

VOTER MOTIVATION AMONG MINNESOTA
SCANDINAVIANS, 1888-1894:
THE DURABILITY OF PARTY IMAGE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Linda Odegaard
December 1981

As a day well spent procures
a happy sleep,
So a life well employed procures
a happy death.
--Leonardo da Vinci

With respect, admiration, and deepest gratitude to
William L. West,
1936-1979, who illuminated the darkness

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ABSTRACT

Economic dislocation in Norway and Sweden and prosperity in America caused a vast flood of emigrants to leave Scandinavia during the 1880's and settle in the agricultural Midwest, especially Minnesota. The hard times that came upon the United States in the late 1880's dashed the dreams of Minnesota Scandinavians and caused many to forsake their traditional Republicanism and vote for the Farmers' Alliance and People's Party in protest against the lack of empathy for the plight of the farmer and laborer perceived within the GOP. These Norwegians and Swedes withdrew from any connection with the Democracy because they saw it as an organization which condoned immorality, alcoholism, popery, slavery, and sloth.

The economic situation of the Scandinavian-American farmer was the deciding factor in his voting behavior. In western Minnesota, poverty and loss of property reached epidemic proportions because wheat farmers in that area had concentrated solely on grain production, thus allowing for no other source of income. Mortgages and debts accrued during good times could not be paid in the lean years. Farmers in western counties heartily embraced the agrarian parties.

Swedes and Norwegians in prosperous counties, however, mainly east central and southeastern Minnesota, paid little heed to the cries of discontentment voiced by Alliancemen and

Populists. Diversification in these counties and better prices for their commodities -- milk and vegetables -- kept farmers there afloat during the 1890's. Neither third party found much support from Scandinavians in prosperous counties.

While economic circumstances determined the vote of Minnesota Scandinavians, ethnocultural differences between Swedes and Norwegians also played a factor in the decision. Norwegian emigrants were accustomed to political activity whereas Swedish farmers tended to accept their lot in life and adapt to a diminished role in the political process. This propensity to change among Norwegians and reluctance to change among Swedes continued after the emigrants left their homelands and influenced their political decisions in Minnesota.

Ethnocultural experiences and values preordained the response of Swedes and Norwegians to the agrarian movement, but economic circumstances ripened the situation and proved the determining factor in Scandinavian immigrant voting decisions in Minnesota during this period.

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Introduction

The question of what makes people vote the way they do has long puzzled historians, not to mention politicians. A variety of factors -- economic, cultural, regional, moral, to name a few -- influence Americans when they exercise their constitutional right the first Tuesday after the first Monday of every fourth November. This complex question becomes more difficult to dissect if the voters are immigrants whose backgrounds are not familiar to the investigator. Ethnocultural influences combine with present circumstances to determine new voters' preferences.

The study of immigrant voting is not new, but with the rise of ethnic consciousness its importance has received greater recognition. Thus, ethnocultural studies have increased in recent years. Samuel P. Hays wrote: "Ethnocultural issues were far more important to voters than were tariffs, trusts, and railroads. They touched lives directly and moved people deeply."¹

Once ethnocultural experiences come to light, however, exceptions to the norm appear within an ethnic group and among culturally similar nationalities. To say that an ethnocultural

¹Richard L. McCormick, "Ethnocultural Interpretations of Nineteenth-Century American Voting Behavior," Political Science Quarterly, 89 (June, 1974), 354; Robert Swierenga, "Ethnocultural Political Analysis: a New Approach to American Ethnic Studies," Journal of American Studies, 5 (April, 1971), 67.

approach to voter motivation, to the exclusion of the current situation of the voter, is the most enlightened strategy is to ignore the paramount nature of economic survival.

In Minnesota, the 1880's witnessed the arrival of Scandinavians in great numbers. Their experience has been the Minnesota experience, and their political and social legacy helped to mold the attitudes of today's Minnesotans. In order to determine what influenced Swedes and Norwegians at Minnesota polls from 1888-1894, the Old World heritage must be consulted along with the economic picture in America at the time. It seems probable that such an investigation will clarify the differences in voting between these two groups in Minnesota who are often perceived to be identical.

The question to be answered is which of these influences, ethnocultural or economic, was the deciding factor in immigrant voting decisions. If neither experience dominated, to what extent did each contribute to a political commitment? And, how did the issues of the day reflect Old World concerns?

CHAPTER ONE:
THE BACKGROUND OF SCANDINAVIAN
IMMIGRATION TO MINNESOTA

Because of the predominantly rural background of Minnesota's Scandinavian immigrants, it is necessary to survey the extent of and opportunity for peasant political participation in the immigrants' homelands, reasons for various attitudinal and issue-oriented differences between the two groups, and the causes of emigration.

The Swedish Political Heritage

Scandinavian immigrants inherited a democratic tradition in the form of local tinger, representative assemblies, that convened as early as the ninth century. Although a peasant aristocracy dominated these bodies, the topographical isolation of the peasantry safeguarded its political rights.¹

In Sweden, the four-estate system of the Riksdag served as an additional protection of the civil rights of the peasantry. That class, as well as the clergy, the bourgeoisie, and the nobility, was represented in the assembly. Although the aristocracy controlled the Riksdag, it insisted on basic freedoms for all. The Constitution of 1483 even recognized

¹J.A. Lauwerys, Scandinavian Democracy: Development of Democratic Thought and Institutions in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden (Copenhagen, 1958), 71; Magnus Nodtvedt, The Rebirth of Norway's Peasantry: Folk Leader Hans Nielsen Hauge (Tacoma, 1965), 5-6; Florence Edith Janson, The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840-1930 (New York, 1970), 43.

the right to harbor political prisoners, a provision which nineteenth century Swedish historian Anders Schönberg called anarchical.²

Aristocratic constitutionalism triumphed in Sweden during the eighteenth century. Central administration, government by specialists, and elective kingship were some of the accomplishments of the Era of Liberty, 1714-1772. Despite evidence that the Riksdag enacted these measures in order to appease the masses, without the insistence of the aristocracy that each ting be represented by a royal appointee, Sweden's tradition of democracy would have been in the hands of the king, a tenuous place at best. Although this policy of rule by regent in effect ended local self-government, republicanism in Sweden survived.³

Due to pressure to conform to democratic trends abroad, Sweden rewrote its constitution in 1809. The Instrument of Government embraced the basic separation of powers embodied in the American Constitution. Although the new constitution provided for more frequent meetings of the Riksdag, that body retained the obsolete four-chamber system that prolonged aristocratic dominance. Despite strong protests, feudal burdens

²Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 11; Michael Roberts, On Aristocratic Constitutionalism in Swedish History: 1520-1720 (London, 1966), 3-5.

³Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 10-17, 43.

remained.⁴ The Swedish tradition of compromise and moderation emerged victorious. In the words of one contemporary politician, the Riksdag acted "wisely slow" In Sweden, according to political scientist Joseph B. Board Jr., gradualism had always been the case: "Whatever happened elsewhere was invariably late in coming to Sweden." In fact, Board added, "The Romans never bothered to come at all" This reluctance to change plagued Sweden throughout the nineteenth century.⁵

In 1866, however, the Riksdag enacted a needed reform. The De Geer bill dissolved the anachronistic four-estate system and substituted a bicameral order. The measure provided for an indirectly elected upper house and a directly elected lower house. In rural areas, however, local authorities still selected members to the lower house.⁶ Agricultural and industrial laborers remained disfranchised; only 20 percent of the male population could vote. Of the seventy-six farmers in the

⁴B.J. Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 1720-1865: The Rise of the Middle Classes (Boston, 1943), 228; Dankwart A. Rustow, The Politics of Compromise: A Study of Parties and Cabinet Government in Sweden (Princeton, 1955), 13-16; Joseph B. Board Jr., The Government and Politics of Sweden (New York, 1970), 27; Stein Kuhnle, Patterns of Social and Political Mobilization: A Historical Analysis of the Nordic Countries (London, 1975), 11; Nils P. Andren, Government and Politics in the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden (Stockholm, 1964), 148.

⁵Board, Government and Politics, 19; Rustow, Compromise, 33, 42; Kuhnle, Patterns, 13.

⁶Board, Government and Politics, 28; Kuhnle, Patterns, 11.

agriculturally dominated lower house, 70 percent were large landowners. An estate totaling one thousand riksdaler was the requirement for holding office. In 1872, only 22 percent of the adult male population was eligible to select among the six-tenths of one percent qualified to take a seat in the Riksdag.⁷

Besides failing to democratize the political process, the De Geer plan did not overcome the tendency of the old four-chamber system to create conflict. Though the aristocracy no longer assumed a seat in the Riksdag by virtue of birth but by election, the upper house served merely as a "new chamber of nobles," and bickering between the two houses continued.⁸

The Swedish electorate was not only small, it was apathetic. As late as 1880, the beginning of the great era of immigration to Minnesota, fewer than 30 percent of the eligible Swedish voters exercised this right. In 1872 in Stockholm, one-tenth of one percent of the lowest tax bracket and 26 percent of the highest bracket voted.⁹

Although Sweden adopted liberal humanitarian measures, throughout the nineteenth century it remained politically backward.¹⁰ Swedish political scientist Herbert Tingsten noted that "the major impression [is] one of political stagnation.

⁷Rustow, Compromise, 118-124, 23-24; Kuhnle, Patterns, 18. The adult male population at the time was 952,000. See B.R. Mitchell, European Historical Statistics: 1750-1970 (London, 1975), 50.

⁸Rustow, Compromise, 118-124; George M. Stephenson, "The Background of the Beginnings of Swedish Immigration, 1850-1875," American Historical Review, 31 (July, 1926), 721-722.

⁹Rustow, Compromise, 21; Kuhnle, Patterns, 15.

¹⁰Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 576-581, 641-697.

In no other country whose population had attained a comparable degree of education does there appear to have been so little interest in the major issues of national policy." Not until the 1880's did the tariff issue rouse the limited Swedish electorate out of its lethargy, a response which came too late to affect most immigrants.¹¹

The Political Heritage of the Norwegian Immigrant

The histories of Norway and Sweden paralleled each other until 1380 when a marriage between the royal houses of Denmark and Norway cemented a union of the two countries. Due to the death of four-fifths of the Norwegian nobility during the Black Plague, a Danish bureaucracy emerged in Norway to administer the country, thus destroying a long tradition of peasant participation in local government. The Danish king reigned absolutely beginning in 1660 when the weak Danish aristocracy, unlike Sweden's noble class, relinquished its power to control the monarchy.¹²

Danish rule came increasingly to mean the Danishization of Norway. Danish merchants conducted trade, political decisions emanated from Copenhagen, and the Danish language replaced the vernacular in learned circles. Only in isolated areas was the Viking culture preserved. Danish commercialism

¹¹Rustow, Compromise, 42, 35.

¹²Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 19-20; Halvdan Koht and Sigmund Skard, The Voice of Norway (New York, 1944), 14.

in Norway, however, thrust the Norwegian middle class into world affairs which enlightened the native entrepreneurs concerning democratic trends and the economic interdependence of the marketplace. These revelations stirred Norwegian nationalism, assuring the success of the independence movement in 1814.¹³

Norwegian hostility toward the ruling class gave rise to class consciousness in that country. In the late eighteenth century, three events united the peasantry against the native bureaucracy which shared in much of the wealth produced by a mercantilist policy. The first event occurred in 1765. The Strile War was a tax revolt in Bergen by peasants from the surrounding countryside. Its importance lies in the fact that it created the first feeling of unity among the bøndestand, peasantry. Thirty years later, the martyrdom of Christian J. Lofthuus roused the bøndestand to a fever pitch. Lofthuus, a farmer, went to Copenhagen several times with petitions protesting burueacratic encroachments on peasant power and special privileges granted Danish and native entrepreneurs. He was arrested in 1787, and his death in prison ten years later "echoed like a smothered cry . . . against the misuse of official power" ¹⁴

¹³Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 33; Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 131.

¹⁴Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 201; Koht and Skard, Norway, 58; Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 59, 249; Peter A. Munch, "The Peasant Movement in Norway: A Study in Class and Culture," British Journal of Sociology, 5 (March, 1954), 69.

Haugeanism, a Norwegian pietistic movement, was the third occurrence that drew the peasantry together. Hans Nielsen Hauge, an itinerant preacher, began traveling the countryside in 1796, wailing against an aloof and unsaved Lutheran clergy. Since the clergy in Scandinavia was a branch of the civil service, this movement easily spread into the political arena, becoming anti-Danish and anti-bureaucratic. For eight years, Hauge agitated for religious, political, and economic reform. Since he based his demands on the broad doctrine of Christian equality, Haugeanism touched the middle class also.¹⁵

The political importance of Haugeanism cannot be underestimated. Coming on the heels of Lofthuus's death and just prior to independence, this movement awakened Norwegian nationalism and democratic sentiments. It taught the peasantry to manage its own affairs. Already rehearsed in anti-official agitation, in 1814 Norway's agrarian class awoke to political and economic realities. The demise of the bureaucracy was a direct result of this movement.¹⁶

The peasant movement in Norway was also influenced by the self-sufficiency and xenophobia that physical isolation creates, the social distances among the classes, middle class dominance of the democratic and economic avant-garde, and

¹⁵Munch, "The Peasant Movement," 70-71; Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 310-318; Koht and Skard, Norway, 59; Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 218-222; Lauwerys, Scandinavian Democracy, 141.

¹⁶Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 315-320.

a general peasant refusal to acquiesce to a back seat in the political hierarchy. The glorification of rural life by the Romantic movement complemented these factors.¹⁷

Despite deep-seated bitterness between the peasantry and the ruling classes, Norwegians gathered at Eidsvold in May, 1814, to declare their independence from their Danish masters. Versions of the intentions of the delegates to the constitutional convention range from romantically egalitarian to coldly self-serving. Contemporary British political observer Samuel Laing said: "There is not probably in the history of mankind another instance of a free constitution . . . suitable without alteration to all the ends of good government."¹⁸ More realistic, however, is the belief that convention delegates worked out many compromises among the several interests represented at the Eidsvold convention. Merchants and aristocrats successfully excluded peasants from significant political participation by requiring indirect election to the Storting. Forty-five percent of the adult male population, the most liberal suffrage in Europe, received the right to choose electors who in turn selected Storting members. Many non-landed received the right to vote also, but as the population shifted toward the city, property qualifications decreased the per-

¹⁷Munch, "The Peasant Movement," 64-72.

¹⁸Harry Eckstein, Division and Cohesion in Democracy: A Study of Norway (Princeton, 1966), 11; Kuhnle, Patterns, 12; Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 224; Koht and Skard, Norway, 66.

centage of eligible voters. The constitution required that two-thirds of the representation come from rural constituencies, and even though the rural population of Norway comprised 87 percent of the inhabitants, no other constitution in Europe included a greater percentage of the people. In addition, elitists denied peasant demands to democratize military obligations and grant freedom of trade and occupation to laborers.¹⁹

Like Progressive historians of the American Constitution, one Norwegian school of thought notes the economic influence of the bourgeoisie and the tightrope walk of elitists between mass democracy and monarchical rule. Wisely, however, sane heads prevailed among the classes in Norway, and Norwegian nationalism made compromise possible. Though the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie shared few interests with the bøndestand, they recognized the intensity of peasant enthusiasm for political power and granted enough power to the peasantry to mollify it.²⁰

The watershed in peasant political fortunes occurred in 1837 with the passage of a local self-government law. Events on the continent in 1830 and the election of a peasant dominated Storting in 1833 encouraged Norwegian farmers to involve themselves more fully in the political process. Storting mem-

¹⁹Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 511; Kuhnle, Patterns, 12-17; Eckstein, Division and Cohesion, 12; Koht and Skard, Norway, 68-70; James A. Storing, Norwegian Democracy (Boston, 1963), 165; Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 235-237; Andren, Government and Politics, 180.

²⁰Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 569.

ber John Neergaard walked from village to village, in a style reminiscent of Hauge, promoting local self-government and proclaiming the rights of the peasant. In a pamphlet, Olaboka, Neergaard attacked the upper classes and the bureaucratic monopoly of government positions, advocated economic reform, and urged true agrarian entry into Norwegian politics.²¹

Neergaard and many like him persuaded the Storting to enact the 1837 legislation. In essence, the law created provincial assemblies, comprised of the chairmen of directly elected parish councils, to supervise the administration of the several provinces, or fylkes. These fylkesting legislated under the direction of the royally appointed governor of the fylke. The law also set up executive councils which included one quarter of the parish councilmembers to administer local government affairs. This measure laid the groundwork for peasant control of the Storting which began in 1884 by involving the bøndestand in the practical matters of government and giving it the experience necessary to decide national affairs.²²

Swedish and Norwegian Tariff Histories, 1840-1890

Because of the importance of the tariff issue in America during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it is necessary to understand the position of the Scandinavian peasants on protection and free trade prior to their emigration in or-

²¹Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 220-225.

²²Ibid., 511, 557; Munch, "The Peasant Movement," 69; Koht and Skard, Norway, 77; Nodtvedt, Rebirth, 241-242; Storting, Norwegian Democracy, 118.

der to accurately assess if the immigrants' stances on the tariff in America stemmed from ethnocultural beliefs, economic circumstances, or a combination of both.

From the 1840's until Sweden's return to protection in 1887, peasants in both Scandinavian countries shared similar economies and philosophies toward international trade. The local nature of the agricultural market did not warrant a need for protection, and, as a result, the benefits of free trade -- luxury items from abroad -- seemed appealing. As long as self-supply remained intact, Scandinavian peasants accepted free trade. The idea that free trade bettered relations among nations also made the new economic philosophy attractive to those who too often served as pawns on the military chessboard.²³

With improvements in transportation came a flow of consumer goods which whet the appetite of the farmer for the niceties of life. This and the return of prosperity in the 1840's began to erode the self-sufficiency of the farmer to the point that he no longer made his own clothing, horseshoes, farm equipment, flour, etc.²⁴

Sweden, a last minute, but most enthusiastic, convert to laissez-faire economics, adopted free trade in the 1850's and managed to ride out the economic storms of the 1870's with the philosophy intact. However, during the 1880's, a combination of depression in Sweden and prosperity in America which sent its farm produce to compete with Europe's, forced the

²³Ibid., 231-232.

²⁴Ibid., 270; Andren, Government and Politics, 35.

