratic principles.
   B. The Alliance is founded on Democratic principles.
   C. The Agrarian leader Kolb is a good Democratic.

Kolb and his speakers contended that the record of the Democratic Party did not warrant its continuance in power since the party was guilty of fraudulent practices and the record of neither the state nor national administration was worthy of support. Selecting a highly emotional theme Democratic speakers declared that the issue was one of maintaining white supremacy, pointing out that the "old party" had redeemed the state from Reconstruction and stood for "white rule." They charged the Kolb party with being un-D-Democratic and therefore radical. Refutation of

---

27 Throughout this campaign speakers on both sides used "Democratic" and "democratic" interchangeably to refer to both party membership and democratic principle.
this charge became a second contention for the third party as Kolb speakers tried to prove that the Agrarians were Democratic.

I. The record of the Democratic party does not warrant its continuance in power.

The first argument advanced by third party speakers was:

A. The Democratic Party is guilty of fraudulent practices.

This can be cast as a categorical syllogism:

| Major premise | Any party guilty of fraudulent practices should be removed from power. |
| Minor premise | The Democratic Party is guilty of fraudulent practices. |
| Conclusion    | The Democratic Party should be removed from power. |

This syllogism is logically valid. If an audience believed the major premise and the speakers proved the minor premise, then listeners would accept the conclusion, making the syllogism rhetorically effective. However, speakers could not assume that hearers believed the major premise, for Alabama voters had approved fraudulent methods used to redeem the state from Reconstruction in 1872 and since then had condoned whatever methods were necessary to maintain the Democratic Party in power. Kolb himself was a leader in overthrowing Reconstruction and was active in the political life of a county where the Negroes outnumbered the whites. He said, "I never stuffed a ballot box in my life. It is true
that in former years I sat by and saw it done and winked at it, but because it was then necessary to suppress the negro vote. But there is no need for that now and we must have fair elections." Yet he was the first to cry "fraud" when he believed that Black Belt tactics were being used against him. His reaction suggests that third party members believed fraud against whites to be a different matter from that against Negroes. Reform speakers faced audiences who were mixed in belief about the ethics of political party practices.

To prove that the Democratic Party engaged in fraudulent practices, Third Partyites argued: (1) Democratic Party leaders stifle the will of the people; (2) The Democratic machine stole the elections of 1892 and 1894; (3) The Democratic Party attempts to disfranchise the poor white and Negro.

1. Democratic leaders stifle the will of the people.

Reform orators charged that the Democratic leaders thwarted the will of the people in two ways: (a) by violating the will of the people in the 1890 State Convention; and (b) exercising arbitrary authority. In attempting to prove the first charge Kolb speakers turned to testimony, example,

28 Kolb-Oates Debate, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 25, 1894.
analogy, and equivocation. Kolb suggested that the Democratic machine ran the Convention: "... four men nominated Jones. It was not the convention that did it. The leading friends of the other four candidates combined. They sat up all night to beat me and succeeded." He offered strong evidence to prove his claim. First in support he quoted an editorial entitled, "How It Was Done," from the Montgomery Advertiser which described how the Democratic candidates combined in a beat-Kolb effort. The paper further admitted that the enforcement of a unit rule for county delegations also contributed to Kolb's defeat. Secondly, Kolb quoted a prominent Jones follower who said, "We have swindled Kolb out of the nomination once, and we will do it again." This apparent admission from a Jones man was good testimony to prove that the Convention had treated Kolb unfairly.

Taliaferro developed detailed examples into analogies to point out that the Convention had not chosen the candidate most desired by the people. He argued:

As you all know the first ballot in every convention is the nearest index of the true sentiments of the delegates... Now, when the first ballot was taken in that convention, Reuben F. Kolb received 235\(\frac{1}{2}\) votes and Thomas G. Jones 45\(\frac{1}{2}\). That


is the record you have my countrymen, and when I say you, I mean the aggregated masses of the democracy of the state. Suppose a democratic citizen of New York, or suppose a democratic president occupying the chair at Washington, desired to know who was the foremost man in the confidence of his own people, and were to pick out the claimants by the Montgomery Advertiser, if you like, and find that, upon the first vote cast in the convention, there were 235½ votes for Kolb and 45½ votes for Jones, would such a president be authorized if he had a mission or a trustee to impose, would he be authorized to give it to Kolb as against Jones?  

In a second hypothetical example, he developed the following analogy:

If I desire to know the legal capabilities of two lawyers in the county of Jefferson—and I will illustrate by taking Mr. Bowman and Mr. Altman sitting on the platform—I would go to the members of the bar of this city to know how they stood in their esteem. We have 175 members of this bar. I would take a vote of that 175 members and if 150 of these lawyers voted that Mr. Bowman was the better lawyer and only 25 of them voted that Mr. Altman was the better lawyer, and I comparatively a stranger to those men, would you say that I was authorized to come to the conclusion that Mr. Bowman was the better lawyer? If his majority was 125 in a total of 175, could I not safely say that he was a lawyer of great ability—a lawyer of integrity—would that not be your conclusion? Well this question of the fitness of two men including within its scope his moral character, intellectual capacity and fitness... for office, this matter has already been submitted to the democratic councils of the State of Alabama and let us see the results.

32 E. T. Taliaferro, Speech at Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 14, 1891.

33 Ibid.
Taliaferro cleverly employed a hypothetical example with which the audience would agree. He then used an analogy to prove his point that Kolb, the choice of the Convention, had been unfairly treated. In a later speech before a partisan group Kolb used this same method. He said: "On the first ballot I had over two hundred votes, and the Governor had only thirty-nine and that is an index of how we stood with the people."\(^3\)

In strongly Democratic areas Kolb exercised care often to the point of vagueness in accusing the Convention of wrongdoing. In Bessemer he suggested that "By various means the 'convention arrived at a result satisfactory to the people of Alabama' and 'the convention having done a wrong,' the people should right that wrong."\(^3\) At Blue Springs he denied that he had ever publicly "charged fraud against the state convention. The convention made a mistake and it remains for the people to rectify that mistake."\(^3\)

"They say I have charged that the last convention was a fraud. I say it was a combination to beat me, and I can name fifty or more of that convention who voted for Governor Jones who were for me."\(^3\)

---

\(^3\) R. F. Kolb, Report of Speech in Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

\(^3\) R. F. Kolb, Report of Speech at Bessemer, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 18, 1891.

\(^3\) R. F. Kolb, Report of Speech at Blue Springs, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 20, 1891.

\(^3\) Ibid., April 24, 1892.
Kolb was guilty of equivocation. He placed himself in a vulnerable position by qualifying his charge against the convention before strongly Democratic audiences. Third party speakers thus cleverly blamed Kolb's 1890 defeat on the Democratic Convention rather than on the voters. Taliaferro was particularly effective with use of example and analogy to emphasize that Kolb was the people's choice. Quoting the *Advertiser* and prominent Democratic leaders was effective support of the charge that machine politics had swindled the people and Kolb out of the nomination. It is doubtful that many Regular Democrats were convinced that the Convention had been unfair. The arguments must have strengthened and solidified the belief of the Kolb supporters that the Democratic machine was against them and that they must take action. One orator voiced the sentiments of a majority of the Kolb men as evidenced by the nomination of Kolb in 1892:

The action of the last state convention must be rebuked; even at the sacrifice of Democratic precedent, and the retirement of an accidental Governor, whose weakness was his strength, and Reuben F. Kolb, the choice of the majority of the delegates of the last convention placed in the gubernatorial chair, where the voice of the majority of the people called him last May a year ago.38

Kolb speakers further accused the Democratic Party of stifling the will of the people by pointing out specific instances of Democratic leaders exercising arbitrary authority. Targets of one of Goodwyn's speeches were H.C.

38 *People's Reflector*, n.d., 1891.
Tompkins, 1890 Convention chairman; Frank Pettus, Speaker of the Alabama House of Representatives; and the entire State Democratic Executive Committee. Goodwyn said:

In 1890 I supported Thomas G. Jones. He went to that convention with forty-five delegates, an insignificant minority. Kolb went there with a majority. Did these delegates have any rights but to follow out instructions? But whom did they nominate? By an arbitrary ruling of the chair, something absolutely contrary to parliamentary usage, a man who had been repudiated by the people was nominated. . . . In 1892 the same candidates went before the people. The executive committee had been given power to rule on the delegations. Many trumped up excuses were brought forward to throw out Kolb delegations. . . . The two houses in joint session announced the result of the election. I arose and offered a protest against the counting of votes in fifteen counties. Speaker Pettus ruled me out of order.  

Goodwyn quoted facts that were recorded in the Senate Journals. Since the leaders represented the entire party, implicating the Speaker of the House, the Executive Committee, and the chairman of the State Convention with arbitrary action was strong evidence for the conclusion that the Democratic Party stifled the will of the people.

E. P. Johnson, local Alliance lecturer, used the above technique against local party leaders. He suggested in a speech titled "Where are we at?" that Democratic probate judges who validated false election returns made law and order impossible.  

40 E. P. Johnson, Alliance speech, The Jeffersonian February 9, 1894.
Goodwyn's, was primarily assertion. However, for an Alliance audience who already believed that they had been cheated in the election, the unsupported charge was enough to foster the belief that Democratic politicians were against the common people. This contention affords an interesting comparison of how a state leader and a county leader handled the same issue. Johnson localized the argument to appeal to his Alliance audience who would probably not understand the violations of parliamentary procedure cited by Goodwyn. Third party orators offered testimony and authority to prove that the Democratic Party leaders stifled the will of the people. The arguments also appealed to the basic drive of freedom of action.

2. The Democratic machine stole the elections of 1892-1894.

After the election of 1892 the third party faced the problem of keeping the members unified both for an all-out effort in the national election and for the state election of 1894. Kolb and other speakers attempted to regroup the party around the issue of election fraud beginning at the Jeffersonian-Populist Convention in Birmingham in September. This meeting had been called as a direct result of third party charges that the Democrats had stolen the state election. After a month to gather evidence, Kolb spoke to prove that he had been elected governor. He quoted statistics to show that in some counties the Democrats reported greater returns than there were voters registered and in
other counties they reported his votes much smaller than they actually were. After citing statistics he quoted sworn statements from citizens of the counties in question and then asked some delegate of the convention to verify the evidence. In reference to Montgomery County he stated that there were not 4,000 votes cast and that:

> out of those 4,000 votes I received at least a majority of over 1500 votes, and yet the returns show that my distinguished opponent received 6254 majority out of less than 4,000 votes polled, and I received over 1500 of those 4000. Now before passing any further I do not want to make any broad statement here without proof of the facts that they are true, and I will call upon some delegate from Montgomery County who is present here to rise in his place and state if I have not stated correctly the facts and the truth. (Here a number of delegates from Montgomery County arose and verified the statements of Captain Kolb in regard to the recent frauds committed in Montgomery County.)

