

URBAN POLITICS AND THE URBAN PROCESS

TWO CASE STUDIES OF PHILADELPHIA

by

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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
at Oxford University

Corpus Christi College

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Both academics and the makers of public policy have for a long time been interested in the study of urban politics, but the subject needs to be integrated with the process of urban growth and development. Too frequently, the urban polity is analyzed as an arena which passively reflects or mechanically responds to more fundamental changes in the urban social structure. In this work, case studies of political reform in Philadelphia at two periods, 1800 to 1854 and 1890 to 1915, develop a number of hypotheses about how the urban polity plays an influential role in shaping the process of urban growth and change.

Both case studies begin with computer-assisted analyses of changes in the socio-economic and spatial structures of urban society. Such changes are often considered to be fundamental causes of urban political reform either because they altered political elites' interests in municipal government or because they created enormous new demands on existing municipal works and services. The studies show, however, that social structural changes cannot by themselves explain the course of urban political development in the city of Philadelphia.

Concentrating primarily on the formulation and implementation of municipal public works, the studies show that in both periods, the course of political reform was often shaped by two things: the 'private' or selfish interests of political actors, and the fragmented financial, administrative and party structures of the urban polity. More important, the studies show how self-interested political activities, in a polity in which authority was highly fragmented, often had consequences which were far reaching in their impact on the structure and experience of urban life. Indeed, the first case study shows how urban politics shaped the process of social group formation in the industrializing city. The second case study shows how the structure and conduct of urban politics determined social groups' political power in the city. The conclusion then demonstrates how the case studies support a number of hypotheses about the relationship between urban politics and urban society which may be applied generally to analyses of the process of urban growth and change.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CMA  | Citizens' Municipal Association                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| CSRA | Civil Service Reform Association                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| MUTA | Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| OAA  | <u>Ordinances of the Corporation of, and Acts of Assembly Relating to the City of Philadelphia: Chronologically Arranged With a Digested Index. Prepared and Published by Direction of the Select and Common Councils, Under the Supervision of a Committee Consisting of Charles A. Poulson, John Truck and Saunders Lewis</u> (Phila., Chrissy and Markley, 1851) |
| OCP  | <u>Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia: Passed Between the First Day of January, 1850 and the Sixth Day of June 1854; And Acts of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Relating to the City; Passed at the Sessions of 1849, 1850...1854</u> (Phila., Chrissy and Markley, 1854)                                         |
| OHA  | Octavia Hill Association                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| PBMR | Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| PHS  | Pennsylvania Historical Society                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| PMAM | Philadelphia, <u>Mayor's Annual Message</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| PMHB | <u>Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| PRT  | Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| PSHP | Philadelphia Social History Project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| UGI  | United Gas Improvements Company                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| UTC  | Union Traction Company                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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In Memory of  
Sondra Cowan Greenstein

## INTRODUCTION

Both academics and makers of public policy have shown much interest in urban politics, but the subject needs to be integrated more fully with the process of urban development and growth. The urban polity is frequently seen abstractly as an arena which simply responds mechanically to fundamental changes in the urban social structure. This is because the field of urban studies has developed as social scientists and professionals employed in municipal civil services imported into the study of urban life, concepts and problems borrowed from their respective studies and practices. The study of urban politics has in no way proven exceptional in this and has been influenced simultaneously from several different directions. One consequence of this is that urban politics and its role in the urban process is rarely defined as a problem which is itself in need of explanation.

One influence on the study of urban politics comes from social and political theorists who import into the study of urban life problems which are borrowed from discussions about who rules in modern government generally and from debates about the role of the state in capitalist society. Take for example studies of urban government which attempt to analyze where power lies in American society. Robert Dahl, and his critics, amongst them Domhoff, Crenson, Bachrach and Baratz, and to a certain extent Banfield, all examine competition between different interest groups in the urban

political arena to ascertain whether any one group dominates in a series of contested policy decisions concerning the distribution of limited municipal resources.<sup>1</sup> They ask, in other words, how democratic is urban government, and government more generally ? Pluralists claim that power is diffused throughout urban society since no group is seen to dominate over contested policy decisions. Elite theorists, on the other hand, claim that the urban business class is capable of directing decision-making in those contests in which it has a vested interest. Whichever position is adopted, urban politics, although it is the subject of analysis is not the object under investigation. The existence of urban political institutions and urban political practices is not a problem in need of explanation.<sup>2</sup>

Recent neo-Marxist studies of urban politics agree with the power theorists that urban politics is about the competition between urban interest groups over the distribution of a limited supply of

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1). Robert Dahl, Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961); Matthew A. Crenson, The Un-Politics of Air Pollution (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971); G. William Domhoff, Who Rules America? (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967); Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, 'The Two Faces of Power', American Political Science Review, 56(1962), pp.947-52; Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, City Politics, (N.Y., Vintage Books, 1963); E.C. Banfield, The Unheavenly City Revisited: A Review of 'The Unheavenly City' (Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1968).