Swedish peasantry to demand protection for their cereal grains. Between 1881 and 1887, the price of grain dropped almost 50 percent, prompting the founding of the Ruralist Party to seek ameliorative legislation. Farmers aligned with conservative businessmen and industrialists to demand protection for their products from American goods.²⁵

Norway adopted free trade in 1842 in order to benefit from its trade with Great Britain. The leading economic scholar in Norway, Anton Martin Schweigaard, advocated a tariff for revenue only, a philosophy that fit in well with the Norwegian peasants' preference for moderate protection as a source of revenue. This, the peasants felt, would lay the tax burden on those who purchased expensive imported items and were well able to shoulder the duty. In addition, Haugean frugality and shunning of material pleasures caused the bønde-stand to be skeptical of free trade. The peasantry, however, voiced no real opposition to Norway's acceptance of free trade because agrarians in that country were also becoming reliant on manufactured goods.²⁶

The boom in America did not affect Norway as severely nor in the manner that it affected Sweden. Swedish feudalism and topography allowed for a more abundant grain harvest while fish and lumber were Norway's major exports. American goods did not compete to the devastating degree in Norway that they

²⁵Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 229, 235; Andren, Government and Politics, 35.

²⁶Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 230-234.

did in Sweden. Norwegian farmers, therefore, remained aligned with urban laborers in a liberal party rather than shifting to the right as Swedish agrarians did during the 1880's.²⁷

Causes of Emigration from Sweden

"Do you suppose it means nothing
that that which satisfied once
satisfies no more . . . ?"²⁸

That Swedish emigration was necessary is not debatable. Crop failures, overspeculation, population increases not compensated for by a policy of land reclamation, and a deflationary policy that forced foreclosures accounted for a decline in agrarian income beginning in the 1850's and an increasing number of landless Swedish peasants with no means of support. Further, the policy of consolidation of land made it more difficult for tenants to gain their own farms. This created resentment toward propertied farmers who were not suffering appreciably. Demands for government intervention arose; immunity from eviction was the major cry. The solidarity of an aggrieved tenantry contributed to the De Geer reform in 1866.²⁹

Significant numbers of Swedish immigrants began departing for America, and Minnesota, in the 1860's. While the 1850's witnessed only 1,690 emigrants per year from Sweden, 12,245 per year left during the next decade. From 1861-1865, 10,429 Swedes arrived in America; in the five years following the

²⁷Andren, Government and Politics, 17.

²⁸Hovde, The Scandinavian Countries, 650.

²⁹Janson, Swedish Immigration, 222-224.

American Civil War, 80,491 Swedes landed on Zion's shores. No Swedish county during the 1860's lost less than several hundred emigrants, a reflection of the scope of the economic distress that blanketed that country from 1867-1879. Because of the economic depression in the United States, this first exodus ended in 1874. Whereas the years 1868-1873 saw 99,800 Swedes emigrate to the United States, only 30,750 came during the next five years.³⁰

Low prices, low wages and unemployment in infant Swedish industries, a stagnant economy -- Latin America surpassed Sweden in economic growth in 1900 -- and population increases resulting in greater numbers of landless peasants and laborers spurred a renewed Swedish emigration during the 1880's. Thirty-seven thousand Swedes reached America per year during this decade, Minnesota receiving the most. This flow continued unabated until 1887 when hard times hit the United States again and spawned the agrarian revolt that many Scandinavians joined.³¹

The boom in American agriculture depressed the whole European economy during this time. In England, wheat prices

³⁰Ibid., 227, 266, 274.

³¹Ibid., 276-285; John S. Lindberg, The Background of Swedish Emigration to the United States: An Economic and Sociological Study in the Dynamics of Migration (Minneapolis, 1930), 177, 99; Dankwart A. Rustow, "Sweden's Transition to Democracy: Some Notes toward a Genetic Theory," Scandinavian Political Studies, 5 (1971), 17-19.

fell from fifty-four to forty shillings between 1871 and 1881. Prices hit rock bottom in the early 1890's when wheat sold at twenty-seven shillings per bushel. In Sweden, costs rose while profits and wages declined. Between 1873-1889, wages dropped from fifty-four cents to forty cents per day on the average. In contrast, railroad construction workers in America earned \$1.25 per day, plus room and board.³²

Discontent over the lack of religious freedom accompanied economic despair. As in Norway, a pietistic religious movement occurred in Sweden that sought to reawaken backsliding Swedes and establish more rights for newer denominations. The 1830's and 1840's were decades of attempted reform in this area. The movement began when the Swedish Lutheran Church sought to curb the popularity of George Scott, an English Methodist who preached evangelistic and unorthodox doctrines. With his ostracism by the state, demands for religious freedom grew louder, and organizations like The Society for the Advancement of Religious Freedom and The Evangelization of the Fatherland appeared. The state hounded many unauthorized sects, especially Baptists and Mormons. From the

³²Janson, Swedish Immigration, 276-285; Lindberg, Swedish Emigration, 177.

1830's until 1873 when the Riksdag granted religious freedom, Baptists served a total of ninety-eight years in jail and paid \$6,750 in fines for practising Christianity in an unauthorized manner.³³

Political factors also played a role in contributing to the desire of Swedes to emigrate. The depression of the 1880's caused increased political dissent, manifested by the formation of the Social Democratic Party, which, with the Salvation Army, became a prime target of governmental oppression. In addition to restrictions limiting freedom of speech, press, and assembly, Swedish dissidents chafed against a continuing small electorate. In 1872, only 22 percent of men of age were enfranchised. In 1900, Sweden still had the smallest electorate of any country with a representative government.³⁴

Although the lack of political and religious freedom influenced emigration, the vast majority left Sweden for economic reasons. One tenant's son spoke bitterly of memories of his mother crying because, "we begged for bread and she had not a crumb to give us." He ranked class differences and the "question of personal worth" as secondary considerations.³⁵

Propaganda from America became the straw that broke the camel's back. Rumors of cheap land and high wages in America got the attention of the potential emigrant, but letters from old friends now in America decided the matter. One Swedish-

³³Lindberg, Swedish Emigration, 170-172, 38-41; Stephenson, "Swedish Immigration," 710-712; Janson, Swedish Immigration, 59, 17. Norwegians obtained religious freedom a generation earlier than Swedes. See Janson, Swedish Immigration, 69.

³⁴Janson, Swedish Immigration, 293; Kuhnle, Patterns, 18.

³⁵Janson, Swedish Immigration, 101.

American farmer wrote home of being, "busy in America planting 17 acres of wheat, 50 acres of oats, and 4 acres of barley, and today we plant potatoes" Another fellow, planning to visit Sweden at Christmas, changed his mind when he pondered: "What can one do in Sweden but work for some bread and salt herring . . . ?" He spoke shamefully of "heavy taxes for Sweden's lazy officials" and concluded that "Sweden has been and continues to be a slave land" ³⁶

Causes of Norwegian Emigration

Norway's commercial orientation resulted in an economy dependent on the mercy of the ubiquitous British fleet, a grace that expired after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. The blockade and high protective tariff which England imposed on Norway sank the Norwegian economy into a depression that lasted into the 1840's. Prices rose, exports fell, and revenue ceased to flow. A deflationary policy attempted to counteract this situation, but the Norwegian economy ground to a halt, and thousands of unemployed laborers returned to the countryside seeking some support. Population increases and skyrocketing land values exacerbated the difficulties till the number of tenants increased from 48,000 in 1825 to 65,000 thirty years later. Landless tenants accounted for one-fourth of the population; the numbers reliant on public charity doubled between 1825 and 1845. Those who managed to retain

³⁶ Ibid., 23.

their small farms -- 12.5 acres on the average, or half the size of a Swedish holding -- earned 30 percent less than urban workers. In 1865, the gross product of industrial labor surpassed agricultural production in Norway by 300 percent. Throughout the century, however, Norwegian farmers avoided starvation, and the relative poverty of the country was more dispersed than in Sweden.³⁷

Emigration from Norway began earlier than the Swedish exodus, but migration patterns paralleled each other. From a few thousand per year in the 1850's, approximately 111,000 Norwegians came to the United States in the eight years following the American Civil War. The Panic of 1873 in America caused immigration to slow, but the pace increased again during the 1880's to 20,000 per year. In the one hundred years beginning in 1830, about 830,000 Norwegians arrived in the Midwest.³⁸

The complex set of factors that pushed Swedes to forsake their homeland did not exist in Norway because it offered more political and religious freedom, as well as greater social equality. Push factors included unemployment and high prices while cheap and plentiful land and a booming economy drew emigrants to the New World. Like the Swedish emigrant, the Norwegian trekker made his final decision to emigrate based on the "America letters," correspondences to friends in

³⁷Fritz Hodne, An Economic History of Norway, 1815-1970 (Trondheim, 1975), 21-30, 138-167.

³⁸Ibid., 36, 358.

Scandinavia about the golden opportunity awaiting everyone across the ocean.³⁹

The Ethnocultural Basis of Scandinavian-American Republicanism

Both Swedes and Norwegians voted consistently and overwhelmingly Republican upon their arrival in America. Most scholars agree that this political habit stemmed from Scandinavian support of the Republican stance on slavery, the free homestead law, and temperance.⁴⁰ Republican attitudes against slavery attracted all immigrants; Scandinavian support of Lincoln's policy of cheap land needs no explanation. Temperance also appealed to both national groups because of unhappy experiences with liquor and the liquor trade in their homelands. In Norway, according to Theodore Blegen, the use of potatoes in rural whisky stills upset the economy and robbed the people of a needed source of food. As a result, alcohol was viewed as a contributor to poverty and as one factor in the need of many Norwegians to emigrate. Also, most capital crimes in Norway were alcohol-related. In 1871, the Norwegian government, attempting to regulate the industry, gave municipalities a near monopoly over the trade. Sweden experienced similar difficulties with the devil's brew. In the 1840's,

³⁹Ibid., 356-360.

⁴⁰Ernest B. Gustafson, "The Attitude of the Swedes Toward the Radical Third Party until about 1896," (Unpublished term thesis, University of Minnesota, under the direction of Solon J. Buck, no year given), 22; Kendric Charles Babcock, The Scandinavian Element in the United States (Urbana, 1914), 171.

Swedes drank forty million gallons of alcohol a year, a consumption level that prompted the Riksdag to partially nationalize the liquor industry in 1855. Besides the economic benefits of sobriety, the pietistic movement worked to convince Scandinavians of the foolishness of alcoholism.⁴¹

But the America that existed immediately after the Civil War was history to the new flood of immigrants in the 1880's. The immortal names of Lincoln, Grant, Davis, and Lee were replaced by the more human Carnegies, Rockefellers, and Vanderbilts. In Minnesota, the names Pillsbury, Hill, Hibbing, and Merritt represented the changing economic nature of the industrializing state. The high ideals that guided Scandinavian-American voters in the 1860's and 1870's gave way to more practical motives amid the new realities of the last two decades of the century.

⁴¹ Frederick Hale, "Marcus Hansen, Puritanism, and Scandinavian Immigrant Temperance Movements," Norwegian-American Historical Association, 27 (1977), 22-24.

CHAPTER TWO:
THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE
IN MINNESOTA BEFORE 1890

Grangers and Greenbackers

The Patrons of Husbandry, founded by Minnesotan Oliver H. Kelley, introduced agrarian protest to Minnesota during the late 1860's when it began complaining of railroad discrimination and monopolistic practices. Legislators in four Midwestern states enacted "Granger laws" to regulate railroads and grain elevators. Farmers gained a national victory in 1877 when the Supreme Court decided in Munn v. Illinois that states held the power to so regulate. After the Panic of 1873, Greenbackers demanded inflationary policies to remedy the tight money situation and sought government intervention rather than the free market principles supported by the Grange. The Greenback Party embraced the laborer as a fellow sufferer.¹

The currency issue originated during the Civil War when the treasury printed paper money in order to pay for military expenditures. After the war, Congress sought to reintroduce coins to restrict the money supply and calm down the economy. This, of course, led to a battle between creditors and debtors, contractionists and inflationists, East and West.²

¹Norman Pollack (ed.), The Populist Mind (Indianapolis, 1967), xxxi; John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party (Minneapolis, 1931), vii.

²Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 302.

A major moot point in the discussion of this topic is the reason for the demonetization of silver in 1873. Gold bugs worried over the disparity between the price of gold and the price of silver, the more precious commodity at the time. Some historians find evidence that John Sherman's Treasury Department anticipated new discoveries of silver and, therefore, persuaded Congress to demonetize the metal in order to stave off a flood of silver on the market.³

The public and most Congressmen were unaware of the repercussions of the "Crime of '73" until 1876. With the discovery of silver in western states, however, silverites railed for its renewal as legal tender as an inflationary measure. Depressed prices and the scarcity of gold were good reasons for debtors to desire expansion of the currency and doubt the motives of hard money men. The silver issue erupted out of this context long before 1896.⁴

The major goals of the Populists, then, regulation and inflation, existed fifteen years before James B. Weaver's candidacy for president in 1892.

³Ibid.; Allen Weinstein, Prelude to Populism: Origins of the Silver Issue, 1867-1878 (New Haven, 1970), 12-17.

⁴Weinstein, Prelude to Populism, 57-81; Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 304.

Scandinavian Concentrations in Minnesota

The triangle from the southeast corner of Minnesota to the Twin Cities to the St. Croix Valley was the first settled area of Minnesota. Until 1860, Anglo-Americans predominated, but after the Civil War, foreign settlers became more numerous.⁵ German and Irish immigrants first inhabited the St. Croix area, but by 1880 Swedes comprised 58 percent of the population in Washington, Isanti, and Chisago counties. In Chisago County, 80 percent of the people spoke Swedish; no counties in America contained as many Swedes per capita as Chisago and Isanti counties in east central Minnesota.⁶ Norwegian immigrants settled the southeast portion of the state. In 1860, the townships of Arendahl and Norway in Fillmore County elected Norwegians to all but one office.⁷

By 1890, areas of Scandinavian concentration included much of western Minnesota, the wheat belt. The 1905 census records 126,283 foreign-born Swedes and 111,611 foreign-born Norwegians in the state. Scandinavian descendants made up a

⁵John M. Deason, The Economic History of the Township of Rusheba and the Village of Rush City, Chisago County, Minnesota to 1900 (Minneapolis, 1947), 38.

⁶Robert C. Ostergren, "Cultural Homogeneity and Population Stability Among Swedish Immigrants in Chisago County," Minnesota History Bulletin, 43 (Fall, 1973), 259.

⁷Babcock, The Scandinavian Element, 144; Kendrick Charles Babcock, "The Scandinavian Element in American Population," American Historical Review, 16 (January, 1911), 307.

much larger portion of the population, however, since these figures only indicate foreign-born residents and not their children.⁸

⁸John G. Rice, Patterns of Ethnicity in a Minnesota County, 1880-1905 (Umeå, Sweden, 1973), 8-9; John R. Borchert, Atlas of Minnesota Resources and Settlement (Minneapolis, 1969), 38.

For the purposes of this work, the economic situation, voting records, and press opinion of six Swedish, six Norwegian, and two mixed counties will be studied. None of the counties chosen as predominantly Swedish or Norwegian contained less than 57 percent of that specific ethnic group. Because the Swedes tended to congregate in compact settlements, their concentrations were higher than the Norwegian. The voting records of only these counties were scrutinized. Maps I and II locate these counties.

The fourteen counties are broken up into three economic categories: high, low, and normal foreclosure. (See Hallie Farmer, "Mortgage Foreclosures and Redemptions and Land Values in Minnesota in the Years 1881 and 1891," Minnesota Executive Documents (St. Paul, 1892), 2:363-454. Maps III and IV illustrate Farmer's conclusions.).

Because the body of this work deals with the response of the Scandinavians to agrarian protest, and because this author reads neither Swedish nor Norwegian, great care was taken to assure the representative nature of the English language newspapers in the chosen counties. For this reason, only journals in towns whose Swedish or Norwegian element exceeded 50 percent of the total foreign-born population in 1905 qualified for this study. These townships, of course, existed within the borders of highly ethnic counties. The Minnesota State Census of 1905 provided a breakdown of each township in the state on the basis of nationality.

Economic Conditions in Minnesota During the 1880's

The highmark of immigration to Minnesota, the 1880's, coincided with the decade of the state's most rapid growth. Though the economy of the territory had rested on a fur trading and then a lumbering foundation, agriculture, specifically wheat culture, became the basis of Minnesota's wealth and appeal to settlers. Post-Civil War prosperity, the Homestead Act, and European immigration were the major factors in the growth of the state from a population of 172,023 in 1860 to 1,129,803 in 1890, an increase of more than 300,000 per decade. In thirty years, Minnesota advanced from a wilderness to a settled area with an extensive railroad network and a wheat and dairy economy surpassed by only a handful of states. By 1890, Minneapolis was the flour milling capital of the world.⁹

Minnesota's economic boom mirrored the national phenomenon. When the depression of the previous decade abated, the country reacted by overinvesting in land, stock, and newly-invented machinery. Eastern financiers eagerly supplied the West with more money than it needed and farmers and other small capitalists jumped at the easy credit. This overspeculation caused a rise in land values from 400 to 600 percent between 1881 and 1887.¹⁰

⁹Deason, The Economic History, 6; Carl H. Chrislock, "The Norwegian-American Impact on Minnesota Politics: How far 'Left of Center'?" Harald S. Naess, (ed.), Norwegian Influence on the Upper Midwest (Duluth, 1975), 108.

¹⁰Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 21-24.

Needless to say, third party action proved inconsequential during the prosperous 1880's. To be sure, the Farmers' Alliance emerged, but it did not blossom until the economy sagged again. This inevitable decline began in 1883 when overspeculation caused the bottom to drop out of the wheat market. For the Midwestern farmer, the fall in wheat prices produced drastic consequences. Prices at Chicago plummeted from \$1.26 per bushel in 1882 to seventy-six cents in 1884. At forty-two cents per bushel in 1885 at Crookston, Polk County, farmers lost eight cents per unit. Corn prices only fell three cents per bushel between 1870 and 1885.¹¹

Severe winters and summer droughts throughout the wheat belt aggravated the economic situation. One Nebraska farmer observed that the "small grain and corn were cut short" by the hot sun and winds and that "the yield amounted to preciously near nothing." Predictably, Republican supremacy in Nebraska ended that same year when an Antimonopolist-Alliance fusion ticket attracted 19 percent of that state's vote.¹² Minnesota wheat farmers reliant on a one-crop income found it impossible to pay mortgages contracted during good times.

¹¹Ibid., 81; H. Weatherhead, "The Farmers' Alliance in Norman County, Minnesota," (Unpublished term thesis, University of Minnesota, under the direction of John D. Hicks, 1931), 3.