Kolb presented similar statistics for twenty-two counties. In each case delegates arose and verified his presentation. Kolb was evidently aware that this inartistic proof added

---


42 By "non-artistic proofs are meant all such as are not supplied by our own efforts, but existed beforehand, such as witnesses, admissions under torture, written contracts, and the like." *Rhetoric of Aristotle*, Lane Cooper, ed. (New York: Appleton-Century Co., 1932), p. 8.
weight to his own arguments. He said:

Now we want to publish to the world, and I want you to be patient with me just a little while and we will get these statements as they ought to be. Broad assertions from me would not amount to anything, but when I make them and can substantiate them by reputable men, they are bound to carry confidence with them and the world is bound to believe them.\(^{43}\)

The effectiveness of Kolb's argument depended on the listener's believing his evidence. Democrats most likely believed that the statistics were lies or that vote manipulation to defeat Kolb was not wrong. Most third party members were already aware of election practices, at least within their own counties. Kolb's argument served to suggest that the Democratic Party had victimized the entire state. Other speakers tried to include the national party in the antipathy felt toward the state organization and pointed out that there was hope for the Agrarians if the National People's Party was successful. J.C. Manning predicted that the time was at hand "when we have a chance to down the plutocrats, the Democrats, the Demo- crats, the Jones-crats, and all the other crats."\(^{44}\)

Zell Gaston, another Populist speaker, suggested that the fight begun in August had to be carried on because the political and economic situation was getting


\(^{44}\) J.C. Manning, Report of Speech at Birmingham, Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892.
worse. He told the audience,

You have been told for twenty-five years to plough on and let others run things. You have ploughed on, hoping promises would be filled, until now your very freedom is endangered, and it looks like you will have to bow down to money kings. Are you free when your farms are mortgaged, and when you are as bad off at the end of the year as in the beginning? The papers do not seem to understand why we struck for freedom at Montgomery. I say to these people, if they send to the fields and workshops they will find out what has forced you to rise in masses for the relief you want. Democracy has lost its meaning in Alabama. Knowing this on June 8th last, you nominated R. F. Kolb for Governor. You asserted true Democracy. What have you gotten for doing this? You have been cursed from the stump and by the press. You have been called soreheads. When the speakers have gotten a chance to talk to you they abused you for all you are worth. The bar plead against you and the pulpit was silent as to your wrongs.\(^45\)

Kolb attempted to prove logically that he was counted out in the election. It appears that he was interested in enhancing his image as the martyr to the reform cause in order to unify the reform forces and further his own political career. Other speakers appealed to self-preservation and freedom of action to garner support for the People's Party in the national election. Although he supported the People's Party candidates, Kolb did not lead his followers into the Populist Party. The arguments employed were probably successful since the state gave such a large vote to the Populist Party in the national

\(^{45}\) Zell Gaston, Report of Speech in Birmingham, Montgomery \textit{Advertiser}, September 17, 1892.
election and the Jeffersonians rallied solidly behind Kolb, starting the old familiar cry of "Reuben for Governor" in 1894.

Third partyites kept the issue of election fraud alive for the 1894 election. Kolb wrote a letter to the State Legislature in December of 1892 in which he pointed out the evidence he had collected to prove that he was the rightful governor. The press gave this letter wide circulation. Manning's *Politics in Alabama* publicized the statistics and testimony of election frauds. By 1894 voters were familiar with the 1892 evidence, and speakers apparently felt no necessity to prove again their claims that the Democrats had stolen the vote. For example, W. H. Skaggs was reported as making "the same old cry of fraud and ballot box stuffing; and said that he did not think there were fifty honest men in Alabama who do not believe Kolb had a majority of the vote in 1892."46 At the third party rally in Birmingham the reporter wrote that Captain Kolb "made his usual speech, stating his personal grievances and crying fraud against the Democratic Party."47 At Dothan, Colonel J. P. Oliver "made the same old speech of vilification and

---


and abuse of the Democratic officials and Party, charging fraud and urging a free ballot and fair count." In the speech which opened the campaign Kolb "made the same old charge of having been swindled out of the election as Governor two years ago." At the Jeffersonian-Populist State Convention Goodwyn said, "that he, after an investigation of the matter, had not the least doubt that Governor Jones occupies the executive chair by fraud. He appealed to the people to rise up and oppose ballot box frauds." Reporters said George Gaither's speech consisted "principally of charges against Democracy. He said,'They talk about a negro stealing chickens, I never saw a negro in my life whom I would not risk in my poultry yard quicker than I would an organized democrat with a ballot box.'" Gaither probably amused his audience with this colloquial humor. His jibe at Negroes suggested that third party speakers were no longer concerned with the good will of the Negro voter.

Even though the reports are from opposition newspapers, there is no evidence that they distorted what the speaker said. In other instances they printed material which was detrimental to the Democrats. The inclusion of Jeffersonian charges of election frauds suggests that this matter was kept before Alabama audiences.

In a debate Kolb reported that Oates and Johnson had charged each other with fraud in the primary election for governor. Oates interrupted:

I never charged anybody with fraud.
Captain Kolb--Don't you say in the Age-Herald that you had it [the nomination] if you were not cheated out of it?
Colonel Oates--Yes, I believe I did say that.
(Laughter and applause)

Although Kolb had forced the admission that the Regular Democratic candidates distrusted each other, he failed to utilize the fact by suggesting that if Democrats cheated each other they would surely cheat the opposition.

Kolb added to his argument the testimony of Democratic Party leader Frank Pettus who said, "Kolb, we counted you out in 1892 and we will do it again in 1894."  

Jeffersonians repeated the accusation of election fraud in 1894 with little specific proof, since they had advanced similar charges in 1890 and 1892 and therefore

53 Ibid.
expected audiences to be familiar with the charges. However, the Democratic leaders boasted publicly that they had counted Kolb out in previous elections so there was not much need to prove the contention. The value of the argument was that it contributed to party unity through the appeals of freedom of action, fair play, and security.

3. The Democratic Party attempts to disfranchise poor-whites and Negroes by the Sayre Election Law.

A third charge of fraud against the Democrats stated that the Sayre Election Law was nothing more than a legal tool to prevent Negroes and poor-whites from voting. Since no election had been held under the Sayre Act, there was no real evidence of the law being used to disfranchise voters. Third party speakers argued that the intent of the law was to disfranchise, that manipulation of votes was possible, and therefore the Democratic Party would use the law against Kolb supporters. Speakers reminded audiences that the Black Belt Democrats had attempted to call a constitutional convention to revise the suffrage clause along the lines of the Mississippi Constitution, and when this move failed they passed as a substitute the Sayre Election Law.\(^{54}\)

A. P. Longshore attempted to demonstrate by hypothetical example how illegally the Sayre Law could be administered:

Why if a man goes up to vote and can't read, and does not know who he wants to vote for, he has to call on one of the managers to tell him where to put his X, and after coming away from the polls, if someone should ask him who he voted for he will have to say, 'I don't know, I just stuck her in and left.'

Frank Baltzell described several methods by which the voters could be defrauded:

The power to appoint inspectors is conferred in the governor, in order that he may choose men of the right stripe. 'Do you solemnly swear you will conduct the election to the best interest of the party' is about the sort of oath that will be administered; that's the way they have been doing in the black belt for 20 years past. The county registrar has power to send out a man to register every Jones man and not Kolb men. Those darkies (Pointing to a number of colored auditors on the outskirts) are not in it at all and you white folks are only 15 degrees from where they are . . . . The agonized claim that judges will be at the polling places to prepare the ballot of such as cannot read. These men will be simply 'fixers' who prepare the ballots as the bosses dictate.

Although Longshore and Baltzell did not prove that the Sayre Election law disfranchised voters, they did indicate that Democrats could employ the law to defraud Negroes and poor-whites.

55 A. P. Longshore, Report of Speech at Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, April 21, 1894.

56 Frank Baltzell, Speech at Tuscaloosa County Alliance, Tuscaloosa Times, July 19, 1893.
Before pro-third party audiences, other speakers simply used a labeling technique calling the Sayre Act "villainous" or "undemocratic."

Kolb, still playing the martyr, declared that the Sayre Law was directed against him. Kolb quoted Governor Jones as saying: "Hand me that bill quick, for fear my arm may be paralyzed. It forever wipes out third partyism and Kolbism in Alabama." P. G. Bowman used this same statement throughout the campaign and finally produced a witness to substantiate it. John Shugart, a person who reportedly heard the Governor make the remark, testified:

I have lived in Jefferson County since I was one year old, and I am now nearly 42, weigh 166 pounds, am five feet six inches high and am personally responsible for what I say, and I never swallowed anything in my life. On the 21st day of February 1893, I went behind the enrolling clerk to Governor Jones' room. Sam Will John was there lobbying all the time, I say it, against the laboring people. Governor Jones asked what I would have, and Mr. John said: 'Governor, or Tom,' I don't remember which, 'here is the Sayre Election bill,' and the Governor laid mine aside. (Here Mr. Shugart again said he was personally responsible for what he said, and that his office was on Third Avenue near Twenty-first

---


street, room 1, Lane and Terry building, and that no guards were stationed there,) Governor Jones said: 'Hand me that bill I want to sign it before my arm is paralyzed. It forever does away with Kolbism and negro supremacy in Alabama. 59

Use of the alleged Jones' statement was an attempt to substitute an *ad hominem* attack for valid argument. Although the Shugart statement would help in emphasizing the apparent intent of the Sayre Law, its use makes one question the ethics of speakers who evaded argument in this manner.

Discussion of the Sayre Election Law served two purposes. First, it helped unify the Agrarian reformers against the Democratic Party. Secondly, it educated audiences as to the provisions of the Sayre Law so that voters would not be disfranchised because of ignorance of the act.

B. The state administration is unworthy of support

Reform orators made two major attacks on the record of the state administration, arguing that it approved the leasing of convicts to work in the coal mines and that the Democratic gubernatorial candidates had undesirable records.

1. The state administration approves of convict leasing

In the counties where convicts were worked in the mines, third party speakers advocated abolishing the convict

lease system. The Democratic platforms of 1890, 1892, and 1894 favored revision of the convict lease system, but nothing was done about the matter. Kolb and his friends compared their stand on the issue with that of the Democrats and pointed out that the Democrats had not carried out campaign promises.

Convict leasing was a threat to the mining communities in two ways. First, such labor competed with free labor. Secondly, many of the men who worked in the mines as convicts remained to work when they were released. Residents of the area objected to them as an undesirable element. Third party speakers verbalized these threats, seeking to motivate hearers to support the Agrarian platform by appealing to desire for security and protection of home and children. Kolb said to a Birmingham audience,

One of the most vital, important issues which imperatively demands the earnest consideration of every lover of his state, is the convict question. I have given this subject much thought, and I am firmly in the opinion that the present lease system is unwise for the state, iniquitous towards the convicts and odiously unjust toward the honest, the free labor of our great and growing commonwealth. Fellow citizens, I have strong convictions on this subject and especially do I sympathize with the good people of Jefferson County who suffer more than all the rest of the state combined, from the operation of this law, which allows this fair city and these fertile valleys, the homes of an honest, free and thrifty people, to become the dumping ground of the state's vicious and pauperized refuse. And if you cannot be rid of this iniquitous
system in any other way, if I should be elected your next governor I now and here pledge myself by the authority which shall be reposed in me to cancel all contracts by which the convict lease system has its existence.  