2). Banfield and Wilson explicitly state that they study urban politics because 'it affords exceptional opportunities to generalize about American political culture, American democracy, and democracy in general', op.cit., p.2.

resources for public works and services.<sup>1</sup> They claim, however, that if power is pluralistic and hence democratic, it is so in appearance only since groups' interests and the very issues over which they compete are shaped by social and economic forces over which they have no influence or control. As an example of this, such works examine the advancement of corporate capitalism at the turn of the twentieth century,<sup>2</sup> and the more recent redirection of capital into secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy which resulted from a crisis of over production-under consumption in the industrial sector.<sup>3</sup> During both of these periods industries and their workforces moved beyond the city's boundaries. Inner-city areas were consequently given over to the urban poor and to financial and commercial firms which employed suburban commuters. These changes in the structure of urban life which were directed by processes of capitalist development devastated the city's tax base. At the same time they put pressure on municipal government to invest a greater portion of its declining revenues in extending existing municipal

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1). See R. Friedland, F.F. Piven and R.R. Alford 'Political Conflict, Urban Structure, and the Fiscal Crisis', in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers, eds., Marxism and the Metropolis, 2nd edition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984); F.F. Piven 'The Urban Crisis: Who Got What and Why' in Stephen M. David and Paul E Peterson, eds., Urban Politics and Public Policy: The City in Crisis, second edition (N.Y., Praeger Publishers inc., 1976), 318-338; P. Saunders, Social Theory and the Urban Question (London, Hutchinson and Co., 1981), chapter 8.

2). See Nancy Kleniewski, 'From Industrial to Corporate City: The Role of Urban Renewal' in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers, op.cit., 205-222.; S.M. David and P.E. Peterson 'The Politics of Transportation', in S.M. David and P. Peterson eds., op.cit.; Patrick J. Ashton 'Urbanization and the Dynamic of Suburban Development Under Capitalism', in W. K. Tabb and L. Sawers, op.cit.

3). David Harvey, 'Government Policies, Financial Institutions and Neighborhood Change in U.S. Cities' in M. Harloe ed., Captive Cities (London, John Wiley, 1977); P. Saunders op. cit., chapter 7.

services such as transportation (to meet the needs of commuters and suburban industries) and social welfare (to meet the growing problems of urban blight). In other words, the political agenda was defined by social forces over which participants in the political arena (and municipal government generally) had no control.

Obviously the problems which power theorists and neo-Marxists address are radically different and each group adopts a conceptual framework which is more or less consistent with the object of its respective inquiry. The one thing that is common to both kinds of analysis is that in neither is urban politics the subject of analysis. Instead, it is part and parcel of an idea about the nature of American government (Dahl) or about the role of the state in capitalist society (the neo-Marxist analysis).

A second influence on the study of urban politics stems from attempts to design political strategies to effect large-scale social change in the urban environment or, more simply, to bring about efficient governmental practices. Because urban government is identified as being a contributing factor in the development of the problems that various authors perceive, and because it figures largely in the resolution of those problems, urban political studies have been written by interested parties as vehicles for mobilizing different policy preferences. Urban studies of this type are not attempts to explain certain social and political phenomena unique to the city. Instead they are mediums in which policy interests are advanced.

Let us take for example two interpretations of the urban problem which identify different sources of the urban crisis and

consequently propose diametrically different solutions which are intended as political interventions. For the first of these, it is possible to draw once again on the work of the neo-Marxists for whom urban political analysis has a strategic object as well as a theoretical one. In fact, their interest in analyzing the role of the state in capitalist society is derived from the desire to understand how social unrest was contained in the late 1960s, and from a need to design a strategy for social change in the contracted economic and conservative political conditions of the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>1</sup>

In works by Piven, Friedland and Dunleavy we are told that the city is suffering from a fiscal crisis which results from the elaboration of two structurally necessary but fundamentally contradictory roles that are adopted by a capitalist state.<sup>2</sup> In the first of its two roles, the state alleviates some of the symptoms of social dislocation and conflict which are inherent in capitalist society by providing for the integration of society's un- and under-employed in order to ensure the reproduction of necessary labor-power and to preserve political and social stability. The state does

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1). See Michael Harloe's introduction to M. Harloe, ed., New Perspectives on Urban Change and Conflict (London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), p.24.