¹²John D. Barnhart, "Rainfall and the Populist Party in Nebraska," American Political Science Review, 19 (August, 1925), 534-535.

Although prices rose to eighty-five cents per bushel in 1890 in Minnesota's Red River Valley, because drought and grasshoppers devastated the crop, there was little wheat to sell.¹³

Foreclosures, the real barometer of hard times, increased tremendously.¹⁴ In 1881, southeastern Minnesota suffered more from foreclosures than the western part of the state, but by 1891, bad weather and a lack of agricultural diversity created true distress in western counties. The twelve counties in the southeast, shaded dark on Map III, averaged one acre foreclosed per sixty-seven acres assessed in 1881. Ten years later, however, foreclosures declined to one acre per 929 assessed. Foreclosures in Polk, Clay, Becker, Ottertail, Grant, Stevens, Pope, and Swift counties in the western part of the state rose from one acre per 361 assessed in 1881 to one per ninety-three in 1891. Although foreclosures in the Swedish counties of east central Minnesota rose during the 1880's also, losses remained in the below normal category.¹⁵

Diversification accounted for the improved situation in the older counties while a one-crop income and drought on marginal lands caused severe hardship in the western part of the state. According to railroad baron James J. Hill, "not one farmer in five in the northern part of the state . . . raises

¹³Henrietta Larson, The Wheat Market and the Farmer in Minnesota: 1858-1900 (New York, 1926), 166; Thorstein Veblen, "Price of Wheat since 1867," Journal of Political Economy, 1 (December, 1892), 96.

¹⁴See Maps III and IV.

¹⁵Farmer, "Mortgage Foreclosures," 376-377.

his own meat or makes his own butter." Maps V and VI give a better indication of the diversification-distress relationship of the late eighties. In general, the state registered "dissatisfaction and complaint" and in "new portions, impoverishment, bankruptcy, and general distress."¹⁶

Chief among the worries of the grain producer was the tight money situation that prevented mortgages paid and contributed to high foreclosure rates. Although many credit companies charged illegally high interest rates, according to John Lathrop, ex-secretary of the state Alliance, no one dared protest these abuses for fear of credit blacklisting. At the same time, legislators feared that the passage of usury legislation would cause the withdrawal of capital from the state.¹⁷

To the farmer, the railroad companies created low prices by stifling competition. To be sure, before railroads made the national economy interdependent, the farmer sold his wheat to the highest bidder. As noted in the 1884 report of the railroad commissioner of the state of Minnesota, "It was the little buyer with his flat warehouse and the merchant who were formerly buyers, and who, like the regulator of a watch, adjusted the markets and the grades. Under that free and flexible system, grades adjusted themselves, and towns . . . are

¹⁶John D. Hicks, "The Origin and Early History of the Farmers' Alliance in Minnesota," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 9 (December, 1922), 205-207.

¹⁷Carl H. Chrislock, The Politics of Protest in Minnesota, 1890-1901: From Populism to Progressivism (Minneapolis, 1955), 66.

open and free markets . . . and not a complaint has ever come from a single one of those places. The record shows that they have paid the highest average price for grain and with no complaint as to grades. This is proof of the benefits of commercial freedom, which blows the theories of the railways to atoms." The greater capital and efficiency enjoyed by interstate companies allowed them to dictate the price of farm commodities and force the farmer to take their offers.¹⁸

The founding of the Minneapolis Millers Association in 1876, a buying pool, also contributed to monopolization of the market. For instance, in 1878 in Rush City, Chisago County, local merchant F.H. Pratt bought wheat at seventy to seventy-five cents per bushel while the wheat ring offered farmers five cents per bushel less. The St. Paul Roller Mills Company bought out Pratt in 1884, and farmers lost the five cent advantage.¹⁹

Complaints over the discrepancy between prices given the farmer and the price of wheat at Chicago and Buffalo, New York and London increased as the decade progressed. The Crookston market offered the farmer seventy-five cents per bushel in 1885; wheat sold for one dollar at Buffalo. The next year the figures were sixty-one cents at Crookston and eighty-six cents at Buffalo. This difference, the farmer argued, could not be explained through costs to the railway and elevator companies. In 1890, a great debate centered around a price

¹⁸Ibid., 6-10.

¹⁹ Deason, The Economic History, 154-156.

differential of fifty-four cents per bushel between Crookston and Liverpool for which thirty-four cents remained unaccounted. The Pillsbury Company of Minneapolis tried to justify the profit but could only attribute eight cents to transportation costs. This left the company with a twenty-six cent profit per bushel, too large a profit, according to the farmer. The Great West, a Minneapolis-based Alliance newspaper that supported Ignatius Donnelly in his political endeavors, contended that in 1892, thirty to forty cents per bushel was stolen from Minnesota wheat growers through price differentials in Minneapolis and Buffalo. The state railroad commission cited grading practices as the culprit of these inequalities, estimating that the farmer lost five cents per bushel because elevators sold wheat at a higher grade than they bought it.²⁰

These criticisms may not have been justified. Between 1890 and 1893, the excess price of wheat between Crookston and Liverpool averaged thirty-five cents while marketing costs were twenty-five cents. The Great West, however, calculated that even at ten cents per bushel profit, the railroads robbed every Minnesota farmer of \$180 per year.²¹

As was their penchant, agrarian economists proposed inflationary measures to heal the economy. Paranoid inflationists like Senator William V. Allen of Nebraska argued that

²⁰Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 18; Larson, The Wheat Market, 198-199; Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 78.

²¹Larson, The Wheat Market, 198-201.

the "East has placed its hands on the throats of the West" by shrinking the money supply for selfish reasons.²²

Amid all these grievances, the farmer plodded along. One wheat grower noted that even though the "land is very rich and for six years we have had good crops in the Red River Valley . . . somehow we don't get along though we economize every way we can" Another man who supported a family of seven on \$117.75 a year included on his list of expenditures "comforts . . . travel, books . . . diamonds and broadcloth," an indication that rising expectations contributed to the crisis.²³

²²Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 90.

²³Larson, The Wheat Market, 167.

CHAPTER THREE:
SCANDINAVIANS AND THE FARMERS'
ALLIANCE IN MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Alliance

Hard times heightened festering dissatisfaction with the major parties. The National Farmers' Alliance, founded in New York in 1877 by a group of Grangers, served social functions first and educational and political ends second. By 1886, however, the organization's raison d'être shifted to the political arena. The Cleburne Demands of the Texas Alliance, then a member of the Northern Alliance, condemning the "onerous and shameful abuses . . . of arrogant capitalists," reflected this change in emphasis. The document advocated the recognition of trade unions and other attempts at solidarity, called for taxation of railroad lands, and preached a nascent free silver doctrine and regulation of the money supply by Congress rather than bankers. Along with these items, the Alliance insisted upon government ownership or close scrutiny of the railroads.¹

Although Alliance agitation forced the older parties to respond to agrarian demands, its greater significance lies in the fact that it encouraged farmers to think "who had never thought before" and to "theorize upon their condition." More important still was the feeling of camaraderie that realization of their common plight created.²

¹Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 96-105; Pollack, The Populist Mind, xxxiii-xxxiv.

²Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 132.

Minnesota gradually enlisted in this latest agrarian crusade. An embryonic organization in 1882, by 1884 138 Alliance chapters existed throughout the state. Three hundred more were founded in the next two years. By 1893, twenty-two local Alliances with an estimated one thousand members served Kandiyohi County alone. The largest chapters contained over eighty members. All eighty-two members of the Lake Lillian chapter were Scandinavian. In fact, Scandinavians, and specifically Norwegians, dominated the western part of the state so fully that the rolls of the Red River Valley alliances "read like those of a Scandinavian ethnic society."³

Due to the lack of diversification which exacerbated economic despair in the western part of the state, that region welcomed the Farmers' Alliance. Because of this distress, the St. Paul Pioneer Press warned in 1884 that the people of the fifth district "will make an effort to remedy things this fall." Norman County voters subsequently elected Allianceman Charles Canning to the state house by more than twelve hundred votes. Canning sought a bipartisan consensus to "give the political parties the go-by." The Norman County Alliance, of which Norwegians comprised half the membership, also challenged voters to elect Alliancemen for the "express purpose of remedying the grievances of the farmers" Other parts of the state responded less enthusiastically to the

³Hicks, "The Farmers' Alliance," 204-205; William Watts Folwell, A History of Minnesota (St. Paul, 1926), 3, 169; Victor E. Lawson, "The Farmers' Alliance in Kandiyohi County," Minnesota History Bulletin, 4 (August, 1922), 338; Chrislock, "Norwegian-American Impact," 108.

movement because their recent shift to dairy and vegetable production gave them alternative incomes on which to rely.⁴

In 1884, the state Alliance supported inspection of grading at country elevators, lower interest rates, and adjustment of long-short haul differentials. The convention endorsed the Democratic nominee for governor, Albert Scheffer. Although a self-proclaimed farmer-politician, his banking background did not endear him to farmers. This endorsement caused a split between the supporters of Scheffer, led by Donnelly, and those who preferred an independent ticket.⁵ This division portended the problems that would plague the Alliance and the People's Party in Minnesota.

The 1885 legislature responded to Alliance agitation by passing a law that forced railroad companies to allow anyone to erect an elevator along the road and to provide sidetrack facilities for them. Without these requirements, the cooperative elevator movement of the 1890's could not have been successful. The Twenty-fourth legislature also standardized grading procedures at state terminals by creating a commission to supervise inspection of the elevator companies' tests. Although a provision to strengthen the Railroad and Warehouse

⁴Weatherhead, "The Farmers' Alliance in Norman County," 6; Jon Wefald, A Voice of Protest: Norwegians in American Politics, 1890-1917 (Northfield, Mn., 1971), 47.

⁵Hicks, "The Farmers' Alliance," 220.

Commission's authority passed, the state supreme court ruled that the commission's arbitrary assessments against the railroads denied them their property without due process of law.⁶

A poor crop in 1886 reactivated the disillusionment of temporarily appeased farmers with the economic solutions of the major parties. In Norman County, one of the worst hit counties, ten local Alliance chapters met in July to "promote the welfare of the operative farmer in his political and financial relations" and angrily proclaimed that "Our oppression cannot get much more severe, for if it does we cannot endure it." A "solid phalanx against the enemy" endorsed Knute Nelson and Canning for Congressman and state representative.⁷

The Minnesota chapters of the Alliance and the Knights of Labor formed a coalition in the campaign of 1886 to present a list of demands to both parties. These demands included a call for an end to stock watering, adoption of a graduated income tax, and establishment of a state bureau of labor statistics. State Republicans invited a delegation of this coalition to speak to their annual convention while the Democrats opted to write their platform without advice. Despite Republican cooperation with the farm-labor element, the GOP carried the state by only 2600 votes rather than the normal margin of twenty thousand. For the first time since the Civil

⁶Ibid., 217; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 173-177.

⁷Weatherhead, "The Farmers' Alliance in Norman County," 7-8.

War, Minnesota sent a Democratic delegation to Washington. Several Alliancemen were elected to the state legislature as well. Under Ignatius Donnelly's tutelage, Alliancemen received several coveted appointments to state committees. Donnelly himself chaired the railroad commission.⁸ But, because of infighting and petty personality clashes, only a few of the fifty-seven bills introduced by Donnelly passed the legislature, and those in amended form.⁹

In 1888, Minnesota gave Benjamin Harrison a 38,000 vote margin, elected Republican William R. Merriam to the office of governor with a 24,000 vote cushion, and returned Republicans to control of the state legislature. Mostly responsible for this resurgence was the failure of continually bickering Alliancemen to achieve promised reforms. Many perceived Donnelly's demagogic leadership of house Alliancemen to be the root of the division, and, consequently, he lost his bid for re-election.¹⁰

The Campaign of 1888 and the Swedish Vote

Disillusionment with the Republican Party among Swedish immigrants began over the party's response to the problems of industrialization in the late 1880's. Although the Republican

⁸Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 47; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 169; Donald F. Warner, "Prelude to Populism," Minnesota History, 32 (September, 1951), 130-131.

⁹Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 173-179.

¹⁰Bruce M. White, Minnesota Votes: Election Returns by County for Presidents, Senators, Congressmen, and Governors, 1857-1977 (St. Paul, 1977), 14, 164-165; Martin Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly: Portrait of a Politician (Chicago, 1962), 261; Warner, "Prelude," 132-133.

Party's humanitarian image wooed Swedes into the party, the GOP's tariff position, its seeming support of capitalists at the expense of laborers, and its refusal to increase the money supply during hard times did not command their loyalty. Ethnocultural issues won the Swedes, economic issues were losing them.¹¹ Still, the Minneapolis-based Svenska Folkets Tidning's claim that Swedish support for the Republican Party wavered was only half accurate. Undecided rural Swedish areas included only those counties whose economic situation had worsened during the 1880's -- Kittson, Ottertail, Aitkin, and Kanabec counties -- and even those counties remained loyal to the party of Lincoln when the ballots were counted. The faithfulness of the Republican Party to its constituents was never seriously questioned among prosperous Swedish counties.¹²

The overriding debate of the 1888 campaign throughout the state revolved around the tariff stance of the two parties. Though Republican congressional rejection of the low tariff Mills bill alienated many Swedes, the majority of the Swedish press concurred with Hemlandet, a Chicago Swedish language newspaper, when it called second district Swedish Congressman John Lind's vote for the Mills bill unbecoming. The journal claimed that the garb of Republicanism would "suit him so much better." The Atwater Press, from the conservative

¹¹Gustafson, "The Attitude of the Swedes," 36.

¹²Ibid., 33-35; George M. Stephenson, John Lind of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 1935), 54.

Swedish community in prosperous Kandiyohi County, published several reprints of anti-free trade broadsides throughout the state. The Press admitted, however, that Democratic rallies in Litchfield, Meeker County and Willmar, Kandiyohi County were "grand and surprising" successes.¹³ The Isanti County Press, located in Cambridge, blamed the proposed new schedule for the economic slowdown, as did the majority of journals in Swedish counties.¹⁴

In contrast, the Kanabec County Times declared the Mills bill to be an ill-constructed, sectional, discriminatory product of Republican schemers. Swedish lumbermen, the Times' bread and butter, advocated free trade and felt the lower schedule a poor substitute for true reciprocity.¹⁵

The activities of the nation's trusts also contributed to the volatile campaign of 1888. A Willmar man worried that "[w]e are feeling the effects of their work already [sic]; and when we remember they are only in their infancy . . . we have nothing but the worst to fear." The Atwater Press concurred. The journal felt that "life and liberty in our trades and every-day pursuits are the vital issues of the hour." It compared the campaign to liberate producers to Lincoln's fight to free the slaves. A consensus on this subject among Swedish journals existed regardless of economic circumstances.¹⁶

¹³Stephenson, John Lind, 54; Atwater Press, August 17, September 28, October 5, 1888.

¹⁴Isanti County Press, November 1, 1888.

¹⁵Kanabec County Times, October 11, 1888.

¹⁶Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 22-23; Atwater Press, August 10, 1888.

Lind added his voice to the anti-railroad monopoly chorus by arguing that "nothing but state control or assumption will make it [the railroad] the servant of the public" The Republican platform in the second district, supposedly written by Lind, stated that "history and our own experience teach us that capital so aggregated and empowered becomes aggressive, grasping, and dangerous . . . and inimical to the permanency of our institutions unless properly regulated and restrained by law." Since Lind was re-elected in 1888, the Minneapolis Tribune's comment that Lind did not represent his constituents seems unsound.¹⁷

Despite hard times, Swedes remained loyal to the Republican Party in 1888. The Atwater Press, in an editorial entitled "What the Republican Party has Done," reflected the attitude of many Swedes. The list of GOP accomplishments cited by the journal included: preservation of the Union, freedom for the slaves, civil service reform, dignity to labor through the protection of industry, fiscal restraint, cheap transportation, and prosperity. In contrast, the Isanti County Press pontificated that the Democracy stood for saloons, ballot box frauds, intimidation, slavery, polygamy (?), treason, and free trade.¹⁸

¹⁷Stephenson, John Lind, 32, 40.

¹⁸Atwater Press, September 27, 1888, editorializing and quoting Isanti County Press.

Besides economic issues, the ethnocultural debate over temperance influenced Swedish voters in 1888. Although a Republican legislature passed a high saloon license law, the Minneapolis-based Veckoblad reported Swedish desertion from the party because of its "flirtation with the saloon."¹⁹ A letter to the Atwater Press criticized the journal for accusing Republican defectors to the Prohibition Party of being traitors. The writer wondered, "In 1860 the democrats of the South wanted the slave because it was worth \$500. In 1888 the republicans of the North wants [sic] the saloon because it is worth \$500. Which one is the better?" Another correspondent felt that the paper was too gentle in its treatment of the teetotallers. He insisted that the Republican Party was the only true reform party. The Isanti County Press urged its readers to consider "every movement to a third party a hindrance to the cause of temperance."²⁰ Not all voters in Isanti County heeded this advice; that Swedish county cast 14 percent of its ballots for the third party.²¹ Prohibition seems to have been little mentioned in poorer Swedish counties; supposedly they were too busy simply surviving to worry about such matters.

Despite the conservative nature of the Swedish press in 1888, it must be remembered that the majority of Swedish coun-

¹⁹Hale, "Marcus Hansen," 32.

²⁰Atwater Press, August 24, August 3, 1888; Atwater Press, September 27, 1888 quoting Isanti County Press.

²¹White, Minnesota Votes, 164.

ties enjoyed prosperity. In the elections of the 1890's, more contrasts will emerge between affluent counties and the impoverished ones.