Kolb frequently quoted from his Birmingham speech or from newspaper reports of the speech.  

Taliaferro asked a Birmingham audience,  

What more humiliating sight can a free white man, with a heart throbbing in his bosom, that is honest, with children whose parents are free from stain so far as their moral character is concerned, who labor under but one misfortune, and that is the misfortune of poverty--what a shame it is to see a state by legislation forcing these free white men to compete with a lot of convicts for a livelihood to support their wives and children.  

In this same speech Taliaferro insinuated that Jones was against removing the convicts from the mines because the head of the Jones' Club in Birmingham objected to their removal. Implying guilt by association he said,  

I assert another proposition. In all my acquaintance in Jefferson county (and it is extensive) I have not yet learned of one single man who is in favor of the convict system who is not also in favor of Jones for governor. I assert furthermore, that I have not heard of a single man in Jefferson county who is in favor of the convict system who is for Kolb for governor. Now, you know a man, as a general rule, by the company he keeps.  

---

63 Ibid.
Bowman attempted to direct resentment toward the mine owners by suggesting that they had special reason for defeating Kolb:

It would pay one corporation alone in Jefferson county to pay $100,000 in order that the will of the people might be throttled. Fifteen hundred convicts are hired from the state for about $180,000 a year. If these convicts were removed, the Tennessee Iron and Railroad Company would have to pay $750,000 a year for free labor. The company could afford to pay out an enormous sum, (to defeat Kolb in the election) 64

Manning simply called "attention to the fact that the convicts had not been taken from the mines. He said that Governor Jones had pledged himself to remove the convicts." 65

Agrarian speakers employed emotional appeals to connect their cause with the interests of the mining communities. The convict lease contention was a strong one since it demonstrated that the Democrats had not carried out campaign promises. It was used to attract the support of the voters in the mining areas who objected violently to the convict system.

2. The Democratic gubernatorial candidates are unworthy of support.

Reform orators suggested that Governor Jones' 64

record was an undesirable one for a gubernatorial candidate because he misused his pardoning power, squandered state funds on military encampments, was in the pay of the railroads, was not a good Democrat, called out troops unnecessarily to break strikes, and raised the state debt.

a. Thomas G. Jones has an undesirable record.

Kolb led the attack with the statement, "The Jones administration is marked by his mania for pardoning criminals. . . ." He implied that Jones had pardoned an unusually large number of prisoners but quoted no definite number. Kolb also charged that Jones pardoned criminals who returned to their life of crime:

He (Kolb) made a long and labored effort to show that Joe Gentry the negro from Opelika, pardoned by Governor Jones was not in the poor house but was running a 'blind tiger' in Opelika. To prove his last point he produced a bottle of whiskey with a certificate posted on it by one who claimed he had bought the liquor at Gentry's 'tiger.' He also produced the certificate of the Sheriff of Lee County that he had seen the fellow buy the whiskey of Gentry.67

On two other occasions in the locality of Gentry's 'tiger' Kolb produced a bottle of whiskey as a visual support.68

---

The use of testimony and visual aids constituted a somewhat dramatic presentation of inartistic proof to stir listeners to think that Governor Jones deliberately allowed criminals to settle in their midst. Based upon one example, this argument is not adequately supported. However, associating with the argument emotional appeals to security could well have stirred the antagonism of his listeners.

Suggesting that Jones spent money unnecessarily on military encampments, Taliaferro urged voters to consider the matter of Jones' Fourth Regiment, "with an annual encampment at a cost of $900 to $1000 and epaulets, while the people are hardly able to pay their debts, yet they are taxed for this purpose." Kolb reported that at Mobile, Jones "spent $900 for music and $150 of it was for music at the Governor's headquarters." On another occasion, a reporter noted that Kolb "caught the audible approval of a large portion of his listeners by saying, 'My friends, I'm confident that you don't want to pay out money for brass buttons and music as long as cotton stays at six cents.'" Kolb did not consider the Governor's

---

69 E. T. Taliaferro, Report of Speech at Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 24, 1892.

70 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

reasons for a new regiment or the value of militia encampments. He depended on the emotional appeal of security to arouse the desired response. For farmers who had enjoyed no frills like music or brass buttons, this was an effective means to secure agreement that the Governor was wasting tax money.

Taliaferro implied that the Governor favored the railroads, suggesting that "no railroad attorney should be placed upon the supreme court bench or made governor of a state; while they might honestly discharge their duties their judgement [sic] would be biased." Most farmers looked upon the railroads as greedy corporations and upon their attorneys as conniving manipulators of the law. While Taliaferro had a reasonable point he gave it an unwarranted emotional coloring by connecting it with audience prejudice toward railroads.

72 E. T. Taliaferro, Report of Speech at Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 24, 1892.
73 "Complaints against the railways, while most violent in the West, were by no means confined to that section. Practically every charge made by the western farmers had its counterpart everywhere else. In the South particularly the sins that the roads had committed differed in degree perhaps, but not much in kind, from the sins of the western roads. Southern railroads, like western railroads, were accused of levying 'freight and fares at their pleasure to the oppression of the citizens' and of making their rates according to the principle 'take as much out of the pockets of the farmers as we can without actually taking it all.' John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1931), pp. 72-73.
Bowman tried to arouse prejudice toward aristocracy and heredity titles by referring to Governor Jones as "the grandson of Thomas Goode Jones of Shropshire, England." Bowman was a favorite of farm audiences and his delivery, described as "sarcastic," probably stirred some antagonism toward Jones.

Third party speakers also cast doubt on Jones' record as a Democrat, substituting emotion and prejudice for reason by frequently referring to an incident during the Reconstruction period when Jones rode in a Republican procession labeled the "fourth of July procession affair." Bowman employed this line of attack more than any other speaker, particularly before audiences of laborers in the mining districts where prejudice toward the Negro was strongest. At Pratt Mines he reportedly read an account of this procession . . . . Nearly all of the officers of the day proved to be negroes, and in reading their names the speaker added, 'colored,' or 'black' to the great amusement of the crowd . . . . 'There was another gentleman in the crowd who seemed to be ashamed of the company he was in for he wore his hat pulled down so far over his face that we could not distinguish him.' That man, continued Mr. Bowman, was the man who last week came up here to teach democracy. Would you vote for him?

---

75 Cf. Chapter III.
The reporter of Bowman's speech at Mt. Pinson noted that the Speaker's reading of the famous extract from the *Montgomery Mail* of July 6, 1867, dealing with the noted Fourth of July procession of that year, was skillfully done, he ringing all the changes on 'colored,' 'Black,' 'niggers,' and 'coons,' and convulsing the audience with laughter. Reports indicate that when Bowman mentioned the "Republican parade" matter in three other speeches, he aroused laughter and applause. Kolb made specific reference to the parade matter in a speech at Bessemer commenting, "No one could say that he had ever ridden in a Negro procession." Evidently audiences were probably familiar with the subject because it had been treated extensively in the newspapers and further development was unnecessary. In one debate, Kolb refuted Governor Jones' defense of the parade incident:

About that Fourth of July ride, I believe the Governor is sorry that he was caught in that sort of company. He claims to have been appointed as a Democrat. Mr. Sheperd, as good Democrat as anybody was removed to make place for him as Reporter of the Supreme Court. Jones was the private secretary to the Chief Justice, and all the judges boarded at his house in Jefferson... Governor Jones has said that this Fourth of July ride had no more political significance than his.

---


ride in the procession at Birmingham with President Harrison. It was his duty as Governor of the State to go there to receive the President of the United States; but it was not his duty to go in a Republican procession. 79

Third party use of the parade issue suggests the extent and intensity of prejudice toward the Negro office holders and Republicans of the Reconstruction. Jones' efforts to justify his actions suggest that he realized how potent this argument was with his audience. Use of the "parade argument" for audiences of the 1890's was most likely an effective though unethical means of persuasion.

In the same mining areas where they had advanced the convict lease argument, third party speakers criticized Governor Jones for calling out the state militia to prevent strikes. In unsupported assertions they stated that the calling of the militia was an unnecessary action. Bowman attempted to stir the fear of a Birmingham audience as follows: "Today we hear the march of soldiers on the streets of Birmingham when they are not needed. If it comes to that we can get up a regiment larger than the Second." 80 A second speaker, William Vaughn, said, "the prime cause of the disturbance at Pratt Mines was Governor

79 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

Jones' bringing the bluecoat soldiers there sixty days ago, and if Governor Jones wished to kill the germ of disease he would issue one more proclamation and that one against the ballot box thief." Before an audience of farmers S.M.Adams claimed that the use of troops in Birmingham was

An unjust and unnecessary expense for the people. He made the impression that he was in sympathy with the striking miners and stated that if Kolb was governor the military would not have been called to now be paying $1200 a day to the soldiers for the protection of a few mines and railroads. Bowman, Vaughn, and Adams ignored the fact that there were valid reasons for calling the troops to Birmingham. They employed emotional appeals to move their listeners. Bowman's suggestion that the miners might oppose the troops was not a responsible one and lent credence to Democratic charges that he was "wild and unreasonable."

A.P. Longshore made a last criticism of Governor Jones which was frequently repeated in the reform press. Longshore told a farmer audience "about Governor Jones borrowing for the state hundreds of thousands of dollars and raising the taxes of the people, but for what purpose he did not know." Jones had borrowed money for the state

83 A.P. Longshore, Report of Speech in Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, April 21, 1894.
and had recommended an increase in taxes because of the increasing state debt. The implication that Jones' financial policy was bad for the state remained unsupported. The Governor himself claimed that he had a sound fiscal program. Longshore probably won few converts to the Kolb banner with this argument.

b. William C. Oates has an undesirable record.

During the 1894 campaign third party speakers suggested that Oates was unworthy of office because he supported Cleveland and because he opposed the Blair Educational Bill and the Hatch Act. They gave much attention to his congressional record and to his statement that "he did not believe it the duty, nor is it to the best interest of the state, to educate its entire population beyond the primaries." Bowman accused Colonel Oates of opposing "the education of farmers' sons" in order to "keep them in ignorance, so that they could control them." In a debate with Oates, Kolb charged his opponent with saying that "No follower of mine could pass a primary examination."

---

85 Birmingham Age-Herald, May 6, 1894.
The education argument based on the evidence of Oates' voting record in Congress appealed to security and freedom of action. It cast doubt on Oates' views on education and prejudiced farmers against him.

C. The National Administration is unworthy of support.

In 1894 third party speakers attacked both the United States Congress and President Cleveland, suggesting that the national administration was unworthy of support.

1. Congress is unworthy of support.

Kolbites blamed Congress for the economic ills of the day. For example E.P. Johnson suggested that unjust congressional acts threatened security:

The farmers and laborers bear eighty per cent of the burdens of the government and have no representation in congress. All others pay twenty per cent and have all the law-making power. About the close of the war, congress passed an act by which cotton was taxed to the enormous amount of three dollars per one hundred pounds, which was a direct tax on the farmers and nobody else.  