2). R. Friedland, F.F. Piven, and R.R. Alford 'Political Conflict', op. cit.; F.F. Piven, 'The Urban Crisis', op.cit., P. Dunleavy, Urban Political Analysis: The Politics of Collective Consumption (London, Macmillan Press, 1980); R. Friedland, Power and Crisis in the City: Corporations, Unions and Urban Politics (London, Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1982). Also see Manuel Castells, The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach (London, Edward Arnold, 1977); C. Cockburn, The Local State (London, Pluto Press, 1977); C.G. Pickvance, ed., Urban Sociology: Critical Essays (London, Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1976).

this through its provision of collectively consumed goods such as housing, welfare and education. Local governments, which are historically responsible for the provision of these goods, were overwhelmed with the growing number of the politically unincorporated and under-employed urban blacks in the 1950s. Piven, for example, describes the Great Society and the War on Poverty as the federal government's response to the cities' plight; an attempt to assist financially beleaguered municipal governments in meeting the increased expense of providing for and integrating the growing population of the black urban poor into the political and social life of the city. The lion's share of these resources was absorbed by existing municipal bureaucracies and political parties. Nevertheless, enough positions were created within both parties and municipal bureaucracies to facilitate the political integration of the city's blacks.

Federal largesse during the 1960s, however, soon began to interfere with the second of the state's structurally defined roles: investing to create the conditions necessary for the continued expansion and profitability of free enterprise. As federal support was withdrawn from municipal programs, demands from municipal bureaucracies and groups of the urban poor which had benefited from the preceding period of federal largesse continued unabated, draining the fiscal resources of the city.<sup>1</sup>

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1). The fiscal crisis was compounded by the fact that the city's tax base had been in decline for some time owing to the movement of industries outside the city boundaries and because of the suburban migration of the city's affluent. See Nancy Kleniewski, 'From Industrial to Corporate City', in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers, op.cit., 205-222.; Patrick J. Ashton 'Urbanization and the Dynamic of Suburban Development', in W. K. Tabb and L. Sawers, op.cit.

The fiscal crisis of the late 1960s was compounded by a crisis of legitimacy when urban and political unrest increased with the withdrawal of federal money from municipal programs. Interestingly, at least according to Piven, political unrest was largely directed against the local institutions which served to distribute federal aid. Hence, municipal governments were exposed to the vagueries of competitive interest-group politics. Federal decision-making bodies which had directed both the expansion and contraction of the War on Poverty remained unchallenged. Given this analysis the policy most likely to be adopted is one which would bring the activities and resources of private industries and both of the state's roles under greater public scrutiny and control.<sup>1</sup>

Another analysis of urban politics which is designed as a means of advancing political strategy is presented by authors such as Yates, Kaufman and Sayre, and Lineberry and Sharansky. This analysis, however, is not interested in the extension of popular democratic control over both government and industry. Instead, it is interested in developing public policies which will result in the efficient administration of the many municipal service bureaucracies.<sup>2</sup> According to this analysis, effective policy-making

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1). See especially W.K. Tabb 'A Pro-People Urban Policy' in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers eds., op.cit., passim.

2). Douglas Yates, The Ungovernable City: The Politics of Urban Problems and Policy Making (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1977); Wallace Sayre and Herbert Kaufman, Governing New York City: Politics in the Metropolis (N.Y., The Russell Sage Foundation, 1960); Robert Lineberry and Ira Sharansky, Urban Politics and Public Policy (N.Y., Harper and Row, 1978).

requires some understanding of how decisions are actually made in what Yates refers to as the 'black box' of urban government. Such an understanding is not available through analyses of who rules in the decision-making process or through neo-Marxist analyses which concentrate on the structural circumstances which define decision-makers' options.