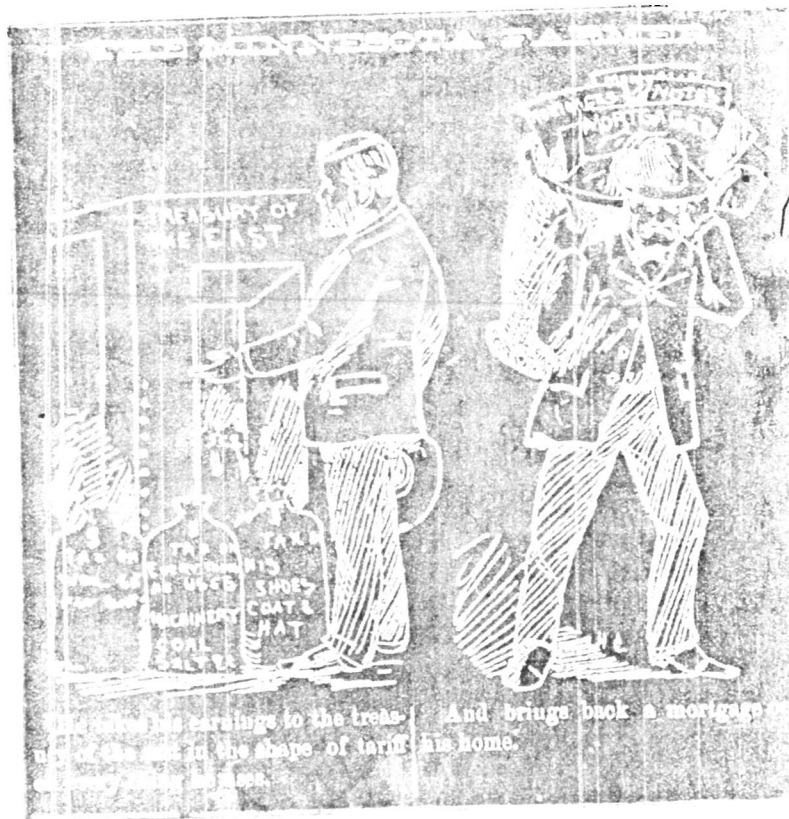
The Norwegian Press in 1888

Because of their inhabitation of the distressed counties, western Minnesota Norwegians joined the Alliance in greater numbers than their Swedish counterparts. Norwegians reacted with much less patience to their economic plight than Swedish farmers, and a greater divergence of opinion existed between western and southeastern Minnesota Norwegians than was evident among Swedes of differing economic circumstances. Journals from the wealthier Norwegian counties juxtaposed Democratic dishonesty and Republican virtue; the evils of free trade and the blessings of protection; the Democratic slavocracy and the glorious Union. The Alliance Party received little mention in the Norwegian press of the fertile southeast corner of the state.

Journals statewide devoted the majority of their space to the tariff issue, and the Norwegian press was no exception. Throughout prosperous southeastern and Minnesota River Valley settlements, Norwegians, like their Swedish counterparts, equated free trade with unemployment and a flood of foreign items on the market. From Lac Qui Parle County, with only one foreclosure in every 328 assessed acres in 1891, came the conclusion of the Dawson Sentinel that tariff change was

unnecessary as it would only aid "alien competitors." Dawsonites extended three cheers to John Lind after his speech there condemning free trade. He praised the Mills bill because it taxed luxury items from abroad rather than everyday needs produced by American industries.²²

While Norwegians in prosperous counties applauded the Mills bill because it reduced the tariff by seven to eight percent, the press of economically depressed western counties expressed a different viewpoint as to the benefits of the plan. The Norman County Herald summarized its interpretation of the effects of the Republican tariff stance with a cartoon.²³



²²Dawson Sentinel, October 12, October 19, 1888.

²³Norman County Herald, October 5, 1888.

Even though the Herald feared both protection and reciprocity, the journal felt that there was "one thing in favor of the laborer as against the Republican high tax and free whiskey, to wit; If protection gets a little higher he can drink all the rum he wants without fear of having snakes in his boots -- unless somebody gives him the boots." The Herald spoke for the western part of the state in its assessments.²⁴

The Daily Farmer of Fergus Falls, Ottertail County, agreed with the Herald. It noted that the staunchly Republican Norwegian farmer finally learned that "Protection means robbery" and urged Ottertail County farmers to "count up what has been ground out of you by oppression and unjust tariff taxes the past 16 years" and vote Democratic. Of course, the Daily Farmer had no alternative party to recommend to farmers in 1888. In a letter to the editor of the Daily Farmer on October 9, Judge Lars M. Rand, a reductionist from the fifth district, noted a peculiarity in the tax schedule of the Mills bill. According to the judge, diamonds, fine silk and wool, jewelry, wines, and shawls carried an average duty of 29 percent; window glass, steel rails, and cheap woolen material were taxed at 83 percent.²⁵

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Daily Farmer, October 8-9, 1888.

On the subject of privilege and monopoly, Faedrelandet og Emigranten, a Norwegian language newspaper, believed that the railroads received more land than they used and urged the government to assure that "lands are not squandered away on rich corporations" The Fergus Falls Ugeblad, also written in Norwegian, echoed that sentiment when it stated that the land belonged to the public "and not just a select few" ²⁶

In a related concern, Nye Normanden of Minneapolis bemoaned the fact that the money "speculators now steal from the people . . . they have no moral right to own." Donnelly's election to the state legislature in 1886 caused the Fergus Falls Journal to comment: "Get the mops ready You can almost hear the water drip as he [Donnelly] squeezes it out of railroad stock." Still, the Norman County Herald doubted if the wheat ring and state grain elevator employees operated in cahoots. Such collusion was unlikely, the organ sarcastically commented, since state employees know nothing except "the amount of their pay and the way to get it." ²⁷

²⁶ Andersen, The Scandinavian Immigrants, 137; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 32.

²⁷ Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 32; Norman County Herald, October 5, 1888; Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly, 252.

Even the prosperous Norwegian counties in the southeast portion of the state agreed with western Minnesotans on the issue of distribution of power and wealth. The Kenyon Leader, Goodhue County, printed this item.²⁸

WHAT IT IS

A Vanderbilt or a Rockefeller can pen a few lines of legal-ese and it becomes worth anywhere from \$5,000,000 to \$50,000,000. That is capital.

The United States can take an ounce and a fraction of gold and stamp a "screamer" and \$20 upon it. That is money.

A good mechanic can take \$5 worth of raw material and turn it into an article worth \$10 or \$20. That is skill.

An editor can take the long-winded article of an ignorant correspondent and cut it down to a few correct lines of readable common sense. That is brains.

A merchant can buy an article for 50 cents and sell it for \$1. That is business.

A lawyer can talk ten minutes with a client and charge him \$50. That is unreasonable.

A lady can buy a hat or bonnet for \$10 or \$15, but would rather pay \$50. That is foolishness.

A laborer can work ten hours a day and haul ten tons of rock or other material for \$1. That is unjust.

A comparison of English-American and Norwegian-American journals on the subject of the laborer shows a decided difference in attitude. The Gary Inter-State of Gary, South Dakota, remained convinced of "an abundance of money within the power of the working class, money which they might utilize but do not." In typical Calvinist rhetoric, the paper advised immigrants to "fight it out for yourself." In contrast, Scan-

²⁸Kenyon Leader, January 10, 1901.

dinaven felt that the rich look down upon the poor "on account of their filth But what encouragement is there for thrift and cleanliness amid such surroundings?"²⁹

Norwegians in the southeastern and western parts of the state disagreed also over the credentials of Merriam, the GOP gubernatorial candidate in 1888. For example, the wealthier Norwegian counties praised him for his accomplishments as speaker of the house while western voters complained about his alleged unsavory connections. One man claimed that the "boodle sticks out so plain that it is disgusting," and another wrote, "If you are for sale . . . vote for Merriam." A third farmer protested that the wheat ring still controlled the Republican Party in Minnesota. The Daily Farmer conveyed these pejorative sentiments pictorially:³⁰

²⁹Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 34.

³⁰Daily Farmer, October 13, October 24, 1888; Norman County Herald, October 5, October 19, 1888.

Boodle Sinking the Ship.



Engulfed in the Swirling Maelstrom of Popular Disgust.

Boodle Can Buy Delegates, but Not the People.

The Flopping Cryptogram a Poor Anchor.

Donnelly's endorsement of Merriam did not help the future governor among Norwegians in either economic set of counties. One reader of the Daily Farmer condemned Donnelly as the "prince of floppers and humbugs" because he jumped from party to party. The Lanesboro Journal of Fillmore County in the rich southeast corner of the state described him frequently, as so many did, as a demagogue. No section of the state fully trusted him throughout this era.³¹

As was true of Swedes, Norwegians did not disagree as much on the issues as on the intentions of the Republican Party. While journals from prosperous Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, and Lac Qui Parle counties recognized a concentration of wealth, voters there did not blame the party of Lincoln for its existence. They spoke instead of the GOP as the party of reform; just as it had ended human slavery, they felt, the party would eradicate economic bondage. The more economically distressed Norwegian counties did not believe the old promises. For example, the mayor of Fergus Falls noted the presence of a "liberal sentiment in this [Ottertail] county which cannot be smothered, or damned [sic] up." A letter signed "One of the Awakened" of Hegne, Norman County, predicted that the "sleeping republicans" of that community had finally "been brought out of their long nap" The North,

³¹Norman County Herald, October 26, 1888; Daily Farmer, October 22, 1888; Lanesboro Journal, October, 1888.

an English language Scandinavian publication, summed up the situation among Norwegians when it stated "that there is little or no faith in either of the great political parties."³²

Prohibition dominated the ethnocultural scene among Norwegians as well as Swedes. Condemnation of the saloon crossed economic lines, but support of the third party flourished in distressed Norwegian areas. This differed from the Swedish pattern which found the Prohibition Party faring better in prosperous Swedish counties.³³ This apparently confusing fact becomes clearer when the association between alcohol and poverty in the minds of the Norwegian immigrant is remembered.

Election Statistics

An analysis of the 1888 voting pattern in the selected counties reveals a slightly stronger loyalty to the Republican Party among Norwegians than Swedes. While 65 percent of the Norwegian townships voted for Benjamin Harrison and Merriam, 60 percent of the Swedish communities did so.³⁴

In comparison to the Scandinavian vote, non-Scandinavian townships in the Scandinavian counties gave 55 percent of their vote to the GOP, 35 percent to the Democrats, and 10 percent to Prohibitionists. While the Norwegian vote followed more closely than the Swedish vote the sentiments expressed at the

³²Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 46; Daily Farmer, October 17, 1888.

³³Minnesota, The Legislative Manual of the State of Minnesota: Compiled and Published under Direction of H. Mattson, Secretary of State, 1889 (St. Paul, 1889), 329-396.

³⁴Ibid.

polls by non-Scandinavians, Minnesota's Scandinavians in general remained more loyal to the Republican Party in 1888 than the state as a whole.³⁵

A breakdown of the counties into economic categories only slightly alters the picture. Surprisingly, distressed Norwegian counties also remained more loyal to the Republican Party than those Swedish counties feeling the economic pinch. Despite the vociferous condemnation by western Norwegians of the GOP, the Prohibition Party did not appeal to them, and, of course, the Democracy was not a serious contender among Scandinavians in Minnesota until the 1930's. In Scandinavian counties with high foreclosure rates, 36 percent voted other than Republican. This compares to 30 percent in the more prosperous counties. Economics did not significantly affect the vote of the non-Scandinavian element either, although they voted for the Democracy more readily than Scandinavians.³⁶

Harrison carried sixty-three counties in the 1888 presidential election; Grover Cleveland won sixteen. Of those sixteen Cleveland victories, all came in counties with a dominant Finnish or German population. This must be explained in other than economic terms since prosperous Scandinavian counties voted overwhelmingly Republican while German counties in the same economic and geographic situation remained Democratic.³⁷ Eth-

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷John D. Hicks, "The People's Party in Minnesota," Minnesota History Bulletin, 5 (November, 1924), 533; White, Minnesota Votes, 164-165.

nocultural issues did not capture most of the political space in the press of the Scandinavian counties, but it is evident that the various ethnic groups within the state perceived the issues differently.

Despite disillusionment with the major parties expressed in the Scandinavian press in 1888, only eight of the fourteen counties studied gave the third party alternative more than 10 percent of their vote.³⁸ The independency of the Farmers' Alliance in 1890 would change that.

³⁸Legislative Manual, 1889, 329-396.

CHAPTER FOUR:
1890: THE CLIMAX OF AGRARIAN
POLITICS IN MINNESOTA

Third Party Action

The failure of the 1889 legislature and the Merriam administration to attack economic problems forced Minnesota farmers to demand an alternative political choice in 1890. No longer convinced of the good intentions of Governor Merriam and his party, Minnesota farmers joined the Minnesota Alliance en masse.

Factionalism among Alliance legislators that dashed the hopes of those to whom they promised reform also plagued the Alliance executive committee meeting when it addressed the questions of party leadership and direction in March, 1890. Donnelly's abrasiveness, as well as honest differences of opinion, polarized the gathering into Donnelly and R.J. Hall factions for the presidency of the Alliance. After much bickering, Hall, a rather obscure member of the organization, received the position. A bitter Donnelly used his newly founded organ, the Great West, and its editor Dr. Everett W. Fish, to attack Hall and his henchmen. In the matter of party direction, Donnelly's forces were skeptical about third party action whereas an independent ticket appealed to the Hall group. Because local alliances favored the latter route, the March meeting tentatively recommended this course to the platform committee of the annual convention.¹

¹Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 106-108; Hicks, "The People's Party," 536-537.

Delegates to the 1890 Alliance convention assembled in St. Paul in July to call for "free and open markets," an end to railroad discrimination against independent elevators and small farmers, public warehouses à la the subtreasury plan of the Southern Alliance, and government control and eventual ownership of the railroad companies. The platform condemned the new McKinley tariff and the tight money policies of the Harrison administration. Election rather than appointment to the state Railroad and Warehouse Commission and labor legislation, an obvious effort to attract blue collar votes, received the support of the convention. Politically, the 505 delegates endorsed the direct election of the president and senators and the Australian ballot.²

Although the executive committee divided on the subject of independent action, the convention voted 394 to 28 in favor of such a venture. A split between Donnelly and Hall supporters over the gubernatorial nomination produced a deadlocked convention which finally nominated Sidney M. Owen, the editor of Farm, Stock, and Home, as the standard bearer of the new party. Owen's recent arrival in Minnesota -- he had been in the state five years -- did not soothe either group.³

Although the Minnesota Alliance chose to create its own ticket in 1890, other avenues of protest existed. Politically,

²Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 111-112; Hicks, "The People's Party," 538; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 188.

³Carl H. Chrislock, "Sidney M. Owen: An Editor in Politics," Minnesota History, 36 (December, 1958), 110; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 108-109; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 188.

the Alliance could have applied pressure to the old parties in the form of bloc voting; farm-labor cooperation during the 1885 legislature achieved some notable results and pressured the Republican Party into incorporating many of the demands of the fusionists into the 1886 GOP platform. Aside from political action, long term economic solutions such as cooperative elevators, creameries, and general stores eventually saved the farmer money and competed with the various rings that had a stranglehold on the market. Another long term remedy, diversification, already proven effective in southeastern Minnesota as a weapon against the steady decline in agricultural prices, could have protected one-crop income western Minnesota farmers from further economic misery if it had been implemented in the 1890's.⁴

Nevertheless, the Alliance chose independent action because, in the farmers' eyes, the repeated failure of the old parties to address the problems of railroad discrimination and concentration, high interest rates, and low prices justified and demanded such a course. Accusations of machine and boodle politics in the Merriam administration aggravated the anger of farmers.⁵

The Republicans held their convention in July also. The uneventful gathering endorsed the McKinley tariff, low interest rates, anti-trust legislation, high priced saloon licenses,

⁴Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 73-77.

⁵Ibid., 100-103; Hicks, "The People's Party," 537.

regulation of the railroads. The platform also favored the secret ballot and free textbooks to all public school children. Governor Merriam easily won renomination.⁶

Two months later the Democrats met to nominate former railroad attorney Thomas Wilson to run against Merriam and Owen. His party opposed the McKinley tax, criticized the Republican grain inspection law in Minnesota for not including country elevators, warned trusts to beware should Wilson be elected, and ballyhooed about alleged corruption within the Merriam administration.⁷

The Campaign

Republicans emphasized their party's record in the fall campaign. Merriam reminded voters of the great traditions of the party of Lincoln and pleaded with the electorate to not let Alliance agitation lure them from the GOP. Alliance proposals, he informed the state, became law only through Republican finesse. Whenever the Democratic-Alliance combine in the 1889 legislature worked without Republican cooperation, Merriam claimed, it failed. The charge was true; partisanship and the lack of a consensus among reformers proved an insurmountable barrier to success.⁸

⁶Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 117; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 187.

⁷Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 118-119; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 187.

⁸Carl H. Chrislock, "The Alliance Party and the Minnesota Legislature of 1891," Minnesota History, 35 (September, 1957), 300.

In an attempt to discredit the Democratic nominee, Merriam supporters printed an out-of-context phrase from a Wilson speech in which he said he would speak no evil of the railroads. In its entirety, the speech advocated regulation, though it praised the great benefits provided to civilization by the railroads.⁹

Democrats focused their attention on Merriam's infamous friends, including James J. Hill, and alleged Republican corruption. Wilson tried in vain to outline the advantages of a free trade policy; the philosophy remained anathema to most Minnesotans.¹⁰

The Farmers' Alliance in Minnesota spoke frequently of the need for third party action. It cautioned farmers and workingmen to not be duped by the sweet talk of the old parties for, after the election, the promises would be forgotten. Candidate Owen stressed three points: the tariff, taxation inequities, and overcapitalization. Although his party endorsed public warehouses, Owen rejected the subtreasury plan because it would create artificial prices and pit one industry against another. A classic Jacksonian, Owen believed that the "fictitious values" of commodities caused by government intervention into the market were the reason for depressed prices. In true laissez-faire fashion, Owen sought a return of the market

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Carl H. Chrislock, "A Cycle in the History of Minnesota Republicanism," Minnesota History, 39 (Fall, 1964), 95.

to full competition. The ultimate sequel to the current situation, he feared, was class conflict, a consequence he was sure no one wanted.¹¹

The Swedish Position in 1890

The traditional Republicanism of the Swedish populace that began eroding in 1888 declined further in 1890. While Princeton's Union predicted that the Republican Party would need "shrewd political maneuvering to secure the old time Republican majority in Isanti county," the Kandiyohi County Alliance recognized that Swedes voted for the Alliance ticket because the "old political parties have proven unfaithful" ¹²

Distressed Swedish counties were divided in their support of the Alliance. The Kanabec County Times wanted it known that Scandinavians were deserting Merriam's party, not Lincoln's, because "L_m_7ammon rules with imperial sway" within the GOP fold. In contrast, the Hallock Weekly News from Kittson County backed Merriam and urged voters not to succumb to the cries of "political cranks with socialist tendencies" The paper's "Bosh!" to the allegation that Swedes were losing interest in the new party probably stemmed more from anger over the charge that the county Alliance was "run by a pack of Swedes" than from allegiance to the Alliance cause.¹³

¹¹Chrislock, "Owen," 110-115.