Herein the speaker presented questionable statistics. The farmer representation argument was not completely true because there were Populists in both House and Senate at that time.  

89 Hicks, op.cit., p.338.
Remembering the cotton tax, the listeners probably con­
cluded that the 1894 Congress was no better than the
Reconstruction Congress.

In a further attack on Congress, he traced the
hardships of a hypothetical farm family through two genera­
tions. He attempted to hit several sensitive spots with
the listeners. He mentioned that the father, "a poor rebel
soldier," began farming after the war and had to go in debt.
The poor farmer expected the "friendship of the government"
but to his surprise his representatives contracted the
currency, and increased his debt instead of cancelling it.
At the death of the father the farm was taken over by the
son, who "can't understand why the rich man's millions go
untaxed and yet he has to pay tax on his pony and plow,
his hoe and axe." Life became too much for the young man
and "for the sake of some relief he will either be a
criminal, a tramp, a pauper, a suicide or a lunatic or all
if necessary; and thus Shylock and Satan secure another
victim." The beautiful daughter of the family was forced
to become a prostitute and finally committed suicide. 90
Johnson included many emotional appeals in the hypothetical
example. It was decidedly overdrawn but it contained

90 E. P. Johnson, Alliance Speech, The Jeffersonian,
February 9, 1894.
enough similarities to their own lives that the listeners could identify with the lives of the hypothetical family and anticipate "a tragic end" for themselves if they did not take over the government.

A. P. Longshore attempted to arouse resentment and hatred of the Democratic Congress by ridiculing its extravagant expenditures on soap and towels. To his farmer-listeners who had experienced difficulty in feeding their families, such emotional appeals were probably effective.

Goodwyn warned that foreign capital unduly influenced the national administration:

Shylock rallies his forces and binds us while he controls our commerce and our money. . . . Foreign capital has come to this country and absorbed a large amount of our wealth. It is natural they should dictate the legislation. Though we exceed England hundreds of millions in wealth, we say to England, we will have no financial law that does not suit her.

The stereotypes of "Shylock," "foreign capital," and "dictate legislation" were designed to arouse listeners who already distrusted the Democratic administration's money policy.

J. C. Manning employed emotional appeal to freedom of action to attack the Democrats. He questioned, "Like hired hounds we cling at the feet of plutocracy and

91 A. P. Longshore, Report of Speech at Linden, The Linden Reporter, June 8, 1894.

Democracy. Shall we do it any longer? (cries of no, no, no.)" It seems from the report of audience reaction that he got the desired response.

2. Cleveland has been an undesirable President.

Jeffersonians further attacked President Cleveland because he failed to support the silver plank of the platform on which he was elected and the spoils system of political appointments. They especially criticized Cleveland's appointments of a Republican as Secretary of State and a Negro as Ambassador to Calais.

Speaking against the President's money policy Longshore:

charged Cleveland and his party with it all - the panic, and the scarcity of money and all the evils connected with the hard times! ... He accused congress in accordance with the dictates of Mr. Cleveland, of repealing the only clause in the Sherman Law that was worth anything to the people, as it stopped the purchase of silver bullion, and knocked a vast amount of money out of circulation.93

Manning was more folksy in style than Longshore. The "Evangel" told the Populist State Convention delegates:

Last year you threw up your hats for Cleveland, now you have no hats to throw up. (cries of 'we have no money to buy a hat!) But you would be


94 A.P. Longshore, Report of Speech at Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, April 21, 1894.
able to put down a square meal if you got it.
(laughter) Grover Cleveland is the greatest enemy of the present civilization. Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Cleveland went fishing at Buzzards Bay, while pains and starvation raged. And Ben Harrison, what of him? He shoots ducks while women and children cry for hunger. (McCarty cried, 'He's in San Francisco lecturing on hard times!') He ought to (said Manning) he helped make hard times and ought to know what to say about them.95

Dealing with the repeal of the Silver Purchase Act, Baltzell accused:

Cleveland announced when he became president that he would establish a gold standard; he would give the country an object lesson—you see, in its failures and general distress. Cleveland's object lesson consists in teaching the people that one man's ideas shall be supreme. His course is heartless, cruel and mean; without parallel in history except when Nero fiddled while Rome burned. He arrogates to himself monarchical powers, by refusing to execute the laws for the purpose of carrying out his individual views of finance.96

The inference that the economic distress [effect] of the country was the result of Cleveland's money policy [cause] was an oversimplification of a complicated causal relationship. It was a case of loose thinking on the part of Manning, Longshore, and Baltzell. This fallacy was "a simple explanation for an occurrence which may have many causes."97 The speakers ignored the many

95 J. C. Manning, Report of Speech at Birmingham Convention, Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.
96 Frank Baltzell, Speech to Tuscaloosa County Alliance, Tuscaloosa Times, July 19, 1893.
97 Braden and Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 125.
factors besides monetary policy which bear on a country's economic condition. The three speakers failed to give valid reasons for needing a change in monetary policy but associated the causal inference with strong motive appeals designed to stir fear and indignation. They suggested to listeners that economic conditions threatened their security, thus evoking the probable response of fear for the future. They charged that Cleveland betrayed the Democratic platform and imposed his personal views on the people, thus appealing to justice and fair play. This is another case of substituting emotional appeal for logical argument and is an unethical approach to persuasion.

E. P. Johnson questioned Cleveland's party loyalty declaring:

After getting into office on a platform that was especially adapted to the wants of everybody individually and collectively, and to let all have quick relief, and plenty of money, he convenes congress in order to do something for the 'dear people' but according to the president's own dictionary, "the dear people" means only bankers and other Shylocks. They get relief and the sons of toil get the object lesson. He is a "dyed in the wool" democrat but in order to enforce democratic doctrine, he has placed at the head of the government the most vile of the bloody shirt republicans. He is a fixed fact in favor of white supremacy and in order to enforce his mandate he has entrusted the representation of the United States to negroes and advised that the negro shall be heard in all deliberations, but no white
man who favors honest government shall be allowed a voice in the party or a vote in the government. Johnson based his argument on the assumption that a good Democrat supported his party platform and appointed only white Democrats to high governmental positions. He probably knew his Alliance audience well enough to evaluate their acceptance of this assumption. By stating that Cleveland failed to carry out the platform and that he appointed a Republican and a Negro to governmental posts Johnson played on audience prejudice toward Negroes and Republicans and probably aroused anger toward Cleveland.

By comparing Cleveland's economic security with that of the average audience member, Skaggs and Longshore stimulated resentment toward the President. Knowing something of the conditions in many of the poor homes of Alabama Longshore described Cleveland's "extravagant style of living; of his dwelling in a finely furnished house, with a table laden with wine and all the luxuries that wealth could command while the people were suffering for the necessities of life!" Skaggs amplified his charge by reading a newspaper account of Cleveland's New Year's reception and drew a parallel with another newspaper account.

---


account concerning the closing down of mills and hunger in
the country. Goodwyn also cast doubt on Cleveland's
character and party loyalty. He told the Jefferson County
Convention delegates,

In the last campaign you were told that the great
question was the force bill. Thousands of people
in other states voted for democracy to defeat that
bill. Who was the author of that bill? Lodge. Who was its champion? Sherman. Those who opposed
Cleveland were denounced as cranks and fools. As
soon as he was elected Cleveland said the great
question was the finances. Whom did he put in
the cabinet? Gresham, a man who had denounced us
as no other man had ever done. Whom did he put
in charge of his message which he sent to the
extraordinary session? Lodge, the author of the
The last campaign was one of hypocrisy and
decit.  

Building up a series of specific instances by his question-
answer chain, Goodwyn suggested that Cleveland was hypo-
critical. He premised his argument on the audience belief
that any Democrat who appointed Republicans to government
posts was hypocritical. This was probably a safe analysis.

Skaggs assumed that his audience agreed that
Cleveland was not a good Democrat and argued that Jeffer-
sonians were true Democrats because they did not support
Cleveland. He said,

I have never heard of a Jeffersonian democrat
or a person claiming to support Captain Kolb,

100 W.H. Skaggs, Speech at Jeffersonian Convention,
Birmingham Age-Herald, February 9 1894.
101 A.T. Goodwyn, Report of Speech at Birmingham,
Birmingham Age-Herald, January 24, 1894.
approve of Grover Cleveland sending a negro to Calais; nor have I ever heard of any one indorsing [sic] him in appointing Walter Q. Gresham secretary of state; nor have I ever heard of any of Captain Kolb's followers indorsing [sic] the appointment of Wayne McVeagh as minister of Italy, a man who was always a republican, and only supported Cleveland because he could not indorse [sic] Harrison and did not like Reid.\textsuperscript{102}

Third party attacks on Cleveland were attacks on the man's personality and not upon his arguments. They were based mostly on emotional appeals to audience prejudice. They suggested that the national administration was no better than that of the state and emphasized the basic premise that the farmers must control the government at every level.

II. The third party agrarians are Democratic.

Opponents of the third party attacked Kolb, the Alliance, and the Ocala platform as being "unconstitutional and undemocratic." To meet these charges, reform party speakers argued (1) that the Ocala demands were Democratic; (2) the Alliance was founded on democratic principles; and (3) that Kolb was a good Democrat.

A. The Ocala demands are based on Democratic principles.

\textsuperscript{102} W. H. Skaggs, Speech at Jeffersonian Convention, Birmingham \textit{Age-Herald}, February 9, 1894.
Kolb's first tactic was to inform farmers just what the Ocala platform contained. He frequently read either parts or the whole document to his audience, claiming that "there was nothing unconstitutional about it, and advised his hearers to accept and support it."103 Since the few farmers who could afford newspapers frequently boycotted the conservative press, many needed information about the Ocala platform. Since the Ocala demands promised economic relief, it is doubtful that many farm audiences were inclined to find fault with them. Kolb also depended on his own reputation to win farmer audiences to the Ocala platform.

Besides explaining the Ocala platform, Kolb discussed the individual demands. He asserted that free and unlimited coinage of silver was sound democratic doctrine "except perhaps, in New York, Mr. Cleveland's home, and other Eastern states, where the plutocratic influence of Wall Street prevails. The majority of the Democratic leaders, except in the East, claim to be battling for an enlargement of the circulating medium."104

The implication that "sound democratic doctrine"


was practiced by "Democratic leaders" was an attempt to get the audience to equate the two terms to mean the same. The use of "except perhaps" clearly labels the argument as assertion and opinion. However, Kolb associated his ideas with those of his audience. He probably stirred his Alabama listeners by mentioning that the silver demand of the Ocala platform was opposed by the traditionally hated "eastern states," "New York," and "Wall Street." These stereotypes had long been prevalent in the South and the West.