The analysis of the black-box of decision-making starts from the premise that since the turn of the twentieth century the administration of municipal government has been taken over by a range of professional service bureaucracies which are more or less autonomous of political parties and of the urban electorate. These bureaucracies compete with one another over a limited share of municipal resources with which they can build their respective organizations and extend the markets for the services which they offer. As bureaucracies grow in this way, municipal government becomes involved in an increasing number of areas of urban civil life and, consequently, with an increasing number of urban groups. Simultaneously, the administration of municipal services becomes increasingly centralized and the relationship between the 'street-level bureaucrat' and the urban citizen (or client) becomes cold and professional.<sup>1</sup>

The problem for urban government, as this analysis sees it, is that municipal bureaucracies are ill-equipped to handle potential

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1). Michael Lipsky, 'Towards a Theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy', in Willis D. Hawley and Michael Lipskey et.al. eds., Theoretical Perspectives on Urban Politics (N.J., Prentice-Hall Inc., 1976).

conflict with citizens' groups at the same time as more and more citizens' groups are entering into conflict with one or other of the city's many administrative bureaucracies. These conflicts between bureaucrats and citizens can become particularly volatile when they spill over into the larger, symbol-evoking arena of party politics and produce what Yates refers to as the uglier side of democratic form of government, 'street-fighting pluralism'. Banfield compares the inability of municipal bureaucracies to avoid volatile conflicts with citizen groups in 'the talk filled room' with political machines' past successes in quietly negotiating competing interests in the 'smoke filled room'. 'In the smoke filled room', he writes,

it was party loyalty and private interest that mainly moved men; these motives always permitted 'doing business'. In the talk-filled room righteous indignation is the main motive, and therefore, the longer the talk continues, the clearer it becomes to each side that the other must either be shouted down or knocked down.(1)

One policy recommendation which emerges from this analysis of urban decision-making is the need for greater centralization and coordination of municipal services. This is the antithesis of the policy prescription shared by Friedland, Piven, Cockburn and Pickvance. Ironically, the decentralizing policy would seem to compound the problems already caused by the centralization of authority while centralization would compound the street-fighting pluralism describe by Yates.

Clearly, then, for current works on urban politics which contribute to academic debates about power and the state, and for

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1). Edward C. Banfield, The Unheavenly City Revisited, p.277.

works which serve as strategies for expressing policy preferences, urban politics is not the object of theorization. Instead, it is the subject for the mobilization of sociological and political theories or policy preferences. Antithetical theories and policy preferences beget mutually exclusive conceptualizations of urban politics. Nowhere, however, is urban politics analyzed as part of the broader processes of urban growth and change. It cannot be. The urban political subject is itself not analyzed since it merely serves to support policy preferences or macroscopic social and political theories. Instead, urban politics is assumed to have a certain form and/or to serve a particular function. Urban government is said to provide public services and maintain social order. For Dahl this function is carried out via a political process which is itself cut off from the rest of society. It is a political arena which negotiates conflicting interests as they emerge in society. The political arena and its implicit functions exist without question. The neo-Marxist analysis employs a broader perspective as it locates urban government as an apparatus of the state in capitalist society. Nevertheless, it too assumes that urban politics has certain functions in maintaining and paying for the services necessary to the reproduction of labor power (utilities, housing, education), and a peaceful social order (welfare, police, judiciary). Here, too, the functions of municipal government are not questioned. Instead, they are assumed to be essential to the fulfillment of one of the two roles which the capitalist state is said to play in rationalizing social and economic contradictions in modern capitalist society.

Where social scientists and policy-makers have failed in analyzing urban politics as a dynamic part of the process of urban growth and change, urban historians have succeeded little better. This is somewhat surprising since historical analyses of urban phenomenon have held out particular promise since the 1968 Yale University 'Nineteenth-Century Industrial City Conference'. The conference brought together a 'generation of scholars determined to write a new urban history, a history of the urban as process'.<sup>1</sup> That is, scholars who set out to conduct interdisciplinary investigations of the urban process in particular cities. The new urban historians were interested in analyzing how individuals' and groups' behaviors helped to build cities, and how city environments influenced a wide range of human experiences and social institutions. In its initial formulation, then, the new urban history promised to show how many different human relations and institutions, political ones among them, both influenced and were influenced by the process of urban growth and change.