¹²Lawson, "Kandiyohi County," 339; The North, October 15, 1890; Isanti County Press, August 14, 1890, quoting the Princeton Union.

¹³Kanabec County Times, October 23, 1890; Hallock Weekly News, November 1, October 25, 1890.

Barely a rumble against the Republican Party came from the press of agriculturally diversified Swedish counties. The Atwater Press warned farmers of the "reactionary Democracy," and the Press of Isanti County found Alliance leaders demagogic. The latter considered their attempted reforms "hotch potch," but internal strife and the party's radical demands alienated Isanti County Swedes more than perceived pomposity. W.H. Dunbar, a disillusioned Allianceman, warned voters of the "political shysters" of the Alliance who led their "fellow man into an incubator of corruption" and encouraged others to return to the Republican fold with him.¹⁴

Although image played a more significant part in the 1890 election than it did in other elections, economic concerns still dominated newspaper space. Low tariff sentiment reflected economic differences among the counties, but some impoverished Swedish areas praised the McKinley bill while others considered it a sop. According to the Mora-based Kanabec County Times, the new schedule was a "monstrosity." An irate farmer from Kittson County expressed his weariness of doing only as he was told and complained, "because we have dared to consider or think . . . we are called ignorant and shallow pated." In Donnellian language, the farmer described the Alliance as, "a youthful giant just born of Swaddling clothes, and I might say born in a manger who will come to maturity early next week. That is the party that will remedy the tariff It is

¹⁴Atwater Press, October 10, 1890; Isanti County Press, October 4, August 28, 1890.

to the masses of the people what Moses was to the Israelites."¹⁵ The Hallock Weekly News printed this letter with which it disagreed, but added praise for the McKinley schedule and thanks to Congressman Solomon G. Comstock for his "vote and successful work for a lower tariff" Across the state in Aitkin County, the Aitkin Age agreed with the irate farmer rather than the Hallock newspaper. The Age printed its own version of the schedule for all "who are farmers, lumbermen, or in short . . . earn their bread by the labor of their hands." In the eyes of Aitkin County Swedes, everyday needs of the poor were taxed more heavily under the McKinley tariff than under the old schedule while luxury items of the rich received a lesser duty.¹⁶ These illustrations serve to further illuminate the division among Swedes throughout the economically depressed counties in Minnesota.

Indecisiveness toward the McKinley bill demonstrated by impoverished counties did not appear in the prosperous Swedish areas. The Isanti County Press echoed the sentiments of neighboring Chisago County and Kandiyohi County when it praised the tariff for taxing only those foreign-made goods also manufactured in America, thus not harming native industries. This statement is in direct contrast to the above comments of the Aitkin Age concerning the unjustness of the McKinley plan.

¹⁵Kanabec County Times, October 2, 1890; Hallock Weekly News, November 1, 1890.

¹⁶Hallock Weekly News, October 25, September 20, November 1, 1890; Aitkin Age, October 25, 1890.

¹⁷Isanti County Press, September 4, August 28, September 25, 1890.

John Lind best summarized the views of Minnesota Swedes toward the new tariff when he tepidly endorsed it, "not because I think it is just to my people . . . [but because_] I wanted to send it to that body [the Senate_] where the glorious West can be heard, where selfishness does not rule supreme as it does in . . . [the House_]. It went and came back a better bill."¹⁸

The most explosive topic throughout the 1890's was the issue of railroad abuses and monopolistic practices. This was one subject in which economic differences among the counties did not influence their thought. From conservative Isanti County, J.F. Zatterstrom remembered "once in Barnum's circus seeing a clown that was going to jump over six horses [E_]very-time he got to the springboard he would turn around with a bland smile and tell the audience, I love to jump." The clown continued to stall, and it made the crowd roar with laughter, which fulfilled the clown's intent. The clown's bluff reminded Zatterstrom of "how the Republicans have legislated on taxing railroad lands."¹⁹

In Kanabec County, a normal foreclosure county, Swedes fumed over the possible repeal of an 1887 act that taxed railroad property. Since the law went into effect, the Times said, \$800,000 in revenue had entered state coffers; a just sum, the

¹⁸Stephenson, John Lind, 64.

¹⁹Isanti County Press, September 27, 1890.

paper felt. The journal endorsed Owen because neither Merriam nor Wilson promised to satisfactorily police the railroad companies.²⁰

Divergent impressions about the Republican paraphrase of Wilson's speech about the railroads appeared in the fall campaign. The conservative Isanti County Press wondered why the Democrats, long advocates of regulation, nominated for governor a railroad attorney who had nothing bad to say about the roads. The journal questioned the Democracy's support of anti-trust legislation. The Aitkin Age, a Democratic organ, defending Wilson, reprinted an article from the St. Paul Globe in which that journal accused the Republican Party of spreading vicious lies about Wilson and distorting the truth. In actuality, the Globe correctly reported, Wilson's speech lauded law-abiding railroad companies while condemning violators of the law. He had nothing bad to say about nonabusive companies.²¹

With regard to wage laborers, economic circumstances did not alter the degree of compassion toward their plight but did affect the views of the various Swedish counties toward the intentions of the major parties. Both Kittson and Aitkin counties suffered from foreclosure problems, but the Hallock Weekly News remained convinced that the Republican Party was the true friend of the workingman while the Democracy only feigned empathy with him. The Kittson County journal described

²⁰Kanabec County Times, October 30, October 9, 1890.

²¹Isanti County Press, September 18, 1890; Aitkin Age, October 4, 1890, quoting the St. Paul Globe.

the Democratic Party as one composed of ex-slaveholders too lazy to work, who treated first slaves and then all workers as scum. On the other hand, the Republican Party, according to the Hallock newspaper, prized the virtues of manual labor and admired those who did an honest day's work. The Aitkin Age, conversely, the only Democratic newspaper among rural Swedish newspapers perused in this study, argued that the Republican Party believed in the "theory that nine hours' pay is sufficient for eleven hours' work." Most Swedish journals remained Republican because they felt that the Alliance Party could not accommodate both agricultural and labor interests under one banner. They were right.²²

Swedes in prosperous counties felt betrayed also, but their economic condition had not reached the breaking point and so, like so many voters throughout American history, they dared not waste their vote on a third party. Those journals within Swedish counties that did support the Alliance were located in impoverished areas and had no choice but to seek an alternative. Again, only lumbermen from Aitkin County voted Democratic.

Ethnocultural issues contributed to the straying affections of the Swedes toward the Republican Party in 1890. In 1888, the Swedish press made only slight mention of Swedish political ambition; by 1890 it proclaimed that the time had

²²Hallock Weekly News, October 25, November 11, 1890; Aitkin Age, October 11, 1890; Isanti County Press, August 28, 1890; Atwater Press, October 27, 1890.

come "to teach the silk stocking, blue blood Yankees that the Scandinavians are not descendants of the lower creatures of nature." Kittson County Swedes felt that it was "not more than fair that their nationality should be represented." This attitude was encouraged by the increasing anti-immigration sentiment among Twin City Republicans and the Swedish realization that their Norwegian counterparts had considerably more clout than they. The Alliance Party afforded an opportunity to get in on the ground floor and make themselves known.²³

Prohibition again constituted an ethnocultural influence on Minnesota Swedes in 1890. Owen's temperate image aided him to an extent among these voters. While some favored individual reform, others felt that "moral suasion will have very little effect upon the saloon-keeper" A consensus advocated a constitutional amendment to settle the matter. Those favoring abstention would not, of course, have voted Democratic.²⁴

Between 1888 and 1890, a disconcerted Swedish populace emerged. Both elections centered around economic issues, but the third party action of the Farmers' Alliance stirred Swedish immigrants and exacerbated their lack of trust in the intentions of the Republican Party. The main difference between the two elections was one of image, not economic opinion. As times got worse, Minnesota Swedes who felt the pinch grew wearier and wearier with old platitudes and promises.

²³Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 59-64; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 24; Hallock Weekly News, October 25, 1890.

²⁴Chrislock, "Owen," 111; The North, October 15, 1890; Kanabec County Times, October 23, 1890.

Norwegian Attachment to the Alliance Cause in 1890

Norwegian farmers in the distressed counties in western Minnesota, unlike Swedes in Kittson, Kanabec, and Aitkin counties, stood firm in their conviction to "quit the Republican Party." Norwegian Congressman Nelson cited Yankee domination of the party, its big business image, prohibition sentiment, and Alliance agitation as the main reasons for this desertion. Letters to the Fertile Journal of Polk County praised the Alliance cause and reminded voters to expect nothing from the old parties whose "voices have been sweet and their promises many and golden" According to the president of the Norman County Alliance, farmers who remained loyal to the GOP "deserve no pity" Another man from that county wanted to show the "bosses that we are able to act for ourselves" Pleading for unity, a Polk County farmer wrote, "Shall we continue to give away our liberty and let ourselves be oppressed and enchained more and more, or shall we stand together and use our weapon, the ballot box, against the enemy?" An Ada, Norman County resident predicted that the Republican Party, "the friend of monopoly . . . will explode shortly."²⁵ This front page advertisement in the Fertile Journal is indicative of the rabid support of the Alliance shown among Norwegians in western Minnesota.²⁶

²⁵Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 59; Chrislock, "Norwegian-American Impact," 108; Fertile Journal, October 16, October 23, 1890; Norman County Herald, October 26, 1890.

²⁶Fertile Journal, October 9, 1890.

THE FARMERS' JOURNAL

ADVERTISING
JOURNAL

Vote the Straight FARMERS ALLIANCE TICKET

And Trade with the

STRAIGHT FARMERS ALLIANCE STORE

The Farmers' Friend is the

CHEAP CASH STORE

OF

HENDRICKS BROS.

WE BUY FOR CASH AND SELL FOR CASH

Dry Goods,
Notions,
Furnishing Goods

CLOTHING,
HATS, CAPS,
BOOTS & SHOES,

Groceries,
Provisions

Norwegians in prosperous counties, however, described Alliancemen as disgruntled farmers who had failed to rise in the Republican hierarchy. A Fillmore County man equated a vote for the Democratic-Alliance coalition with a vote for negation, opposition, and stagnation. The Lanesboro Journal, Fillmore County, quoted Nelson's plea to Hennepin County Scandinavians to vote "just as your forefathers . . . a thousand years ago." Apparently, Nelson felt the ancient Vikings would have risen from their graves and supported Governor Merriam if they could have. Whether this ethnocultural approach was effective or not is a moot point. The Dawson Sentinel of Lac Qui Parle County cautioned citizens to ponder the meaning of the fusion ticket before voting. "Republicans!" the paper urged, "Stand by the ticket, for it is a good one!"²⁷

The accusations, name-calling, and image building tactics that added spice to the campaign in Swedish counties also served to enliven press coverage in Norwegian counties. Criticisms by Norwegian journals against Merriam emphasized his money connections. The Red River Dalen, a Norwegian language newspaper, wondered about the two million dollars Merriam claimed to have saved Minnesota farmers. The money supply did not go to the farmer, the organ said, because, at that figure, each farmer would have been \$20,000 richer. Folkebladet, also

²⁷Glenwood Herald, October 3, 1890, quoting the Northfield News; Lanesboro Journal, October 31, 1890; Dawson Sentinel, October 10, October 31, 1890.

written in Norwegian, contrasted Owen with the boodle-seeking friend of the railroads who occupied the governor's mansion. A writer to the Norman County Herald called the Governor "one of the farmers' greatest oppressors," whose sole aim was to increase his own wealth. The Fergus Falls Journal, however, worried about Owen's commitment to the agrarian cause since he was a city editor. "There is something a little inconsistent in a movement started for the purpose of nominating a farmer which winds up" endorsing a journalist, the paper lamented. The Journal predicted that Owen would serve urban interests rather than agrarian. While negative images of Merriam and positive images of Owen existed mainly within impoverished counties, Norwegians throughout the state agreed that Wilson and his party offered them nothing. No party in 1890 benefited from very objective reporting on the issues, but the Democracy suffered most.²⁸

Local economic conditions did not alter the opinions of Norwegians toward the evils of monopoly any more than they changed Swedish values. A universal contempt toward the roads and other combines existed. Letters to the editors of numerous state journals reflected the feeling among Norwegians that "farmers have been fleeced for many years" By November, one farmer predicted, "the whiskey power, the money power, and monopolies [~will~] . . . be driven from the land." It would be an uphill battle, however, because "[~n~]ine-tenths of the

²⁸The North, November 5, October 1, 1890; Norman County Herald, October 17, 1890; Isanti County Press, August 19, 1890, quoting the Fergus Falls Journal.

exchange men will vote the old parties at the coming election." Criticisms of the third party by "monopoly ridden dailies" presented another obstacle to Alliance victory. The author of a letter to the Fertile Journal facetiously wondered if farmers "believe that bankers and railroad attorneys will work in your interest?" His negative answer was followed by the cheer: "Hail, the Farmers Alliance and the independent union party of Minnesota!"²⁹

Norwegians supported strikers and laborers in general. Rural newspapers agreed that if the old parties do not "make common cause with the farmers and laborers . . . they should not be allowed to retain power in the state." The Dawson Sentinel accused the alleged Alliance organ, the St. Paul News, of being a "rank hypocrite" for not supporting a proposed strike by the Knights of Labor. The journal, along with the Northfield News, Goodhue County, however, agreed with most other papers that a farm-labor merger was like mixing oil and water. Hesitancy about the wisdom of joining the two movements contributed in large measure to Republican fidelity among Norwegians in prosperous counties. The Dawson Sentinel did not support the Lac Qui Parle County Alliance ticket because the party was run by a "band of labor anarchists . . . who labor mostly with their jaw."³⁰

²⁹Norman County Herald, October 17, October 26, 1890; Weatherhead, "The Farmers' Alliance in Norman County," 15-16; Fertile Journal, October 23, October 16, 1890; Dawson Sentinel, August 22, 1890.

³⁰Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 39; Dawson Sentinel, September 12, 1890, quoting the Northfield News; Isanti County Press, October 16, 1890, citing Dawson Sentinel's opinion.

Sensationalism aside, the tariff issue continued to dominate space throughout the state's press. The economic differences among Norwegian counties evinced themselves most obviously on the subject of the McKinley tariff. The divergent opinions in the three distressed Swedish counties on this topic changed to a uniformity of voice in western Norwegian counties. Grant County residents from Elbow Lake said "Bah! Humbug!" to the notion that the tariff was in the farmers' interests. One correspondent wrote that the McKinley bill "advocates such measures as we have for years been contending against." A resident of Norman County urged farmers to "hold fast to the rules [*sic*] that industries which ask for higher duties . . . are already charging up to the high-water mark" Still another irate Norwegian farmer congratulated the Republican Party for being "the only party that has found out that a people who pay double price for all they buy, and receive half price for all they sell will make the most money." The author informed voters that the gold that Republicans promised would fill working pockets lays in the pockets of "industries, railroad kings and their attorneys" ³¹

The Fergus Falls Ugeblad printed a list of taxable items. This, the paper noted, was a sampling of the great and good deed that Congress praised itself for: ³²

³¹Elbow Lake Alliance, November 12, 1890; Norman County Herald, October 31, October 17, 1890.

³²The North, November 5, 1890, quoting the Fergus Falls Ugeblad.

fine cashmere.....	25%	higher duty
broadcloth.....	20%	higher duty
woolen goods.....	40%	higher duty
sealskin cloak.....	30%	lower duty
imitation silk.....	120%	higher duty
corduroy.....	140%	higher duty
cotton.....	285%	higher duty

The counties not pinched by the depression in agricultural prices equated protection with jobs, prosperity, and good wages; free trade meant cheap foreign labor. The Lanesboro Journal knew times were tough but ridiculed Owen's remark that farming paid everyone but the farmer. The paper printed persuasive evidence that the Republican schedule benefited the farmer. The Lac Qui Parle County Press, in agreement with more liberal journals on other subjects, called the new tariff courageous, if not perfect. It encouraged farmers to not bolt the Republican Party because "its naughty you know." The Dawson Sentinel, also of Lac Qui Parle County, described the new schedule as the "bravest battle for principles" since the Civil War.³³

Because of the dire economic circumstances in many Norwegian counties, Norwegian journals spoke less frequently about ethnocultural issues in 1890 than in the past. Like the Swedes, political recognition was important to them, but because they had entered the political arena earlier, Norwegians had more political clout than Swedes. But to the Fergus

³³Glenwood Herald, September 26, 1890; Lanesboro Journal, October 17, October 3, 1890; Lac Qui Parle County Press, October 24, October 10, 1890.

Falls Ugeblad the lack of patronage that the Merriam administration doled out to Norwegians was unforgivable in light of their overwhelming support of him in 1888. Under the direction of Nicolai A. Grevstad, later editor of Scandinaven, a delegation of Norwegians informed the Republican convention in 1890 of their desire for a gubernatorial nominee from their ethnic background, presumably Knute Nelson.³⁴ Republicans did not follow this suggestion, but Norwegian defection that year served as a warning to the GOP; it chose Nelson as its standard bearer in 1892.

The prohibition issue still lived, although Norwegians commented sparingly on the topic in 1890. The North noted the success of local option in Norway where the profits of stockholders in the Bergen Society, a retail liquor cooperative, increased 127 percent every year. The journal also cited the fact that only thirty-four over-the-counter bars existed in Norway, not enough to blemish the landscape or the morals of the people.³⁵

The Results

Owen and Wilson gave Merriam a scare in 1890, and a Farmers' Alliance-Democratic coalition succeeded in capturing the state and national delegations. Although Wilson ran a very

³⁴S.A. Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians in Minnesota towards Populism," (Unpublished term thesis, University of Minnesota, under the direction of Solon J. Buck, 1924), 7; Martin W. Odland, The Life of Knute Nelson (Minneapolis, 1926), 155.