To defend the Ocala demand for abolition of National Banks, Kolb employed fallacious and emotional argument. He said:

Every citizen familiar with the teachings of the democratic leaders from the days of 'Old Hickory,' the illustrious Andrew Jackson, knows that the whole national banking system is undemocratic. All the southern papers, with very few exceptions, are opposed to these banks. What objections then can there be to the Alliance manifesting its opposition to this system by petitioning Congress in the guise of a 'demand' to repeal the law under which these banks flourish and thrive at the expense of the people?105

To say that "this is undemocratic because everybody knows it is undemocratic" begs the question. By connecting his argument with Andrew Jackson, whom most Southerners respected as the President who put Jeffersonian Democracy into practice, Kolb substituted emotional

105 Ibid.
appeal of reverence of authority for logical argument. He continued an evasive technique by using the band-wagon appeal that "all southern papers" were against National Banks. Kolb was certain of audience attitude toward his subject and could have saved time by saying, "I know we are in agreement here." However, by pointing up the area of audience agreement with one area of the Ocala platform, he increased the likelihood of agreement with the entire document. This was good argumentative technique.

Both the State Democratic and the Ocala platforms contained demands for additional governmental control of railroads. Kolb suggested that control was needed since the railroads had become combines and trusts but that the Democrats were not really sincere in their platform, that it was merely "a political wall to cut off the gaze of the people and deceive them." He could have pointed up the idea that the Democratic platform was really little different on the subject of railroad control than the Ocala

106 "Instead of proving an argument, the speaker may attempt to win his point by associating his ideas with those things which are respected or revered by the group." Braden and Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 456.

107 R. F. Kolb, Speech to Jeffersonian Club in Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, October 17, 1892.
demand. It would have made a stronger point of his case had he questioned why the Democrats objected to an Ocala demand that they themselves advocated.

Jerry Simpson did not directly defend the Ocala demand for railroad control. Instead he attempted to show that the railroads were so powerful and corrupt that the audience could only conclude that control was necessary. He attempted to discredit all railroads by describing one railroad owner, Jay Gould, as a grasping, conniving, member of the aristocratic millionaire class that robbed labor and unduly influenced government officials:

As Gould moves across the continent in his palace car the very wind of his garments is enough to corrupt a legislature. The corporations and the millionaires are controlling your government and you are becoming slaves. When the government undertook to establish a great public blessing like postal telegraph, Mr. Gould fought it. When he went to Washington did he call on Mr. Wannamaker? No. The postmaster-general of the United States called to see the millionaire in his palace car at the Pennsylvania depot.108

Simpson further contended that the railroads influenced congressional legislation:

When the proposition was made to enact a law and control the railroads in the interest of the people, they were confronted by men like Cullom, sitting in the senate as paid attorneys of

the railroads. And what was done? On the end of the law was tacked the words 'under similar circumstances and conditions.' No man knows what that is and when the commission came to act under it they had to get the railroads to come and interpret what the law meant. Why if the railroads had had the enactment of the ten commandments, they would have fixed it to read: 'Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery—under similar circumstances and conditions,' and the decalogue in their hands would have meant nothing. Simpson offered no logical proof for his assertions. He employed emotional appeal effectively to increase antagonism toward trusts and corporations with loaded words like "palace car," "aristocracy," and "millionaire." He directed audience resentment toward the railroads with: (1) the suggestion that Gould was against the people because he fought the establishment "of a great public blessing" [appeal to the motive of freedom of action and security]; and (2) the suggestion that the railroads would change the ten commandments if they could [appeal to the audience's sense of tradition and reverence]. Listeners probably made the fallacious connection that Gould controlled government officials because Postmaster-general Wannamaker called on Jay Gould.

The sub-treasury proposal received more criticism than any other part of the Ocala platform. Opponents not only declared it undemocratic and unconstitutional but

109 Ibid.
attempted to show that it would not give the intended relief. In questioning the workability of the proposal they explained that, since the farmer mortgaged his crop before he planted it, he would have nothing to put into government warehouses at harvest time; consequently the bill would benefit only the merchant who owned the crop. Kolb tried to prove that the sub-treasury proposal was democratic, constitutional, and as workable as any plan devised. He declared that the bill was democratic "because a large number of people want it." In employing the reasoning that whatever the people want is democratic, Kolb was guilty of extending the meaning of "a large number of people" to mean majority of the people. This was probably an effective technique since audiences indoctrinated by a "we the people" basis for democracy would fall for the fallacy out of reverence for tradition.

Concerning the constitutionality of the sub-treasury proposal, Kolb argued that congress had the power to provide for the general welfare, that the sub-treasury bill provided for the general welfare; therefore congress had the constitutional authority to enact the bill. This was


111 Inherent in the name "People's Party" was the implication of "majority" and the "People are always right."
effective argument only for audiences who already agreed that the sub-treasury proposal provided for the general welfare. To enforce audience agreement Kolb added an emotional appeal saying:

If congress has the power to vote pensions to soldier's widows, to appropriate money to fire and flood sufferers, to loan funds to the Philadelphia Centennial, New Orleans Exposition and the Chicago Fair, to give rations to the Oklahoma 'boomers,' to vote away millions of acres of the public's domain to railroad corporations, it is sublime folly to say it has no authority to help the growers of corn and cotton.112

None of the examples in Kolb's analogy are enough like the sub-treasury proposal to warrant a valid comparison. However, he prompted his listeners to question congress' sense of fair play and evaluation of human life if it aided non-human agencies like the Philadelphia Centennial, New Orleans Exposition, and Chicago Fair and ignored the farmers.

As to the workability of the sub-treasury proposal, Kolb admitted that he did not claim that it would give the farmers relief or that it could be made practicable. He and other speakers attempted to shift the burden of proof to the opposition by the challenge to provide something better. Kolb said: (1) Let them frame us a bill embodying

relief and we are more than ready to accept it at any time;" 113 (2) "Our opponents simply combat our suggestions without offering anything better. . . ." 114 (3) "We merely say if this won't give relief, formulate a measure that will." 115 These ideas were echoed by other speakers. 116

Third party speakers were in the position of keeping partisan support for a national proposal, while agreeing with the opposition that the proposal was not practicable. The challenge to propose something better attempted to place the Democrats in the dilemma of either accepting the idea or proposing a new one, thereby admitting the need for a relief program. The Democrats did not fall for the dilemma. Kolb and his fellow speakers continued to argue as if the opposition agreed that there was a problem and that the only area of disagreement was how to solve it.


This method probably kept partisan support as well as any other could have done.

In defense of the entire Ocala platform Kolb argued that the farmers had the constitutional right to meet in Ocala and petition the government. Since the Democrats did not object to the right of the Alliance to meet but rather to the Ocala demands themselves, Kolb here refuted an argument not advanced by the opposition. He employed the deceptive technique of attempting to transfer audience agreement with the right of the Alliance to meet and petition to agreement with the petition itself.

Third party speakers depended primarily on emotional appeals in defending the Ocala demands. Kolb, Simpson, and Reese used some logical argument but emphasized appeals to listeners' desires for freedom of action, tradition, and security.

B. The Alliance is founded on Democratic principles.

In the 1892 gubernatorial campaign, when the farmers attempted to take over the running of the Democratic Party, the conservative Democrats attacked the Alliance as being undemocratic. Kolb attempted to gain a favorable image for

---

the farmer organization. He outlined the history of the Alliance employing "bandwagon" appeals stating, "... today it covers forty-two states of the Union and has enrolled under its snow-white banner over four million Americans who detest tyranny with the most intense hatred, and worship alone at freedom's shrine." This technique was of questionable value since mention of "four million" Alliancemen could have reinforced the attitude held by some Democrats that the farmers must be kept from running the party at any cost.

Besides bandwagon emotional appeal Kolb attempted to get his audience to "reason" that the Alliance was democratic. He said:

Listen to some of the tenets of the order—a government of the people, by the people, for the people, with equal rights to all and special privileges to none. The greatest good to the greatest number. The majority must govern, the representatives, as servants of the people, must obey the instructions of their constituents. No hereditary office or title, no taxation beyond the rigid necessities of the government. Equal taxation without favoritism. No costly splendor of administration. No national banks, as banks of issue, with controlling power. No favored class or monopolists. Opposition to centralized corporative powers. Cheap money for the people without the intervention of bankers interests. No intelligent person can read these fundamental principles without recognizing the

---

fact that the hand of a Jeffersonian democrat wrote them down. They are antipodal to the principles of the Republican party. Hence I am justified in declaring that a true allianceman can never be anything but a Democrat.119

All of this argument is unsound. First, Kolb premised that "anything a Jeffersonian Democrat writes down is Jeffersonian in principle." This premise is not true. He tried to reinforce this idea with the emotional appeal to audience respect of Jefferson. Secondly, the "tenets" of the order were not "antipodal to the Republican party." For example, the Republicans would certainly agree with "the majority must govern." Although unsound, this argument was likely effective with Democrats who wanted to believe that the Democratic Party believed in the "good" while the Republicans supported only the "bad." Thirdly, Kolb assumed that anything objected to by Republicans was approved by Democrats. This is untrue in the example of the "tenets" cited because there were Democrats who did not approve of the Alliance "cheap money" principle. After these three errors in reasoning Kolb was not justified in "declaring that a true allianceman can never be anything but a Democrat." Making such a statement was unwise since there were Kolb supporters, particularly in Winston County, who were Republican and Greenback Party members. Throughout Kolb's

119 Ibid.
entire argument runs the fallacy of equivocation in which he uses Democrat and democratic interchangeably.

S. M. Adams promoted a favorable image of the Alliance by reciting some of its accomplishments. He said:

Ever since it was organized in Texas it has been slandered and misrepresented. Yet its every act has been on the side of the people. Who redeemed Louisiana from the curse of the Lottery? The Alliance; and the same noble record of faithful service characterizes it all along. It snowed the lottery under and it snowed the machine under. And it will do the same thing in Alabama. Adams told a half-truth in his first sentence. The Alliance enjoyed a favorable press in most southern states until it began an active participation in politics. In his phrase "on the side of the people," Adams employed a method popular with the third party of using "people" in a context where it would be extended to mean "good," "majority," "we the people." The speaker overstated the role that the Alliance played in the overthrow of the lottery in Louisiana, but he did provide an example of the organization helping to defeat a "machine group," thereby offering Alliancemen encouragement that they might accomplish similar action.


While Kolb avoided reference to the farmers demanding a voice in running the state, Adams openly threatened that the Alliance would take over the Democratic Party. It is doubtful that the unsound argument and emotional appeals of the two speakers changed the attitudes of conservative Democrats. They would have contributed to holding wavering Alliancemen in the Alliance movement.

C. The Agrarian leader is Democratic.

For audiences of farmers or miners, Kolb answered the accusation that he was not a good Democrat by simply asserting that he was and always had been a Democrat. He stated that "he had been a life-long Democrat and his hands had never cast a ballot that did not have the sanction of the Democratic Party" and "never had he nor did he ever intend to espouse any cause that did not embody true simon-pure democratic principles." Kolb relied on his ethical proof to gain acceptance for his unsupported statements. Since he had the reputation from the 1890 campaign of being the farmers' "political Moses" he was fairly safe in assuming that farmer audiences in Kolb strongholds would

accept unsupported assertions.