After the Yale conference, however, the new urban historians lost their way, or so Ted Hershberg claimed in 1981.<sup>2</sup> They had produced many methodologically sophisticated analyses of class and ethnic-group experiences, of community formations, and of social mobility in particular cities. But they had not related their analyses of particular human experiences and relations to a process

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1). Theodore Hershberg, 'The New Urban History: Toward an Interdisciplinary History of the City', in T. Hershberg, et.al. eds., Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family, and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century (N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1981), p.12.  
2). T. Hershberg, 'The New Urban History', op.cit., pp.12-22.

which was particularly urban. It was in an effort to revive the analysis of urban as process, that Hershberg introduced the work that he directed at the interdisciplinary Philadelphia Social History Project. 'Urban as process', Hershberg explained,

should be thought of as the dynamic modeling of the interrelationships among environment, behaviour, and group experience. Research might focus on three things. First, how the urban environment changed over time. Second, what social experience was correlated with different aspects of urban settings...Finally, what were the mechanisms through which environmental and social change were effected.(1)

The Philadelphia Social History Project applied its resources to the study of change in the urban environment and to relating social experiences with different aspects of the urban environment. The work that the project produced deserves nothing but commendation for its analysis of how people's experience of work, family, and group life, and the spatial distribution of people, institutions, activities and artifacts influenced and were influenced by other things which happened in cities. The project, however, could not examine all of the social relationships, activities and institutions which helped shape Philadelphia's urban environment and which Philadelphia's urban environment helped to shape. No one research group, no matter how well funded, could study the urban in all its complexities, even if that group set out to examine 'urban complexities more wholly'. Nevertheless, one cannot help but notice that the PSHP excluded urban politics from its analysis. Neither the effects of urban politics on the process of

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1). Ibid., p.28.

city building nor the effects of the urban environment on the conduct and organization of urban politics came under the scrutiny of the PSHP. This is of particular interest since the concluding part of the volume asserts that the study of urban as process is essential to effective policy-making in today's cities.<sup>1</sup>

The work of the PSHP is not unique amongst the new urban histories in its failure to examine urban politics as part of the urban process. Concentrating primarily on the relationship between behaviour and the economic and demographic aspects of the urban environment, the new urban historians paid little heed to urban politics as a formative influence on the structure and experience of urban life. To cite but a few examples, Zunz's work on the structure of inequality in Detroit, Warner's work on transportation in Boston, Katz's study of the social order in Hamilton, Thernstrom's work on mobility in Boston, Golab's study of Philadelphia's immigrants, and Lane's analysis of urbanization and crime all exclude urban politics from the analysis of the urban process.<sup>2</sup>

What, then, can specific histories of urban politics tell us about the relationship between urban politics and the urban process? Turning to this literature we find at last that urban politics is

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1). See T. Hershberg et.al., 'Part V. Urban as Process and History as Policy', in T. Hershberg, Philadelphia, esp. pp.455-60.

2). O. Zunz, The Changing Faces of Inequality: Urbanization, Industrial Development and Immigrants in Detroit, 1880-1920; S. B. Warner, Jr., Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900 (Mass., Joint Center for Urban Studies, 1962); M.B. Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City (Camb., Harvard University Press, 1975); S. Thernstrom, The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970 (Camb., Harvard University Press, 1973); C. Golab, Immigrant Destinations (Phila., Temple University Press, 1977); R. Lane, 'Urbanization and Criminal Violence in the Nineteenth Century', Journal of Social History, 2(Dec., 1968), pp.156-63.

indeed related to the process of urban growth and change. The relationship, however, generally proceeds in one direction only; from the social, economic and spatial organization of urban life to the organization and conduct of urban politics. This is true of works which examine how city governments provide the infrastructure of public works and services that is necessary for economic growth and social stability. It is also true of works which examine city governments as arenas in which differently interested groups compete over the distribution of scarce resources. In the first case, urban political change is brought about by population growth, suburbanization, the spatial concentration of the urban poor or the relocation of industries. In the second case, urban political change is caused by changes in the socio-economic and spatial structures of urban society which effect people's perceptions of their cities and their interests in city governments. In both cases there is broad agreement that changes in the urban social structure have given rise to three different forms of urban government since the American Revolution. The first lasted through the middle of the nineteenth century; the second lasted to the beginning of the twentieth century; and the third which developed from the turn of the twentieth century remains largely intact today.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, America's cities were geographically compact and largely undifferentiated by social class and ethnicity. They were, to use Warner's now famous phrase, 'walking cities'. In the walking city, social, economic, and political leadership was vested in business elites; men whose

interests in public affairs were shaped through their participation in economic activities which took place largely within the boundaries of the city. Throughout the period business elites used their control over municipal government to provide those public works and services which were necessary to make the city a good place to live and, as importantly, a good place to do business.