³⁵The North, October 1, October 8, 1890.

close second in the state as a whole, among Scandinavians Owen tallied twice the Democratic vote. The Republicans lost four of the five congressional districts in 1890; John Lind was the sole survivor, and his margin was only four hundred out of 42,000 votes cast. On the state level, the balance in the senate among Republicans, Democrats, and Alliancemen, 26, 15, and 13 respectively, and in the house, 41, 40, and 32, represented the discontent and indecision among voters in 1890.³⁶ The three largest Scandinavian wards in Minneapolis defected the most that year.³⁷

An interesting split occurred between Swedish and Norwegian voters in 1890. In 1888, the two groups voted similarly, but in 1890, Norwegian townships gave Owen 62 percent of the vote while Swedes contributed only 30 percent. Economics does not explain this situation either, for the two Swedish counties in the high foreclosure category cast differing votes; Kittson County Swedes giving 51 percent to Owen and Anoka County recording a dismal five percent for the Alliance cause. On the other hand, Norwegian voters in Norman, Ottertail, and Polk counties supported Owen with 76 percent of their ballots. The picture is the same in normal foreclosure counties; both Swedish counties remained Republican; both Norwegian counties voted for Owen. Further, in the prosperous districts, Swedes averaged 53 percent Republican and 25 percent Alliance, but

³⁶White, Minnesota Votes, 165-166; Minnesota, The Legislative Manual of the State of Minnesota: Compiled for the Legislature of 1891 (St. Paul, 1891), 494-553.

³⁷Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 53.

Norwegians in Fillmore, Kandiyohi, and Lac Qui Parle counties gave the incumbent only 35 percent. Owen won among Norwegians even in these locales. Five out of the six Swedish counties remained loyal to the Republican Party -- only Kittson County voted for Owen. The same number of Norwegian counties embraced the Farmers' Alliance -- Fillmore County, with only one foreclosed acre per 305 acres assessed, remained within the Republican fold. Even Lac Qui Parle County, one-half to three-fourths Norwegian, and the least threatened county economically in the survey, elected the Alliance ticket.³⁸

Why this divergence between the two groups? The explanation of why "25,000 Norwegian-born farmers turned their backs upon Mr. Merriam and voted for Mr. Owen" while Swedes remained Republican can only be posited in ethnocultural terms. First, the Old World look at Sweden conducted in the first chapter indicated that Swedes responded to changing times more slowly than Norwegians.³⁹ Secondly, protectionist sentiment in Sweden could very well have biased Swedes in America in favor of the Republican tariff.

³⁸Legislative Manual, 1889, 329-396; Legislative Manual, 1891, 494-553; White, Minnesota Votes, 165-166.

³⁹Gustafson, "The Attitude of the Swedes," 13; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 47.

CHAPTER FIVE:
POPULISM: THE DENOUEMENT OF
MINNESOTA AGRARIAN PROTEST

The Twenty-seventh Legislature, 1891-1893

A reinvigorated Donnelly returned to his house seat in the Twenty-seventh legislature as the de facto head of a Democratic-Alliance coalition in the state house which sought to cooperate in an effort to push through railroad and elevator regulations and various other agrarian demands. The combine captured nineteen committee chairs in the senate, and Alliancemen headed two important railroad and warehouse committees.¹

The balance of power that existed among the three parties gave the Alliance a golden opportunity to manipulate the situation and realign Minnesota politics, but ever-present factionalism prevented the realization of agrarian success. Anti-interest legislation fell first prey to the squabbling coalition. Debate over lower rates centered around the fear that strict guidelines would drive capital from the state. Businessmen argued that this was already happening. Alliance coolness toward the measure caused the first rift in fusionist ranks. Senator E.E. Lommen, an Allianceman from Polk County, trying to conserve the already scarce money supply in his fifth district, warned: "If you want to send this whole upper country to Hades . . . then pass all these [interest] bills at once." John Hompe, the other senator from the fifth

¹Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 129; Hicks, "The People's Party," 539; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 185; Chrislock, "The 1891 Legislature," 302.

district, agreed. Democrats rightly accused Alliancemen of reneging on their partnership. Republican support of the bill made Alliance promises seem all the more shallow. The legislature also defeated the Currier bill, a law that would have standardized tonnage rates within the state; Republicans and urban Democrats stopped this reform. Labor legislation, fiscal conservation, and the Australian ballot became victims of procrastination and petty politics as well.²

True to their prediction, Republicans secured the only victory of the session. The Hompe bill revised the Twenty-fourth legislature's bill to strengthen the Railroad and Warehouse Commission so that it no longer violated the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause.³

The record of the Twenty-seventh legislature confirmed third party inexperience and Republican supremacy to many voters. Alliancemen recognized their failure and sought to disassociate themselves from this dismal performance. Alliancemen feared that "there would be no more Alliance party in Minnesota, forever" if they did not vindicate themselves.⁴

²Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 130-137; Chrislock, "The 1891 Legislature," 306-309.

³Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 134; Chrislock, "The 1891 Legislature," 309.

⁴Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 138-140; Hicks, "The People's Party," 540.

The Populist Party and Minnesota Politics

The Minnesota political scene after 1892 cannot be discussed without linking it to the national Populist crusade. After the creation of the People's Party in 1891, Minnesota Populists began the task of recruiting Alliancemen to the national movement. Many Minnesotans remained skeptical of the venture, however, preferring to tackle state and local problems before advancing to the larger arena. Donnelly's enlistment in the People's Party caused further suspicion among possible recruits.⁵

The Minnesota Alliance tried to remain aloof and separate from the new movement, but merger took place out of a necessity to keep at least a remnant of the Alliance viable. The fusion delegates nominated Donnelly for governor and endorsed the Omaha platform and the People's Party presidential candidate, James B. Weaver.⁶

Although the People's Party grew out of the Alliance, its philosophy differed in many ways from the older organization. While the Alliance favored a free market and opposed the paternalistic subtreasury plan, the People's Party believed in "affirmative action" on both proposals. Populists favored government ownership of the means of transportation; Alliancemen preferred regulation. The Alliance Party wanted to make more noise over the tariff.⁷

⁵Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 143-144; Chrislock, "Owen," 114; Hicks, "The People's Party," 542.

⁶Hicks, "The People's Party," 543; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 147-149.

⁷Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 150.

Meanwhile, Republicans endorsed President Harrison and Knute Nelson for president and governor. A proposed downward revision of the tariff highlighted the GOP platform. Minnesota Republicans recognized Nelson's popularity among Scandinavians and believed, as one Republican asserted, that he would "carry the Norwegian vote of the State in the coat-tail pocket of his trousers."⁸

The Democratic nomination of Irish-Catholic Daniel W. Lawler for governor demonstrated that that party also recognized the importance of ethnic attachments; Democrats hoped to steal votes from Donnelly, also a descendant of Irish immigrants. State Democrats remained free traders and committed to parochial education as a protection against cultural annihilation.⁹

The election results disappointed the Populist Party. The Minnesota Alliance had polled an exciting 23 percent statewide and carried twenty-four counties in 1890; Donnelly garnered only 15.5 percent and won in a scant five counties. Agrarian clout in the state legislature dwindled from 27 to 10 percent, Republicans being the beneficiaries of these political prodigals.¹⁰

⁸Hicks, "The People's Party," 544; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 195; Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 258.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰White, Minnesota Votes, 167-168; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 181.

The failure of the farm element in the 1891 legislature to ameliorate the economic situation in the state was the dominant factor in the re-ascendancy of Minnesota Republicans. Knute Nelson's drawing power among Scandinavians, and especially among the heavily Alliance Norwegians in western Minnesota, followed a close second. A slight upturn in the economy and party allegiance during a presidential election year counted in the GOP triumph as well.¹¹

The Nelson Administration

Although historians remain undecided on the reform-mindedness of Governor Nelson,¹² Minnesota farmers on the whole praised the new government. The heart of Nelson's inaugural address in 1893 dealt with marketing and transportation problems in agriculture. He listed country elevator regulation, the laxity of the railroad code enforcement, diversification, and economization as his four major concerns.¹³

The legislature passed most of Nelson's promised reforms. The Governor's Grain Bill gave the state the power to inspect grading procedures at country elevators; it also enabled farmers to store their grain to wait for a better market. This bill passed despite fusion protest that it did not go far

¹¹Chrislock, "The 1891 Legislature," 312; Hicks, "The People's Party," 546-547; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 159, 183; Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," 7.

¹²Chrislock, "Minnesota Republicanism," 97; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 218-219.

¹³Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 190-192.

enough. Stronger railroad legislation marked the second victory of the Nelson administration. Although Populists joined the majority in supporting a state-run grain terminal at Duluth, the state supreme court overruled that plan. For Nelson, the most shrewd accomplishment of his term was his decision to grant \$100,000 to Red River Valley communities pursuing irrigation projects.¹⁴

The more expectant Populists remained unimpressed with Nelson's record because it failed to include a tax on unused railroad lands, support for women's suffrage, and endorsement of an eight-hour day for the wage laborer. Minnesotans did not, however, concur with Populist accusations that the new administration threw only crumbs to the masses.¹⁵

Aware of Governor Nelson's popularity and the success of the Republican legislature, Minnesota Populists began their crusade to capture the legislature and the governor's mansion in July, 1894. Disillusionment with Donnelly opened the way for the moderate Owen wing of the party to nominate its leader. In his acceptance speech as the People's Party candidate for governor, Owen called for party unity and flexibility. He urged conciliation and consensus. Political observers throughout the state noted the moderation and dignity of the 1894 convention and predicted a more conservative era in Minnesota agrarian politics.¹⁶

¹⁴Ibid., 193-209; Hicks, "The People's Party," 547; Hicks, The Populist Revolt, 289-290; Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 206.

¹⁵Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 204.

¹⁶Ibid., 224-230.

State Republicans cleverly, as in 1892, advocated many agrarian demands of the past decade and responded to the concerns of the day. In order to entice remaining non-believers, the party stressed Nelson's independent stance on past tariff measures and the Farmers' Alliance endorsement of him in his congressional race in 1890. According to the Minneapolis Tribune, a Republican journal, and the Representative, Donnelly's new organ, the Republican Party made these platform concessions because all "the [country] newspapers are turning Populist." The two journals also noted the Scandinavian press's defection.¹⁷

To a certain degree, the Democratic endorsement of free silver and direct election of president and senators was an attempt to lure undecided voters away from the Republican and People's parties. Some observers felt that George L. Becker's candidacy was largely ceremonial, however, and that the state party was simply regrouping until 1896.¹⁸ One important result of the Democratic endorsement of free silver was the switch of John Lind to the Democracy. In 1898 Lind became the first Democratic governor of Minnesota since Henry H. Sibley in 1857.¹⁹

Despite the fact that the 1894 platforms of both major parties wooed discontented voters, candidate Owen captured 30 percent of the state vote and carried twelve counties. He more

¹⁷Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 198; Chrislock, "Minnesota Republicanism," 94-96; Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly, 330-331; Hicks, "The People's Party," 549.

¹⁸Folwell, A History of Minnesota, 198; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 247.

¹⁹Hicks, "The People's Party," 548.

than doubled Donnelly's 1892 tally. Still, Nelson's sixty thousand vote margin over Owen, his closest foe, indicated the success of Republican strategy throughout the state. Western Minnesota, however, depressed further by the downturn in prices beginning in 1893, did not fall for GOP ploys. The seven counties of the Red River Valley cast 54 percent of their vote for Owen and 39 percent for Nelson. Statewide, Nelson received 51 percent; Owen obtained 30 percent.²⁰

Populist analysts of the results of the 1894 election could not understand why the farmers of the state went "back on us, with wheat at 45 cents a bushel," but the St. Paul Globe's description of Populists as "enemies of capital, haters of thrift . . . socialists, anarchists," indicates that recent events such as the Pullman strike and Coxey's Army concerned voters more than Cleveland's depression.²¹

The record of the Republican-controlled Twenty-eighth legislature and the alleged Democratic-induced depression enabled Republicans to dominate state politics again.²² Not until the appearance of the DFL and Floyd B. Olson in the 1930's would a new dynasty emerge.

²⁰White, Minnesota Votes, 168-169.

²¹Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 244-245; Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly, 339-340; Chrislock, "Minnesota Republicanism," 94.

²²Chrislock, "The 1891 Legislature," 312; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 223.

Scandinavian Opinions Toward Populism

Though Scandinavians flirted with Populism in the 1890's, their basic views and traditional Republicanism stood the test. The two major concerns of these voters continued to be monopolistic abuse and economic reform, and they still hoped in the noble, although lately flawed, party of Lincoln. Their antipathy for the Democratic Party and its perceived corruption remained intact.

Tariff opinion throughout impoverished Swedish communities between 1892 and 1894 was as mixed as ever. Residents of Kittson County, although finding it harder to cope, still held to the Republican stance and against tariff reduction which they felt caused the panic and, thus, forty cent wheat. The Aitkin Age felt differently. In a reprint from the Baltimore News, the Age reiterated its free trade stance: "The American laborer in the most highly protected industries goes upon a strike against the lowering of his wages wearing a cap taxed 50 per cent., a shirt taxed 80 per cent. . . . He cuts the bacon produced by the unprotected farmer with a knife taxed 100 per cent. . . ." The Kanabec County Times adhered to free trade also, noting that the repeal of the McKinley bill had not proved disastrous, as many had predicted.²³

²³Hallock Weekly News, October 20, 1894; Aitkin Age, July 30, 1892, quoting the Baltimore News; The North, October 12, 1892; Oscar Fritiof Ander, "The Swedish-American Press and the Election of 1892," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 23 (March, 1937), 541-546.

On the other side of the political and economic fence, the Sacred Heart Bladet, from that Swedish community in Ren-ville County, noted low consumer prices despite Democratic claims that the McKinley tax would raise them. Reverend G.A. Stenberg of Cannon Falls, Goodhue County, stressed the positive effects of protection that he had witnessed in a recent visit to Sweden. No doubt, news of the success of the policy in Sweden traveled to the emigrants. The Chisago County News of Lindstrom believed that the McKinley tariff created the prosperity of the early 1890's.²⁴

Despite their strong support of the agrarian movement, few western Minnesota Norwegians advocated free trade. Journals from Lac Qui Parle, Ottertail, and Grant counties, low, high, and normal foreclosure areas, agreed that full reciprocity remained anathema. The Dawson Sentinel of Lac Qui Parle County rhetorically asked why two-and-one-half percent of the British population existed in poverty if free trade was such a blessing. The journal predicted that the lower Democratic Wilson-Gorman tax would allow the elated British to "capture the American market." The Battle Lake Review, Ottertail County, printed an article by Nicolai Grevstad on the economic situation in Norway. Free trade in Norway, Grevstad said, had depleted the country's gold supply through the purchase of cheaper foreign goods. Grevstad also noted that most Norwegians now

²⁴The North, October 26, 1892; Chisago County News, August 20, 1894.

in America remained ignorant of the disasters perpetrated by free trade in Norway after their departure. If Grevstad assessed the political propensities of his countrymen correctly, Norwegian voters paid little attention to economic matters, for they voted consistently Republican.²⁵

Opinions toward corruption in office and special privilege knew no economic bounds among Swedes. The North Branch Review, Chisago County, expressed bewilderment over a system of justice that puts hungry men in prison for stealing bread while electing crooks to high office. The reference was to Senator William D. Washburn's election despite allegations that he had embezzled six million dollars. The Kanabec County Times noted that the disappearance of No. 1 hard wheat, the most profitable grade for farmers, since Merriam took office in 1889 benefited the governor's tycoon friends. The Times praised Democratic forthrightness and condemned Republican procrastination on this topic. The Atwater Press stressed the importance of electing "boodle-proof" representatives.²⁶

²⁵Dawson Sentinel, September 23, 1892, October 5, 1894; The North, September 15, 1892.

²⁶North Branch Review, August 26, 1892; Kanabec County Times, October 6, November 3, 1892; Atwater Press, November 2, 1894.

Among Norwegian counties, opinion shifted markedly on this subject between 1892 and 1894. In 1892, encouraged by the nomination of a countryman for governor, Norwegians found comfort in the fact that "Knute Nelson is a farmer" who knows what it means to be robbed by the elevator companies. By 1894, however, the disclosure of sweetheart deals between Republican administrations and the timber industry in Minnesota over a period of many years aroused the wrath of western Minnesota Norwegians. The Madison Western Guard and the Dawson Sentinel of Lac Qui Parle County and the McIntosh Times, Polk County, charged the Republicans with payoffs, bribery, and poor judgment in choosing their friends. Lieutenant Governor David M. Clough, allegedly a member of the lumber ring, and his son-in-law, State Auditor Robert Dunn, would never allow investigation of the industry because, according to the Western Guard, a dog never uses "his own tail to punish himself with." The McIntosh Times agreed with the Madison journal's thoughts. The Polk County journal cited the Washburn incident as proof that the judicial system favored the influential. The Red River Dalen estimated that "If God had from the beginning given Adam an annual salary of \$25,000 and allowed him to live until this day, and if Adam had saved every cent of this salary, he would still have been poorer than William Vanderbilt by \$50,000,000."²⁷

²⁷Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 174; Madison Western Guard, September-October, 1894; McIntosh Times, October 9, 1894; Dawson Sentinel, October, 1894; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 37.

The free silver issue, seen inaccurately by many historians as the raison d'être of the Populist crusade, became an issue, although not a major one, in 1894. An examination of Swedish county newspapers during the 1894 campaign reveals, for the first time, division in the ranks of prosperous Swedish farmers. The Chisago County News and the Isanti County Press opposed the concept of unlimited coinage of silver while the Atwater Press, Kandiyohi County, praised Populists for introducing the inflationary idea and condemned the Republican Party for waiting for the go-ahead from London to propose remonetization.²⁸

The Norwegian camp again displayed division along economic lines. Southeastern Minnesota journals applauded the level-headed attitude of the gold bugs. The Dawson Sentinel, whose publication reached Kandiyohi County farmers, warned voters of the free silver panacea. It felt overproduction, not money scarcity, caused low prices.²⁹ Western Minnesota Norwegians suffering from the Panic of 1893 advocated the Populist monetary policy. Nordstjörnen (North Star) of McIntosh, Polk County, felt that the solution to the economic predicament was the election of a "People's Party congress . . . which would entirely remove the present stringency in the money market in

²⁸Chisago County News, August 23, 1894; Arthur J. Nelson, "An Attempt to Appraise the Attitude of the Swedes and Danes toward Third Party Movements in the United States since the Civil War," (Unpublished term thesis, University of Minnesota, under the direction of Solon J. Buck, no year given), 20; Isanti County Press, September 13, 1894; Atwater Press, October 5, 1894.