For non-farmer audiences, Kolb and Taliaferro gave specific examples of Kolb's history as a Democrat. Kolb said:

These hands of mine have never cast anything but a Democratic ballot. My Democracy has never been questioned. I have been the Chairman of Congressional and County Conventions and was always a delegate to the State Convention from Barbour. I have been a trustee of the A.& M. College, appointed Commissioner of Agriculture by two Democratic Governors and my term as trustee will not expire before 1893.123

Taliaferro tried to prove that Kolb was presently a Democrat. He read the Birmingham Kolb Club platform which contained nothing that any Democrat could object to and testified: "Captain Kolb to my personal knowledge read that platform before it was adopted, and he read it afterwards carefully, word for word, and line for line, and he spontaneously, from his heart, announced that he endorsed every word it said from beginning to end."124 It was reasonable for Taliaferro to assume that his audience would agree with him that the Birmingham Democratic Kolb Club platform embraced party principles and that Kolb in endorsing the platform was behaving like a Democrat.

Taliaferro next developed an inductive chain of

123 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.
124 E. T. Taliaferro, Speech in Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 14, 1891.
examples full of emotional appeal to prove Kolb's past history as a Democrat. He appealed to reverence and authority by comparing Kolb to Andrew Johnson:

With one single exception I have never known a man aspiring to a political office in all my life... who has been more vilely slandered than Reuben F. Kolb has been in this canvass. Many years ago there lived in a neighboring state, a very distinguished man... He was slandered and labelled [sic] from one end of the state of Tennessee to the other. Combines and cliques and rings and politicians followed upon his heels wherever he went; but with his face before him, with a conscience clear of all guilt, in the sight of God, and never self-accusing, at last at the ballot box, he was returned to the senate of the United States where he had been before the war. I allude to that great man, Andrew Johnson. (loud applause) So we have a repetition of that canvass in this state, and it is your duty, my countrymen, whether you be for Jones or for Kolb, to do this man simple justice. I will not and I know you will not 'hear mine own enemy slandered.'

Applause at the mention of Johnson's name indicates the high esteem in which southern audiences held him. Taliaferro's analogy was well chosen in that it associated Kolb with a respected Democrat who had been successful in a rough campaign and also fostered Kolb's martyr image.

Taliaferro gave five additional illustrations of Kolb's Democratic record. Briefly these were: (1) He was a member of the Democratic State Convention and met

---

\[125\] Ibid.
Taliaferro in 1886; (2) Governor O'Neal endorsed Kolb's democracy and politics by appointing him to the board of the A. & M. College; (3) Two Democratic Governors appointed him as Commissioner of Agriculture; (4) For twenty years Kolb was a member of the Democratic Executive Committee of Barbour County; (5) Kolb reacted to the 1890 Convention like a good Democrat. From reports of other speeches it is evident that Taliaferro argued in the same manner on three other occasions.\textsuperscript{126} Taliaferro efficiently used detailed illustrations which developed emotional appeals to reverence and tradition. He proved that Kolb had been a Democrat and asked audiences to accept the authority of past record as a basis for believing that Kolb was at that time a party member in good standing. The fact that Taliaferro, an influential party member, spoke for Kolb no doubt helped the "Genial Reuben's" reputation as a good Democrat. Kolb and Taliaferro did not essentially meet the criticism of the opposition who did not challenge Kolb's past democracy but that he was presently neither a "good man" nor a "good Democrat."

\textsuperscript{126} E. T. Taliaferro, Reports of Speeches at Pratt Mines and Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 29, 1891, August 24, 1892; Report of Speech at Troy, Troy Messenger, March 10, 1892.
ETHICAL PROOF

It is apparent in Chapter Four that the leaders of the reform movement enjoyed backgrounds which gave them the respect and admiration of their followers. Not content to rely on what audiences knew about them, Kolb and his fellow orators made every effort through their speeches to enhance their reputations as men of intelligence, character, and good will. Since ethical appeal was used so often it is impractical to present more than a sampling of the various methods utilized by third party speakers.

Kolb almost always opened his speeches with an attempt to establish his good will. At Opelika he demonstrated his humility and good nature by stating "that he took the ovation more as a compliment to Alabama's greatest statesman, Colonel Taliaferro, than to himself." 127 At Pratt Mines he declared that he was glad to appear before working people "for he had been from his earliest boyhood, a workingman himself." 128 At Coalberg, Kolb complimented his hearers on their thrift and progress. 129 Using this

127 R. F. Kolb, Report of Speech at Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 24, 1892.
method again before the Jeffersonian Convention he praised his followers as "a people, mostly farming and toiling masses, who today are the very bedrock of the democracy of this state. . . . You are the true, the tried and unflinching Democrats, who have fought the battles and won the victories of the democracy of Alabama."130

Kolb reminded audiences that he was a loyal southerner saying that "he was in the war on the southern side as long as any soldier. He went out with the first company that entered the Confederate service."131

Identifying himself with his home county of Barbour, Kolb attempted to create goodwill for himself: "He thanked the audience for their presence and thanked God that it was once more his privilege to address an audience in Barbour County and that it was his prayer that he would die and be buried here."132

Kolb's greatest use of ethical appeal was in maintaining his martyr image. In one speech he asked, "Why are all these attacks made against me? They are all because I belong to the Alliance. I thank God I am a member of the Alliance. I believe it makes men better Democrats, because

130 R. F. Kolb, Speech in Birmingham, Alliance News, October 17, 1891.
132 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Jones Debate at Eufaula, Eufaula Daily Times, April 1, 1892.
I belong to that order." On another occasion he stated that "He was fighting the battle of the people against trusts, tricksters, and the illegal oppressions of capital upon labor." At Birmingham he asserted that the reason that he was opposed so strongly was that "They see in me, and hate me for it, one of the humble representatives of the great moving and living power of the progressive true and honest people of this country." At the Jeffersonian Opera House Convention Kolb reminded the delegates,

It has been made too apparent to admit of discussion that this warfare of proscription, ostracism and denunciation has not been directed against me individually but as a representative of those true democrats who ask to have their voices heard in matters of internal management and party policy.

Kolb implied that because he represented "good," everything against him was "evil." He associated with his name virtue words such as "Humble representative of the people" and "representative of true democrats" and assigned negative

133 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

134 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Jones Debate at Eufaula, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 1, 1892.

135 R. F. Kolb, Speech in Birmingham, Alliance News, October 17, 1891.

136 R. F. Kolb, Speech at Jeffersonian Convention, Ibid., June 22, 1892.
terms like "tricksters," "illegal oppressions of capital upon labor," "proscription, ostracism, denunciation," to the opposition. Kolb utilized "bandwagon" technique when he told an audience in Jacksonville that "five hundred men had come to him in person in Birmingham and stated, while they were against him before, they were for him now."\textsuperscript{137}

Kolb answered objections to his taking money from the Republicans when he said at the Kolb-Oates debate that he had been invited to Boston just as Henry Grady had been invited to the New England Society. "Those New England people gave money to build a monument to Grady. The money they gave to this cause of Civil Liberty in Alabama is to a more sacred cause than to build monuments over any dead man."\textsuperscript{138} This analogy between his actions and those of a respected southerner was intended to gain Kolb similar respect. The technique may have been effective.

Finally, Kolb quoted letters of endorsement from respected citizens. In a debate at Henderson he "read the endorsement of Chancellor Foster, Judge Alston, Mr. Clayton, Captain Guice and others of him for Commissioner

\textsuperscript{137} R. F. Kolb, Report of Jacksonville Speech, Montgomery Advertiser, March 18, 1894.

\textsuperscript{138} R. F. Kolb, "July 24, 1894, Kolb-Oates Debate," Birmingham Age-Herald, July 25, 1894.
of Agriculture and asked if they believed all the things that are charged against him, if they would have given him their recommendation."

To create respect for his intelligence, Taliaferro demonstrated a broad knowledge of constitutional history. He attempted to establish himself as an authority on politics by declaring, "After something of an investigation, and some twenty years of experience, more or less in politics, I have said upon the stump in Jefferson County what I repeat here tonight." Rebuking the opposition, he associated himself with proper democratic principle by saying:

I have long fallen into the use of the terms "common people" and the "common masses of the people," and, as a general rule a man uses dialect which expresses the ideas that are very close to his heart, and if I have sinned against the ear of propriety of these gentlemen, I am glad that my sin has been no more heinous than of speaking of that nearest my heart—the rights of the people among whom I live.

Warren Reese complimented the State Alliance Convention and created respect for his intelligence by demonstrating a broad knowledge of the economic conditions of the period.

139 R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate. Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.
140 E. T. Taliaferro, Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 14, 1891.
141 Ibid.
142 Warren Reese, Speech at State Alliance Convention, People's Reflector, n.d. 1891.
J. C. Manning reminded Populists of his humor and good will when he referred to the attack which had been made on him at Florence. He remarked, "that on one side he was egged on by his party and on the other side egged by the opposition."\textsuperscript{143}

Bowman attempted to create respect for his "manly character." On one occasion he "claimed the right to have an opinion and the manhood to express his preference."\textsuperscript{144} On a second instance "Mr. Bowman began his speech with his usual avowal of personal courage."\textsuperscript{145} To suggest his sincerity and honest motives Bowman said,

That he was no candidate but simply working for the success of that which he considered to be right, justice, and democratic. He did not want any office and was willing to sign a pledge that he would never accept an office.\textsuperscript{146}

S. M. Adams probably strengthened his reputation for fearlessness and good will when he concluded in one of his speeches: "Some men are afraid to come out for the right because the papers might jump on them. 'Why,' said he, 'they have abused me from one end of the country to the other.

\textsuperscript{143} Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.
\textsuperscript{144} P. G. Bowman, Report of Speech at Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 24, 1892.
\textsuperscript{146} P. G. Bowman, Report of Speech at Talladega, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 20, 1892.
and I don't mind it any more than I do the falling of gentle dewdrops from heaven."  

Adams increased his standing as a man of character by reminding hearers that "he was a minister of the gospel, and that he would say nothing that he would not say in his pulpit."  

Skaggs, who had left the regular party to become a Kolbite, referred to his heritage of Jeffersonian and Jacksonian principles to counteract Democratic criticism:  

The Age-Herald may call me a republican, a democrat, or a populist, I care not. I stand here tonight to advocate those principles I learned in childhood. If in doing that I am a populite, I then stand upon that plane which tends to the crystallization of the parties. I thank God for the principles I learned so aptly promulgated by Thomas Jefferson and so ably defended by Andrew Jackson; then I am profoundly happy knowing that I have learned pure democracy.  

In attacking the character of the opposition, Kolb speakers pointed out that Jones' supporters were men of questionable ethics. For instance Kolb said, "The senior editor of one of the opposing newspapers, himself a state officer at one time, had been proved to be a defaulter  

147 S. M. Adams, Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham Age-Herald, June 1, 1892.  


to the extent of $339 every dollar of which he had to pay
back." Bowman criticized the State Democratic Executive
Committee when he inquired:

Who is in charge of this campaign? Jones is
a good man, but before being elected governor,
he was the general attorney of the Louisville
and Nashville railroad. A. G. Smith is the
attorney of the Alabama Great Southern railroad,
and Clark and Knox are railroad attorneys, and the
corporations are in charge.