With industrialization, the heterogeneous walking city was transformed: its population and geographic dimensions expanded rapidly and the urban landscape became highly differentiated into areas which were definable by the class, racial and/or ethnic characteristics of their residents. Moreover, for most city dwellers, changes in the organization of production bifurcated the experience of urban life; work and home became two spatially distinct spheres of different activities.

As the urban environment was fragmented, the urban working and immigrant classes began to perceive their political interests in terms of their experience of community rather than their experience of work. According to Katznelson, 'just at the moment when the development of industrial capitalism undercut the skill levels and control over work that artisans had exercised, the working class became capable of developing and controlling the institutions of daily neighborhood life'. As a result, workers were organized into politics 'not as workers, but as residents of this or that ward, as members of this or that ethnic group'.<sup>1</sup>

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1). Ira Katznelson, Urban Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States (N.Y., Pantheon, 1981), p.52.

The community of leading businessmen which once maintained its hold over city government was also fragmented as industrialization differentiated the urban economy and so disrupted elites' political consensus. Moreover, industrial capitalists and commercial merchants found increasingly that their interests in municipal affairs waned as their money-making activities and the forces which affected them ceased to be contained within the boundaries of the city. Business elites therefore withdrew from municipal government. They were replaced by professional politicians who competed to forge coalitions among members of the many different racially, ethnically and religiously defined working-class communities. Necessary municipal works and services which were once supplied by the business class were, in the industrial city, provided by professional politicians who profited handsomely from them.

After the Civil War, the transformation of the urban political system was virtually complete. Municipal government was, by that time, almost entirely in the hands of professional politicians who were elected and re-elected year after year by the urban working class. Business elites whose legitimate influence in municipal government was severely limited by the electoral power of the more numerous working class, had to make their demands on local government through a number of informal channels. As a result 'the relationship between business and formal government became a maze of accommodations' as businessmen and politicians evolved practices which at best were simply outside established political practices;

at worst they were just outwardly corrupt.<sup>1</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, urban machine politics had developed in part from these 'unholy alliances' between businessmen and politicians. Under the leadership of the political boss, party machines held onto city governments by catering to the interests of the urban business classes, providing (at a price) necessary public works and services. Machines also catered to the interests of the immigrant and working-class communities through their distribution of political favours and patronage.<sup>2</sup>

No sooner had boss politics taken over the administration of municipal governments than the structure of urban society began to change fundamentally with the expansion of the urban middle class and the decline of the largely immigrant working class in relation. Cosmopolitan forces which previously had only affected the money-making activities of the city's leading businessmen began to shape the lives of middle-class city dwellers who made up a growing proportion of the urban population. To have some influence over the metropolitan and cosmopolitan forces which increasingly affected their lives, city dwellers began to organize themselves in trade unions, business associations, and in other associations based on ethnicity, religion and race. The emergence of these 'functional interest groups' whose members were drawn from areas which

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1). S. P. Hays, 'The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era', in American Political History as Social Analysis: Essays by Samuel P. Hays (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1980), pp. 226-7.

2). See Edward K. Spann's, The New Metropolitan New York (N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1981), pp.66, 349; Seymour J. Mandelbaum, Boss Tweed's New York (N.Y., John Wiley and Sons, 1965), p.41.

transcended the geographical boundaries of the parochial urban community, threatened the political machines' dominance of urban governments. According to Hays, 'the party's need to appeal to diverse groups within given geographical areas, while giving single-minded expression to none, was a limiting and confining method of political expression to those who wished to give more concentrated support to specialized objectives'. Functional groups, therefore, 'provided alternatives for the transmission of political impulses which the party could not clearly express'.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time as cosmopolitan forces were influencing the lives and political interests of more and more city dwellers, urban business elites were changing the nature of their demands on municipal governments. Reacting to rapid industrial growth, cities' business elites demanded that municipal governments provide more and better-administered public works and services at no extra cost to the taxpayer. These new demands could not, however, be realized through the informal relations that had developed between businessmen and professional politicians. Nor could they be made effectively through the competitive party system where working-class and immigrant voters still outnumbered the urban middle- and upper-class voters. Business elites, therefore, joined together with the new functional interest groups to reform the structure of municipal government in a period of Progressive reform which, historians tend to agree, occurred around the turn of the twentieth century.