²⁹Dawson Sentinel, October 19, 1894.

their first 30 days session of Congress." In an article entitled "Why Am I a Populist?" the Madison Western Guard, Lac Qui Parle County, cited currency scarcity, debt contraction, and banker control over the economy and the major parties as sufficient reasons to abandon them. According to the journal, gold bugs conspired against the people to increase their own wealth, and it wanted to have no part in that.³⁰

Ethnocultural issues played a larger role in 1892 and 1894 than in the previous two elections. Swedes, just beginning to climb out of the apathetic pit they had been in for decades, started voicing opposition to Norwegian domination of political offices. A letter to the North in 1892 from the Society for the Political Equality of the Swedes unabashedly urged Swedes to vote against Nelson and Secretary of State Frederick Brown because if any more Norwegians were elected, they would combine "into a solid league against us Swedes." Svenska Kuriren of Chicago, observing the situation in Minnesota, noted that the "Scandinavian comedy has been acted as successfully as usual, the Norwegians speaking in the name of Scandinavians."³¹ The North Branch Review urged independent voting in order to get recognition while Svenska Folkets Tidning demanded "a man of Swedish descent at the head of one of our State departments" One fellow, however, recognized

³⁰Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," 9; Madison Western Guard, October 31, 1894.

³¹The North, October 12, 1892; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 50; Ander, "The Swedish-American Press," 542; Nelson, "The Attitude of the Swedes," 15.

that Swedes might do better politically if they had "a little of that Norwegian dauntlessness."³²

Because Norwegians were generally more successful politically, they expressed less resentment toward other ethnic or native officeseekers. Faedrelandet og Emigranten, however, urged Norwegians to apply pressure if the Republicans did not nominate a Norwegian to run for Congress in 1894 to represent the eight thousand Norwegian voters in southeastern Minnesota.³³ Nelson's candidacy influenced many voters and while his addition of votes over Merriam's 1890 tally was greatest in Norwegian areas, Clay and Polk counties agreed that his candidacy was "not sufficient bait to cause a single Scandinavian adherent to the People's Party to abandon its principles." A Rothsay, Norman County, man predicted bitterest opposition to Nelson among his countrymen in the old fifth district.³⁴

Other ethnocultural issues included the public school controversy, anti-Catholicism, and the American Protection Association's activities.³⁵ Prohibition had diminished as a major issue by 1894.

³²Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 50; Ander, "The Swedish-American Press," 542; North Branch Review, August 26, 1892; Babcock, The Scandinavian Element, 173-176.

³³Babcock, "The Scandinavian Element," 308.

³⁴Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 184; Wefald, A Voice of Protest, 49-52; Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," 8; John A. Fagereng, Norwegian Social and Cultural Life in Minnesota, 1868-1891; an Analysis of Typical Norwegian Newspapers (Minneapolis, 1932), 125.

³⁵Ridge, Ignatius Donnelly, 308; Chrislock, The Politics of Protest, 68; Ander, "The Swedish-American Press," 543; The North, October 12, 1892; Andersen, The Scandinavian Immigrants, 98-110.

Scandinavian Voters and the Populist Party

The People's Party never attained the heights reached by the Farmers' Alliance in Minnesota. Of the seven Scandinavian counties that voted for Owen in 1890, only four remained loyal to the third party in 1892. Whereas Norwegians in these counties cast 76 percent of their ballots for Owen, Donnelly's margin of victory was 33 percent less. Only Kittson and Polk counties supported Weaver for president.³⁶

Donnelly's candidacy for governor and an improved economic picture diminished the chances of Populist success among the state's Nordic residents in 1892. Among Norwegians, Knute Nelson's nomination drew many of his countrymen back to the Republican Party; Swedes may have been repelled by the choice, considering their rising awareness of the dominant Norwegian position in state politics.

An economic breakdown of the ethnic vote in 1892 reveals no surprises. All of the high foreclosure counties except Swedish Anoka County again voted for a third party alternative. The Norwegians in these counties gave Donnelly 53 percent of their vote while Swedes cast only 27 percent of their ballots for him. If one looks only at western counties, Norwegian Populists still outnumbered Swedes by more than 12 percent. Combining the other nine counties into one group, Swedes actually voted slightly more Populist than Norwegian residents.

³⁶Minnesota, The Legislative Manual of the State of Minnesota: Compiled for the Legislature of 1893 (St. Paul, 1893), 373-461.

Since the Republican vote in these Norwegian counties nearly doubled its 1890 total, it seems likely that Nelson's candidacy had the desired effect upon Norwegians.³⁷

The People's Party vote in the Scandinavian counties climbed over 40 percent again in 1894, a result of alleged Republican corruption, Owen's replacement of Donnelly as the party's gubernatorial nominee, and the Panic of 1893. Populist voting in all three economic categories between both groups rose, although only four depressed western counties endorsed Owen.³⁸

Norwegian participation in the Populist movement again outdistanced Swedish activity, this time by ten percentage points. Among impoverished Scandinavians, Norwegian Populists remained more disillusioned than Swedish farmers. Norman, Ottertail, and Polk county Norwegians gave 64 percent of their vote to the Minneapolis editor while Swedes in Kittson and Ottertail counties cast 51 percent of their ballots for Owen. Swedes in Aitkin, Kanabec, Chisago, Isanti, and Kandiyohi counties voted more strongly Republican than Norwegians for the first time in the four elections studied. Norwegians gladly rejoined the GOP in 1892 when it sponsored one of their own for governor, but Nelson's perceived assimilation into "boodledom" bitterly disappointed Norwegians in 1894 and made them again express their discontent at the ballot box.³⁹

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Minnesota, The Legislative Manual of the State of Minnesota: Compiled for the Legislature of 1895 (St. Paul, 1895), 380-461.

³⁹Ibid.

EPILOGUE

Voters, whether immigrant or not, enter voting booths with certain preconceived images of the parties and candidates involved and seldom vote for those espousing values in direct contrast to their own. For instance, one would hardly expect a black or recent Vietnamese immigrant to vote for a self-proclaimed member of the Ku Klux Klan. Those severely hurt by inflation hesitated to cast their ballots for the Republican Party and its candidate in the 1980 presidential election because they perceived that the GOP was less than sympathetic to their misery.

A century ago also, image played a most important part in voting decisions. Scandinavian immigrants perceived the Republican Party as a compassionate, moral, God-fearing organization composed of evangelical Protestants. Its stances against slavery and for temperance and free land coincided with Scandinavian values. Swedish and Norwegian immigrants cherished their ancient freedoms, protected against feudalism by man and nature. The Romantic Movement in Scandinavia glorified peasant life as Jeffersonianism did in America. Lincoln's homestead policy and his fight against slavery became symbolic of the beneficent GOP. In a negative attraction, the wet, machine-ridden, Irish-Catholic image of the urban Democracy also contributed to a Republican orientation for these pietistic, rural Lutherans.

Although Norway and Sweden both practiced free trade during the first three decades of Scandinavian immigration to America, Republican high tariff policies did not disturb them because the economy was strong and the intentions of the GOP seemed pure. Ethnocultural values and the image of the Republican Party overshadowed policy differences in swaying these immigrants in their initial political decisions as Americans.

Because Scandinavians voted solidly Republican, the state party took their loyalty for granted. The agrarian revolt among Minnesota Scandinavians between 1888-1894 taught Republican leaders a lesson in voter appreciation. Hard times, perceived GOP indifference to the farmers' plight, and a belief that the party hierarchy and oppressive monopolists were of one mind and interest thrust Minnesota Scandinavians into the arms of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party.

Disillusionment with the Republican Party among Minnesota Scandinavians surfaced in 1888, occurring most frequently in the press of poor counties. In a comparison of the opinion of the several journals studied, Minnesota Swedes of all economic backgrounds still believed in the nobility of the party of Lincoln. Wealthy Norwegian farmers felt the same way, but western Norwegians had changed their perceptions of the GOP. Economic difficulty exhausted the patience of these Norwegians which seemed thinner throughout this era than Swedish forbearance.

However, while Norwegians shouted more vociferously against Republican tariff measures, monopolists, and crooked politicians of all stripes, they remained unwilling to vote against the GOP. Both Swedes and Norwegians cast approximately 60 percent of their vote for that party. Economic differences among the counties did not significantly alter voting percentages either in 1888.

The climax of Minnesota agrarian politics occurred in 1890. As the price of farm produce continued to plummet, so did the faith of Scandinavians in the intentions of the Minnesota Republican Party. Both groups began accusing Republicans of unfaithfulness, corruption, antipathy, lies, oppression, and appeasement. This time it was the bark of the Swede that was bigger than his bite; impoverished Norwegians embraced the Farmers' Alliance twice as heartily as poor Swedes. Within Ottertail and Kandiyohi counties, two counties in which Norwegians and Swedes coexisted, the former cast 69 percent of their vote for the third party while Swedes gave only 47 percent of their ballots to Owen. Although desertion from the Republican Party increased among diversified Scandinavian counties, sentiment there did not reach the proportions that it did in western Minnesota.

Anger centered around the tariff and monopolistic abuses in both groups, but indecision and hesitancy marked Swedish words and actions while dauntless Norwegians abandoned the Republican Party readily. In concert with economic anger, the

prohibition question and the rise of nativism among Twin City Republicans clashed with Swedish values. Norwegians spoke infrequently of these topics in 1890.

Scandinavians were motivated to vote for the People's Party for the same reasons that they cast their ballots for the Farmers' Alliance in 1890; Norwegian and Swedish disgust with the idle promises of the parties had not changed. But, in 1892, an upturn in the economy and party loyalty during a presidential election year convinced Scandinavian voters to return to old party preferences. Apprehension over the direction of the new party and Donnelly's candidacy as the People's Party standard bearer also contributed to a 35 percent drop in the vote of the third party among Minnesota Scandinavians. Though the return of the majority of disaffected Norwegians to the Republican fold is indicative of the success of Knute Nelson's candidacy, the ploy forced Swedes to vote independently in order to underscore their demand for political recognition. Only 20 percent of the Swedish voters who voted against the Republican Party in 1890 were drawn back to it in 1892.

In 1894, Minnesota Scandinavians again turned from the Republican Party. The third party vote of these immigrants climbed over 40 percent again after sinking below 30 percent in 1892. Norwegians remained more prone to vote for the agrarian ticket than Swedes. The Panic of 1893, further disclosures of corruption within the Republican Party, and the wise decision of the People's Party to again nominate Sidney Owen as its gubernatorial nominee contributed to this renewed in-

terest in a third party. The lackluster Democratic nomination of George Becker as its gubernatorial candidate gave disgruntled Republicans nowhere else to turn but to the People's Party.

At the outset, the question posed was one of voter motivation. Ethnocultural historians argue that the value systems of voters determine their political decisions. Economic determinists note the overriding basic nature of economic survival. It is clear that among Scandinavian voters during the Populist era economic conditions altered the image held by Minnesota Norwegians and Swedes of the major parties. Desertion rates of Minnesota Scandinavians from the GOP to the third parties were directly proportional to the prices of agricultural goods. The bleaker the economic outlook in a given locale, the dimmer the image of the virtuous GOP. But when prices rose again, Scandinavians forgot their wrath. The agrarian revolt died when prosperity returned.

Economic determinism does not paint the whole picture, however. While Minnesota Norwegians and Swedes shared many cultural traits, their recent histories predisposed them to react differently to the agrarian revolt in America. Norwegian peasant political life during the nineteenth century was characterized by liberality, turmoil, enthusiasm, and change. Norwegian-Americans no more willingly acquiesced to monopolistic abuse and political impotence in America than their ancestors accepted middle class bureaucratic control of the political process in Norway. Traditionally compromising and

adaptive, Minnesota Swedes found it difficult to join the third party trend because they felt "that going too far is sometimes more dangerous than the opposite."¹ Their reaction to their new perception of the Republican Party was to vote Democratic and, thus, remain within the conventional bounds of political expression. Swedish-Americans acted as "wisely slow" as their forefathers.

Political scientist Stein Kuhnle, in a study on the relationship between political participation and social and political history in the Nordic countries, offered a plausible explanation for the differences in Norwegians and Swedes politically.² Kuhnle theorized that states in which absolutism or colonialism and an unstable tradition of representative government existed evince more interest in politics once liberation and the franchise are obtained. On the other hand, states like Sweden which have maintained a native and balanced constitutionalism tend to take their political privileges lightly and do not participate as enthusiastically in the political process as nations which suffered an absence of political rights.³

The sociological roots of Scandinavian political behavior is less important, however, than the fact that these behaviors existed. Though economic circumstances prompted Minnesota Scandinavians to forsake, temporarily, the Republican Party,

¹Gustafson, "The Attitude of the Swedes," 18-19.

²See note 4, chapter one for full citation.

³Kuhnle, Patterns, 12.

the political natures of the two groups dictated how and when they would react. Historical Swedish conservatism and Norwegian precocity among those countries' peasants is well documented. The reactions of these groups to the situation in Minnesota and America at the time should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Swedish and Norwegian histories.

Nevertheless, after the economic crises abated and prosperity returned to America, Scandinavians became loyal Republicans once again. Pride swelled in their pietistic bosoms anew at the thought of the goodness of the reforms of the GOP. And if the Republican Party represented the good in American political life, the Democracy continued to represent the evil. It remained the party of slavery, drunkenness, corruption, and popery. The durability of these images among Minnesota Swedes and Norwegians proved strong. It took a far greater catastrophe -- the Great Depression -- and a more charismatic figure than the Populist movement produced -- Franklin Delano Roosevelt -- to change the old images.

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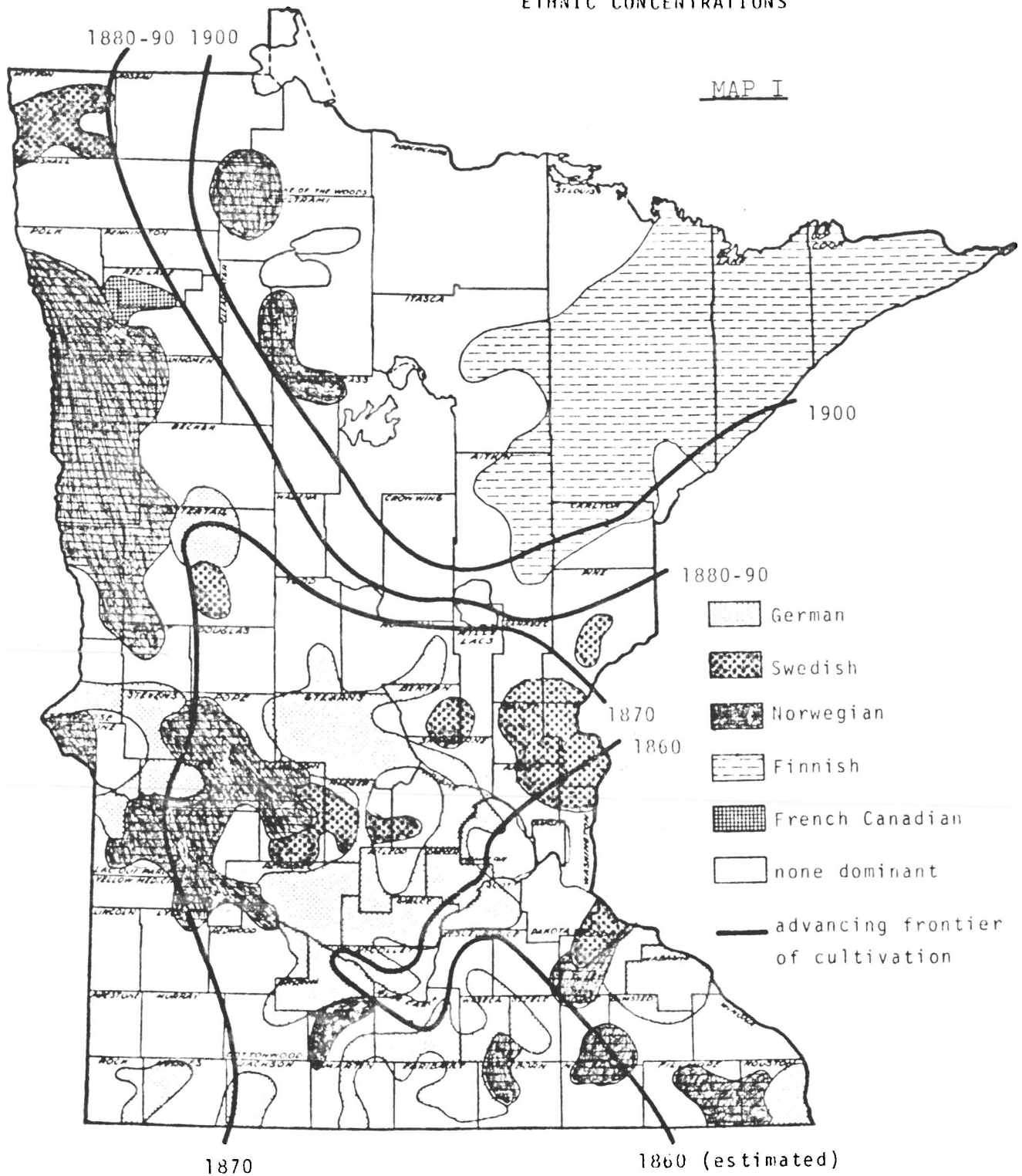
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APPENDIX