Kolb severely attacked another of Jones' leaders:

He said old man Sheppard at Birmingham is the
head of the Jones Campaign Committee and asked
'who is he?' He boasted for twenty years after
the war that he didn't cast a ballot when I
and men of my age were doing all in our power
to rid our people of Negro and Radical rule.
All that time Sheppard was hiding out and part
of the time was out of the State.

He also accused Governor Jones of "receiving stolen pro-

R. F. Kolb, Report of Speech at Pratt Mines,
Birmingham Age-Herald, November 17, 1891.

P. G. Bowman, Report of Speech at Opelika,
Birmingham Age-Herald, July 20, 1892.

R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery
Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

R. F. Kolb, Kolb-Stallings Debate, Montgomery.
Advertiser, March 15, 1892.
dared approach the headquarters of the Jeffersonian democracy, but he had seen as many Negroes as white men at the Democratic headquarters in Talladega."154

In his speech at the State Convention Goodwyn said, "We have the contest of the ages on our hands. A contest on one side for special privileges; on the other, against plutocracy. The pure Samaritan on one side, and the robber of the road on the other."155 His use of a Biblical reference helped contrast the two parties to the advantage of the Jeffersonians.

Third party speakers attempted to establish themselves as fairminded by suggesting that their criticism of the Democratic Party was directed at the Party leaders only. Goodwyn said, "I concede to an overwhelming majority of the opposition, integrity, and honesty of purpose."156 Bowman told an audience: "Don't think every man in the organized democracy is a thief and a rascal; ninety-nine out of every hundred of them are honest. A large majority of all men are honest."157

Summary

Did speakers argue from sound basic premises?

The premise that the farmers could obtain relief for their ills only through control of the state and national governments was sound. Previous attempts to solve their problems through farmer organizations and cooperatives had failed so that the only course of action was to become a political force and obtain beneficial legislation. In fact, finally the National Democratic Party recognized the soundness of the farmers' demands in 1896 by incorporating them in the national platform of that year.

The second premise that failure to gain control of the Democratic Party might necessitate a split with the old party and fusion with other political groups was sound. After the bitter campaigns of 1890 and 1892 it is unlikely that Kolb and the farmers could have ever gained control of the party. The Kolb people in the legislature were not effective, being constantly out-maneuvered by the regular Democratic machine. Even if Kolb had let Jones go unchallenged in 1892 and had waited until 1894 to run for governor, it is improbable that the Black Belt Democrats would have looked with any greater approval on him than they did in 1890. The reform leaders correctly interpreted the temper of their followers as indicated by the
willingness of the Alliancemen to follow Kolb into the Jeffersonian Democratic Party and fuse with other political groups during elections.

The premise that Agrarians were strong enough to gain control of the state and join reformers of other states to gain control of the national government was not entirely sound. True, the Agrarians had numerical strength, but they lacked the political experience and finesse to compete with the Black Belt politicians. Kolb apparently realized that his group could not succeed within the Democratic Party. He led his followers into the Jeffersonian Democratic Party in order to make the vote of the people the controlling factor in the contest. Here he would have the numerical advantage. This move failed when the regular Democrats controlled the counting of ballots to insure their own success.

The premise that the Negro vote must be considered in any election was sound. Since the regular Democrats actively sought Negro votes in 1892, it made good sense for Jeffersonians to do likewise. Failure in obtaining the Negro vote in 1892 made it necessary to consider what course of action to follow in 1894. The decision to abandon the Negro, in some cases urging him to stay away from the polls so that his vote could not be miscounted, seems regrettable but expedient. In any case the Negro was too important to be unnoticed in an election.
What contentions did speakers raise?

The reform orators contended offensively that the Democratic Party should be removed from power in favor of the third party. They argued that the record of the Democratic Party did not warrant its continuing in power since it was guilty of fraudulent practices and the state and national administrations were unworthy of support. Severe Democratic criticism of the Agrarians forced Kolb and his friends to argue defensively that the third party Agrarians were Democratic. An analysis of the arguments suggest that Kolb and his colleagues relied upon little arguments stemming out of local problems and situations in attempting to advance their cause. The speech texts and fragments available indicate that they seldom if ever attempted before popular audiences to consider the fundamental issues and the social and political problems involved in the times. While Populists in other states made national issues paramount,158 Alabama speakers devoted most of their speaking

158 In North Carolina "the outstanding issue of the campaign (1892) was money (with several ramifications) followed by corruption of government which allowed oppressive monopolies and dishonest elections." Robert W. Smith, "A Rhetorical Analysis of the Populist Movement in North Carolina, 1892-1896," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1957; Arnett writes that the national money question usually commanded chief attention in the Populist campaigns in Georgia. Alex M. Arnett, Populist Movement in Georgia (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922), pp. 143-155.
to such local issues as election frauds, convict lease laws, disfranchisement of certain groups, pardoning of criminals, extravagance of public officials, and the Negro problem.

Perhaps the implication of their strategy was that they believed that a discussion of the more basic problems was unnecessary or was likely to be misunderstood. This conclusion is supported by the fact that they talked mainly to rural groups that were not well informed and in many cases uneducated.

How effective were their means of persuasion?

Third party speakers reasoned from analogy, causal relationships, and specific example, offering testimony and statistics as a basis for reasoning. They evaded argument by question begging, insinuation, name calling, and petty appeal to prejudice. Kolb and his friends often presented illogical arguments but seemed to employ them in terms of audience attitude and prejudice. They attempted to gain control of the state government through an exploitation of the emotionalism of their day, stirring their listeners with appeals to the basic drives of security, freedom of action, fair play, pride, and tradition. The Agrarian speakers employed ethical proof effectively. Much of the campaign centered around the ethos of Kolb, who encouraged the presentation of himself as a martyr. This argument was
a convenient one because he could always cast aside a
damaging counter argument by contending that the attack was
personal and vindictive. In other words, he conveniently
sidestepped answering his opponents. In 1890 and 1892 he
used the strategy of transferring the attacks on himself
to the movement as a whole. This tactic and the other
means of persuasion employed by other reform speakers were
evidently effective as evidenced by their maintaining the
third party unity throughout the campaigns and garnering
enough votes to win elections had there been a fair count
of ballots.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

In the 1890's the cause of Agrarian reform began in Alliance agitation and grew into the Jeffersonian Demo­
cratic and Populist Parties. These fused with the Republi­
cans in election years to rock the state politically.
Scores of Third Party speakers declaimed the cause of reform in Alabama. Analysis of their number indicates a growth of emphasis on the spoken word throughout the period. In the 1890 "speakers against the newspapers" campaign, Kolb and Terrell were the principal voices against the conserva­
tive press. In 1892, according to reports, thirty-five Kolbites spoke 140 times at eighty-six places. In 1894, there were reportedly thirty orators who delivered 365 addresses at 186 occasions. Since the information on the period is incomplete, it is probable that many more speeches were given. The rhetoric of the movement forced the Demo­
crats to take to the field against Third Party speakers in a canvass of the state unequalled since the "redeeming campaign" of 1874.

The majority of the speeches were given by Kolb and ten other leaders. These men were educated, experienced
as speakers, active in public affairs, and respected community members. They were representative of particular groups who spoke for the Third Party. The movement centered in the person of Reuben F. Kolb. Commissioner of Agriculture, Allianceman, successful farmer-planter, he led the farmers as a "Political Moses." He was the only party leader who did not retire into political oblivion after 1896. Although other speakers were popular they never received the respect and loyalty given Kolb.

Occasions for Third Party speechmaking were Farmers' Institutes, Alliance sessions and outings, labor meetings, political rallies and conventions. They were advertised by newspaper, poster, handbill, and word of mouth. Outdoor gatherings often featured barbecues and picnics, socializing as well as speeches, where the orator was the "lion of the hour." Indoors the size of the courtroom, Alliance building, civic hall, or opera house limited the number present. At Institutes and Alliance meetings, speakers talked politics only after adjournment. Political rallies were severe in tone as speakers became more purposeful and intense. Conventions were the most colorful and partisan Third Party affairs. Previous arrangements such as decorated platforms and seats for listeners were the exceptions rather than the rule. Bands and processions, included whenever possible, lent atmosphere and mood, but to the speakers themselves belonged the responsibility for success or failure.
Poor white Alliancemen who shared common beliefs in God, white supremacy, and the Democratic Party composed most 1890 audiences. Exceptions were women and children and some Republicans and Greenbackers. In 1892-94, White Jeffersonian or Populist farmers comprised the majority of partisan hearers. Newspapers reported composite crowds as having Democrats, Republicans, miners, laborers, city-dwellers, and Negroes in attendance. Partisans were attentive though enthusiastic listeners, responding with laughter, cheers, applause, questions, and calls for stories. Groups divided in partisanship tried to out-do each other in cheering and applause, and fights and ill temper of both speakers and listeners were not uncommon occurrences. Third Party men used corn cob pipes, canes, hat bands, and wagon decorations as symbols of their support of Kolb. Survey of speech reports leaves the impression that the key word to describe most audiences was "enthusiastic."

Audiences are reported to have ranged from fifty to 8,000. The small groups were at county beat meetings and the larger gatherings at debates and Alliance outings.

In 1890 the embryonic Third Party had to defend itself against a vituperative newspaper campaign in order to keep the support of the farmers. The orators judiciously suggested that "a fight against Kolb is a fight against the Alliance," making Kolb a martyr for the cause by redirecting the attacks made on him to include all Alliancemen.
In 1892 and 1894 Third Party speakers subordinated national questions pertaining to land, transportation, and money to criticism of the policies of the state and national Democratic Party. This plan of attack seems to be a negative approach. Instead of advertising the advantages of a Third Party reform program, speakers spent most of their time in airing the faults of the Democrats. Such a course of action does not seem strange when one examines the situation. Kolb had a strong political following long before his campaign of 1890. In 1892 he led his followers into the Jeffersonian Party and in combination with the Populists and Republicans had a numerical advantage over the Democrats. If he could maintain the solidarity of his party he did not need to devote his campaign to extreme new causes. To keep partisans his plan of action was to expose the machine practices of the old party. The assaults on the money policy of the National Administration were an indirect method of advocating currency reform. These attacks on the Democrats served the purpose of heightening feelings, using attitudes and prejudices to advantage and increasing the fervor for the reform cause.

Basic premises from which reform speakers argued were with one exception sound. The premise that the Agrarians were strong enough to obtain control of the state government would have been sound had the contest been based on numerical strength alone. The Agrarians lacked the
political sophistication to joust in the same arena with the Black Belt politicians who also had the advantage of setting the rules of the game. Since Kolb was familiar with political machine tactics one wonders why he did not plan an effective counterattack against Democratic manipulations.

Third Party speakers offered testimony and statistics as a basis for reasoning from analogy, causal relationship, and specific example. Their arguments, though frequently illogical, were successfully adapted to specific audiences. They evaded their opposition by question-begging, argument ad hominem, labeling, and appeals to prejudice, custom, and tradition. Employing emotional proof as a means of persuasion Kolbites used motivations directed at basic drives of security, justice, fair play, pride, and freedom of action. By associating themselves with respected persons and ideas they utilized ethical proof to demonstrate their intelligence, character, and good will. Reform orators employed emotional appeal more than logical argument. Their extravagant language and broad assertions frequently gave the opposition grounds for calling them a party of anarchy and mob rule. The hot-tempered young men of the movement, in adapting to specific audiences, often failed to analyze the effects their appeals would have on the reading public and lost an opportunity to impress moderate opponents.
Although the Third Party was never successful in electing a governor or legislative majority, the movement was politically and socially significant since it did force recognition of dishonest election procedures and of the corruption of machine politics. Legislation traceable to Third Party demands includes laws pertaining to agriculture and agriculture education, statewide direct primary, labor, and improved (though not completely discontinued) convict system. Through the brotherhood of the Farmers' Alliance and their battle with the Bourbon dynasty for political rights, the farmers acquired and recognized their status as a distinctive part of society.

The rise of the Third Party made the Negro vote in Alabama the deciding factor in elections. To be certain that this situation never occurred again, Alabamians, through the Constitution of 1901, effectively disfranchised many poor whites and almost all Negroes. Although the "pure democracy" which S. M. Adams claimed for populism never existed, the Democratic Party did undergo a housecleaning and the farmers did become an active electorate.

The effectiveness of Third Party speakers gives validity to the fundamental assumption that rhetoric has a vital function in shaping human affairs. Orators voicing the discontent of the period exhorted voters to use the ballot box to obtain needed reform. The Agrarians would
have been successful in electing Kolb governor in 1892 and 1894 if the votes had been counted fairly. The speechmaking of the Third Party movement assured that in the 1890's in Alabama the voice of the people was heard in the land.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. MANUSCRIPTS

A. T. Goodwyn, Biographical Folder, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

A. C. Hargrave, Scrapbook 64, Alabama Room, Amelia Gayle Gorgas Library, University of Alabama.


Thomas Goode Jones Papers, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

R. F. Kolb, Biographical Folder, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Robert McKee Papers, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

Pike County Folder, Alabama State Department of Archives and History.

Warren S. Reese, Biographical Folder, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

W. H. Skaggs, Biographical Folder, The Alabama Department of Archives and History.

O. D. Street Papers, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

E. T. Taliaferro, Biographical Folder, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

B. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS


237
Catalogue of Florence State Normal College: 1886-1887


Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture of the State of Alabama, 1890.


C. NEWSPAPERS

Advertiser, Montgomery, 1865-1896.

Age-Herald, Birmingham, 1890-1896.


Alliance Herald, Montgomery, 1891-1894.

Alliance Journal, Montgomery, 1889-1890.

Alliance News, Montgomery, 1891-1892.

Banner, Ozark, 1892-1894.

Bibb Blade, Centreville, 1880-1891.

Choctaw Advocate, Butler, 1891-1892.

Choctaw Alliance, Butler, 1892-1896.

Daily Register, Mobile, 1889-1894.

Daily Times, Eufaula, 1892.

Democrat, Guntersville, 1892.
Gazette, Tuscaloosa, 1890.

Herald, Union Springs, 1890-1894.

Inquirer, Piedmont, 1893-1894.

Jeffersonian, Troy, 1893-1896.

Journal, Montgomery, 1896.

Journal, Tuscaloosa, 1894.

Messenger, Troy, 1890-1894.

Monroe Journal, Monroeville, 1884-1895.

Outlook, Alexander City, 1894.

People's Daily Tribune, Birmingham, 1894.

People's Reflector, Centreville, 1891-1892.

Progress, Prattville, 1889-1895.

Reporter, Lincoln, 1894.

Sand Mountain Signal, Albertville, 1893-1894.

Standard, Marion, 1889-1894.

Times, Covington, 1889.

Times, Tuscaloosa, 1893.

Times and News, Eufaula, 1892.

Weekly Hot Blast, Anniston, 1892.

Weekly Times, Anniston, 1890-1893.

D. BOOKS


Haynes, Fred E. *Third Party Movements Since the Civil War, With Special Reference to Iowa*. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1916.


Memorial Record of Alabama. 2 Vols. Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1893.


Otkin, Charles H. The Ills of the South or Related Causes Hostile to the General Prosperity of the Southern People. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894.


E. PERIODICALS


Holmes, George K. "A Decade of Mortgages," American Academy of Political and Social Science, IV (September, 1893), 904-918.


Nixon, Herman Clarence. "The Cleavage Within the Farmers' Alliance Movement," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XV (June, 1928), 22-33.


Tracy, Frank B. "Rise and Doom of the Populist Movement," Forum, XVI (1893), 244-248.


White, Melvin J. "Populism in Louisiana During the Nineties," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, V (June, 1918), 3-19.

F. THESES AND DISSERTATIONS


G. CORRESPONDENCE AND INTERVIEWS

Letter from B.L. Scroggins, Registrar and Director of Admissions, Wofford College, Spartanburg, South Carolina, May 10, 1958.

Interview with Mrs. Louise Goodwyn Mustin Faircloth, Granddaughter of Albert Taylor Goodwyn, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, March, 1958.

Interview with Mrs. Ruby Richardson Hume, Granddaughter of Reuben F. Kolb, Mobile, Alabama, August 22, 1962.

Interview with J.J. Newman, Alabama farmer and Rural Mail Carrier in the 1890's, at Anniston, Alabama, July 8, 1953.

H. SPEECHES

Adams, Samuel M. Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, June 1, 1892.


Aldrich, W. F. Report of Speech at Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, October 6, 1894.

Baltzell, Frank. Speech at Tuscaloosa County Alliance, Tuscaloosa Times, July 19, 1893.

Report of Speech at Warrior, Birmingham Age-Herald, November 20, 1891.


Report of Speech at Coalberg, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 2, 1891.

Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 4, 1891.

Report of Speeches at Opelika and Talladega, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 20, 1892.

Report of Speech in Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 24, 1892.

Report of Speeches at Attalla and Selma, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 27, 1892.

Report of Speech at Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa Gazette, July 28, 1892.

Report of Speech at Jeffersonian-Populist Birmingham Convention, Birmingham Age-Herald, September 16, 1892.

Report of Speech in Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 5, 1892.


Report of a joint speaking in Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, June 6, 1894.


Report of Speech in Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, October 6, 1894.

Collier, B. K. Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.

Field, James G. Report of Speech in Birmingham, Montgomery Advertiser, August 11, 1892.

_________. Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.


_________. Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.


_________. Report of Speech at Munford, Montgomery Advertiser, July 31, 1894.


_________. Report of Speech at Jacksonville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 18, 1894.


_________. Report of Speech at Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, April 12, 1894.

_________. Report of Speech at Clayton, Ozark Banner, June 14, 1894.


Johnson, E. P. Speech to Pine Level Alliance, The Jeffersonian, February 9, 1894.


. Speech at Monroeville, Montgomery Advertiser, March 14, 1890.


. Speech at State Democratic Convention, Birmingham Age-Herald, June 1, 1890.


. Report of Speech to District Alliance at Midway, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 22, 1891.


Report of Speech at Coalberg, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 2, 1891.

Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 12, 1891.

Report of Speech at Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, February 21, 1892.

Report of Speech at Troy, Troy Messenger, March 10, 1892.

Speeches of the Kolb-Stalling Debate at Henderson, Montgomery Advertiser, March 15, 1892.

Report of Speech at Clayton, Birmingham Age-Herald, March 29, 1892.

Report of Speech at Mt. Andrew, Birmingham Age-Herald, March 31, 1892.

Report of Kolb-Jones Debate at Eufaula, Birmingham Age-Herald and Eufaula Daily Times, April 1, 1892.

Report of Speech at Bush, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 2, 1892.

Speech at Jennifer, Anniston Weekly Times, April 7, 1892.

Report of Speech at Oxford, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 17, 1892.

Report of Speech at Center Star, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 20, 1892.

Report of Speech at Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, April 24, 1892.

Speech at the Jeffersonian Convention, Birmingham Age-Herald, June 15, 1892.
Kolb, Reuben F. Speech at "Bolters Convention," *Alliance News*, June 22, 1892.


Longshore, A. P. Report of Speech at Linden, Linden Reporter, July 8, 1894.


Report of Speech at Piedmont, Piedmont Inquirer, April 21, 1894.


Manning, Joseph Columbus. Reports of Speeches at Cullman and Erswell Hall, Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, August 17, 1892.

Report of Speech at Birmingham Jeffersonian-Populist Convention, Montgomery Advertiser, September 17, 1892.

Report of Speech at Jefferson County Populist Convention, January 8, 1893.


Report of Speech at Populist State Convention, Montgomery Advertiser, February 9, 1894.


Report of Speech, Alexander City Outlook, July 13, 1894.


Shugart, John T. Speech at Birmingham, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 29, 1894.


Skaggs, William H. Speech at Jeffersonian Nominating Convention, Birmingham Age-Herald, February 9, 1894.

_________. Report of Speech at Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, April 12, 1894.

_________. Report of Speech, Ozark Banner, July 5, 1894.

_________. Report of Speech at Woodlawn, Birmingham Age-Herald, July 31, 1894.

_________. Report of Speech at Munford, Montgomery Advertiser, July 31, 1894.


Street, O. D. Report of Joint Discussion with Governor Jones, Alliance News, August 3, 1892.


_________. Report of Speech at Erswell Hall, Birmingham Age-Herald, December 14, 1891.

_________. Report of Speech at Troy, Troy Messenger, March 10, 1892.

_________. Report of Speech at Opelika, Birmingham Age-Herald, August, 24, 1892.

Terrell, Benjamin. Report of Speech at Montgomery, Montgomery Advertiser, January 1, 1890.
Terrell, Benjamin. Report of Speech at Scottsboro, Montgomery Advertiser, January 18, 1890.

Charles Ellington Porterfield, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Porterfield, was born on March 10, 1922, in Anniston, Alabama. He received his education in the Anniston public schools and matriculated in 1940 to Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama. He joined the Navy in 1943; attended Navy V-12 School at Howard College, Birmingham, Alabama, and Midshipman's School at Columbia University; received his A.B. degree in absentia from Birmingham-Southern College in 1944; and served four years in the Navy. Upon discharge from the service he attended the State University of Iowa receiving the Master of Arts Degree in 1948. He was instructor of Speech at Birmingham-Southern College from 1948 until 1950, when he became a graduate assistant at Louisiana State University. After completing course work he taught from 1952 until 1958 as Assistant Professor of Speech at the University of Alabama. From 1958 until 1961 he was department head and debate coach at Birmingham-Southern College. In 1962 he accepted his present position as Assistant Professor of Speech and Debate Coach at Central Missouri State College, Warrensburg, Missouri. In 1957 he married Rebecca A. Ragsdale and they have one daughter, Rebecca Ellington, age four.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Charles Ellington Porterfield

Speech

Major Field:

Title of Thesis: 'A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis of the Third Party Movement in Alabama, 1890-1894'

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

[Signatures]