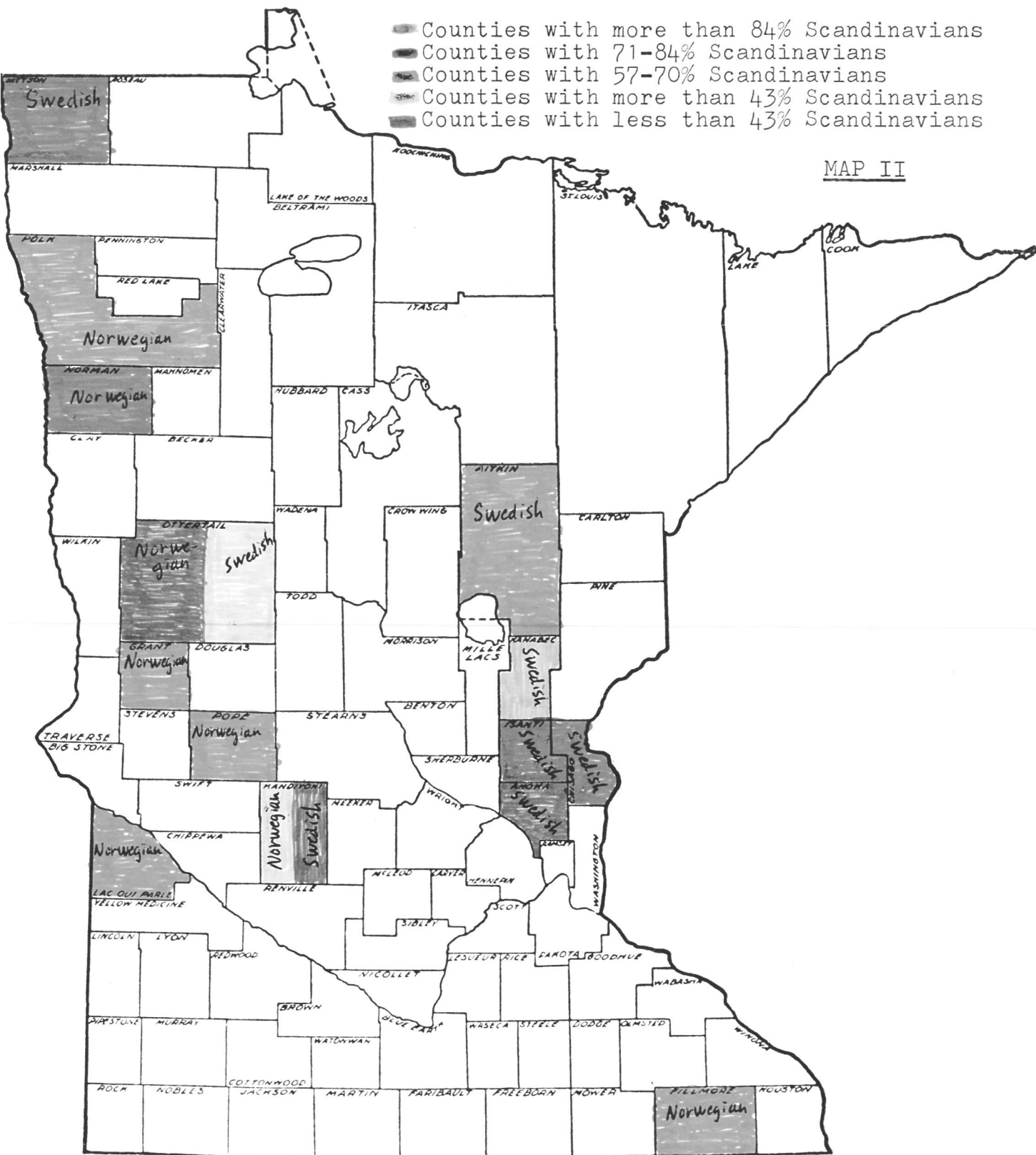
- MAP I: "Ethnic Concentrations," Borchert, Atlas of Minnesota Resources and Settlement, 38.
- MAP II: Concentrations of Scandinavians, Rice, Patterns of Ethnicity, 8-9.
- MAP III: "Mortgage Foreclosure, 1881," Farmer, "Mortgage Foreclosures," 376.
- MAP IV: "Mortgage Foreclosure, 1891," Farmer, "Mortgage Foreclosures," 377.
- MAP V: Production of wheat, Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," accompanying chart.
- MAP VI: Production of eggs and butter, Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," accompanying chart.
- MAP VII: Scandinavian third party voting, 1890-1894, Tanner, "The Attitude of the Norwegians," accompanying chart.

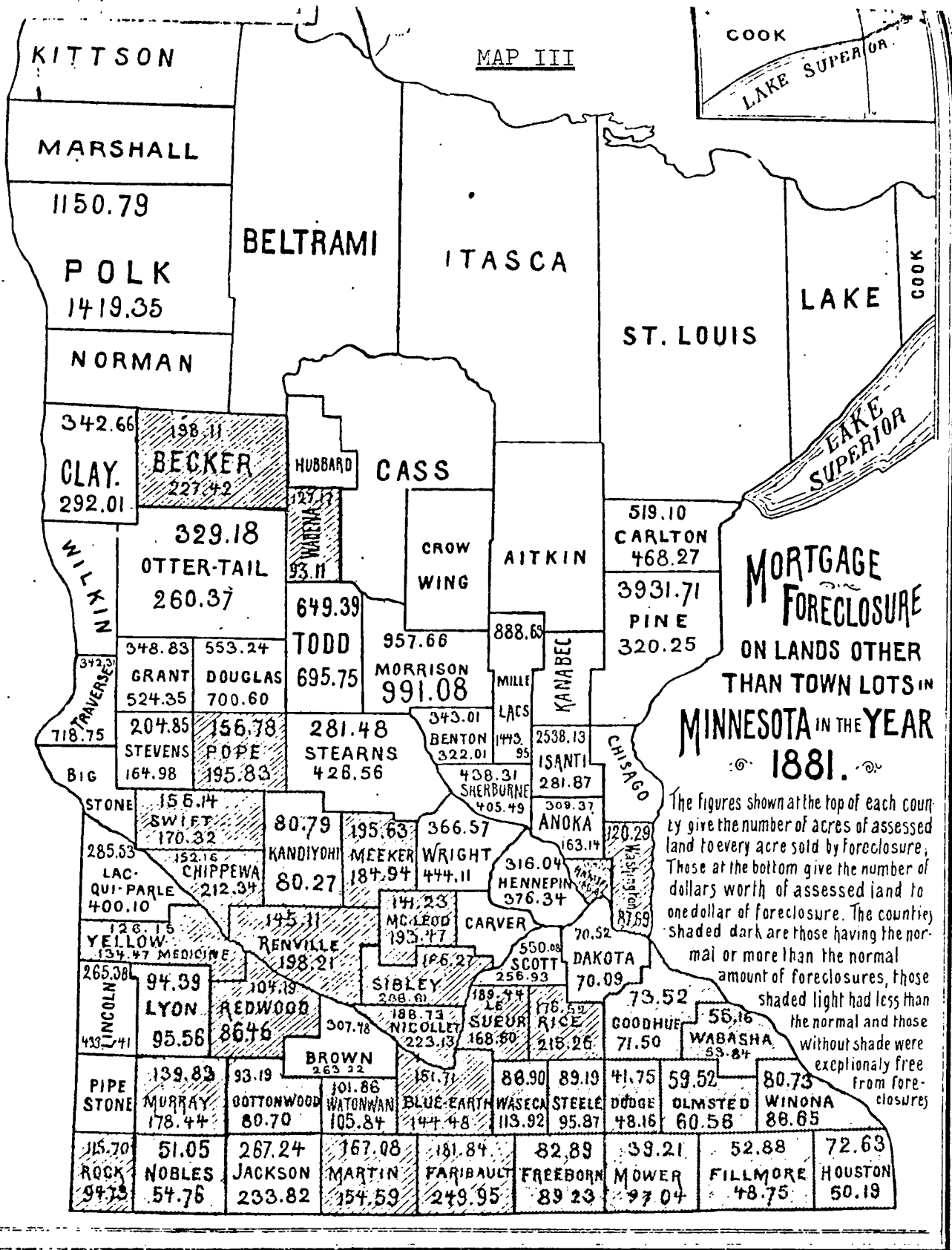
ETHNIC CONCENTRATIONS

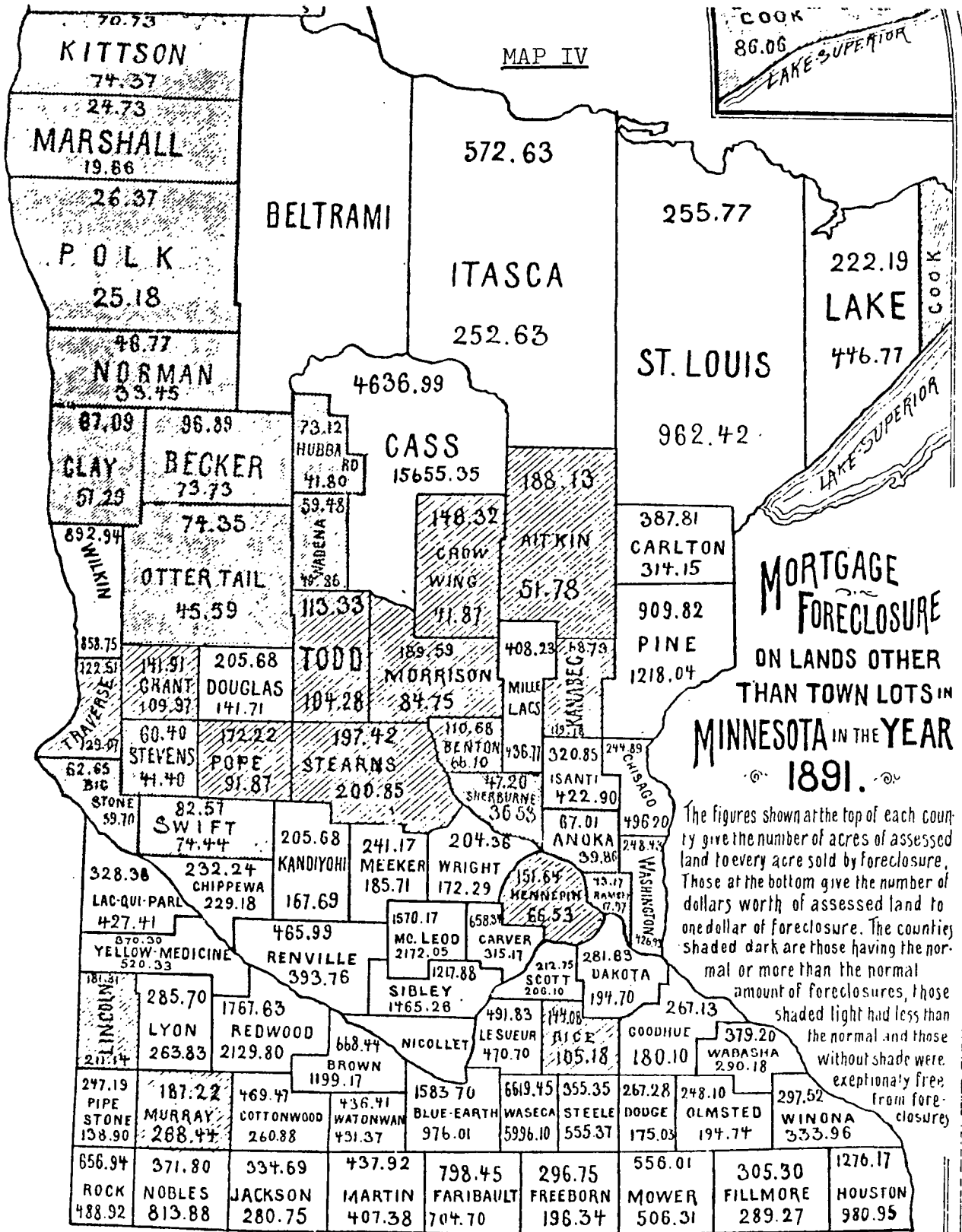
MAP I



generalized from Dr. Douglas Marshall, Minneapolis Tribune, August 28, 1949

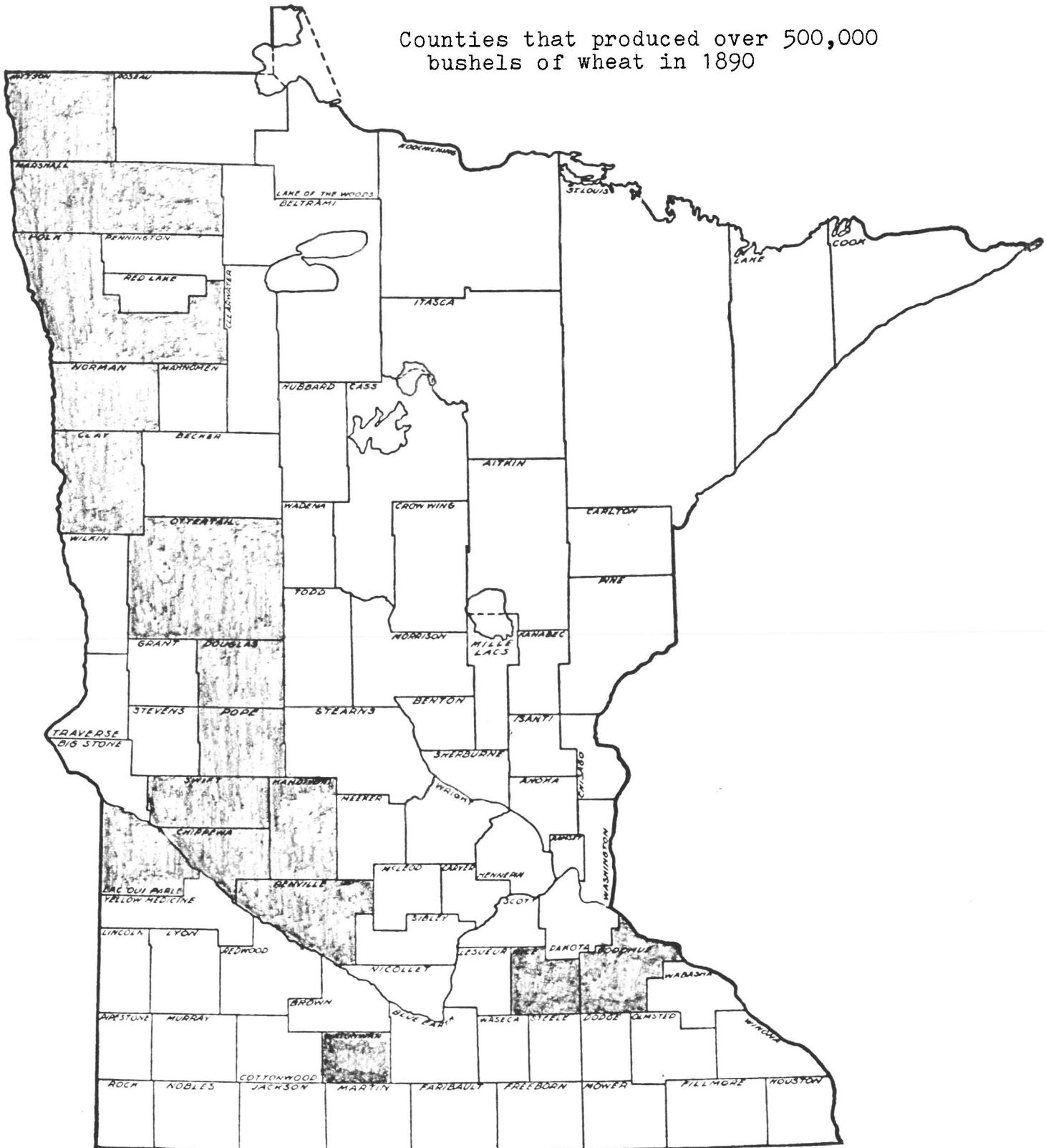






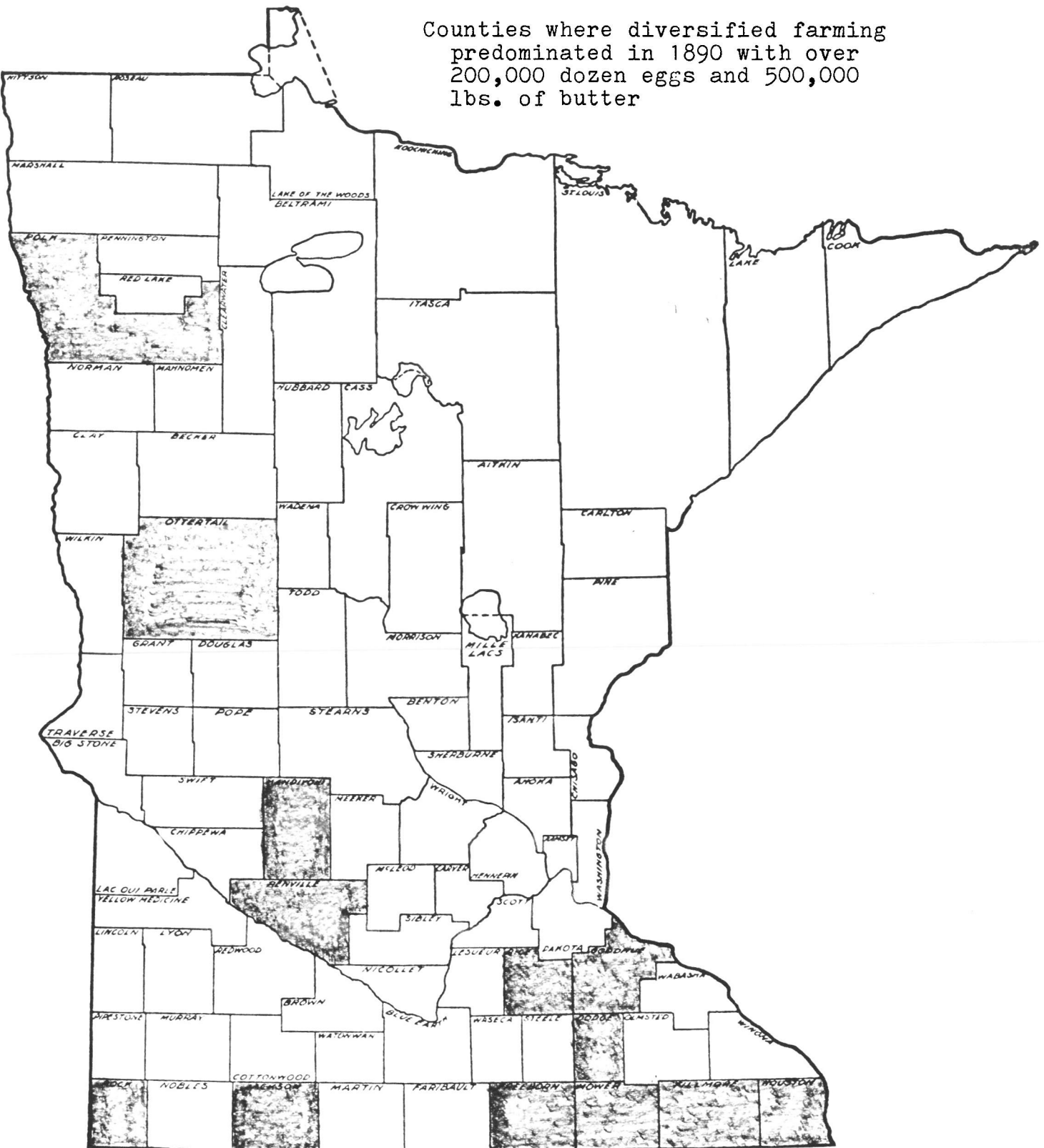
MAP V

Counties that produced over 500,000
bushels of wheat in 1890



MAP VI

Counties where diversified farming predominated in 1890 with over 200,000 dozen eggs and 500,000 lbs. of butter



- Scandinavian counties that voted third party in 1890, 1892, 1894
- Scandinavian counties that voted third party in 1890 only
- Scandinavian counties that remained Republican throughout the 1890's