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1). Sam P. Hays, 'Political Parties and the Community-Society Continuum', in W. N. Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham, eds., The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development (N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1975), p.169.

Within 30 years of the first urban reform campaigns of the Progressive period, the organization and conduct of municipal governments had changed fundamentally. City governments developed a corporate form of hierarchically integrated and professionally staffed bureaucratic departments each with a specific function (e.g. the police department, the fire department, and the bureau of water). In the modern municipal government, contests over public policy were increasingly negotiated by professional civil servants at the level of the relevant municipal bureaucracy; they rarely spilled over into the arena of party competition. As a result, the influence in municipal government of the party machine (and consequently, of immigrant and working-class groups) declined.<sup>1</sup>

Despite its brevity, the above scenario provides a fair representation of how historians of urban politics have treated city government as a passive object which reflected changes in the structure of the urban environment. Rarely do urban political historians ask whether urban politics was an independent variable in the process of urbanization. That is, they ask how the urban social structure effects the organization and conduct of urban politics but not how the organization and conduct of urban politics effects the structure of the urban environment.

Very recently, a number of eminent historians have repudiated political histories which conceptually subordinate the polity to

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1). Theodore J. Lowi, 'Machine Politics - Old and New', in Alexander B. Callow, Jr., ed., American Urban History (N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1973), pp.265-72.

broader social structural forces and advocated instead narrative political histories which focus primarily on the character and activities of society's public figures.<sup>1</sup> Because the urban polity has so often been neglected by historians for its part in shaping the urban process, the new narrative approach to urban political history might at first appear as a novel and welcomed advance. Despite their appearance of novelty, however, narrative political histories are neither new nor unknown in the field of urban studies and, thus far, anyway, they have contributed little to an understanding of urban politics as part of the urban process.

Narrative political history was introduced into the field of American urban studies in the nineteenth century by leading public figures and by lay historians who chronicled the history of American cities in a tradition of civic boosterism and of self-glorification.<sup>2</sup> Such works conceive of the urban polity as the province of great men and the very source of momentous city-building events; they ignore entirely any questions about how the structure of urban society shaped the political interests and the behavior of the 'great and the good'.

Political narratives are not unknown in twentieth-century urban historiography either. Indeed, 'internalist' accounts of politics or 'high' political narratives which are written from a very narrow perspective of the polity, predominated in the literature

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1). Maurice Cowling The Impact of Labour: The Beginning of Modern British Politics, (Camb., Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp.1-12; Lawrence Stone, 'The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History', Past and Present, 85(Nov., 1979), pp.3-24.

2). For an example dealing with the history of Philadelphia see J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884, 3 vols. (Phila., L.H. Everts and Co., 1884).

of urban political history until the early 1960s.<sup>1</sup> Admittedly, such works often begin with a few assumptions about how social structural formations influence the political process. Any further discussion of the relationship between politics and society, however, is ignored or buried below a mass of narrative detail about political parties and public figures.

This work, therefore, remains sceptical about the benefits to urban history of the revival of high political narrative. Such a revival threatens to roll back conceptual advances that have been made by urban historians who, from the 1960s, repudiated narrowly conceived political histories and attempted to examine urban politics in its societal context. Admittedly, in their work on the urban process and on the social basis of urban politics, 'social historians' have over-estimated the importance of socio-economic and spatial forces in shaping both urban politics and the structure and experience of urban life. Their neglect of the urban polity's role in the urban process, however, does not warrant a retreat to narrative accounts of the events which have occurred in an urban polity very narrowly conceived. Rather, it calls for an urban political history which can take account of urban politics as both a dependent and an independent variable in the urban process.

It appears, then, that there is a significant lacuna in a vast academic literature which touches on the subject of urban politics.

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1). A series of high political narratives on Pennsylvania and Philadelphia politics was published by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in the 1950s. One of these works which is cited extensively in the Chapters that follow is Charles M. Snyder, The Jacksonian Heritage: Pennsylvania Politics, 1833-1848 (Harrisburg, 1958).

Urban politics is frequently analyzed. It is, however, rarely analyzed as a dynamic part of the process of urban growth and change. As we have seen, urban politics serves as the subject for studies whose objects are sociological, theoretical or strategically political. For such works the relationship between urban politics and the process of urban development is not a problem. Neither the urban polity nor the process of urban growth and change is the object under investigation. Historians for whom the process of urban growth and change is the object under investigation, exclude urban politics from their briefs. Meanwhile, historians for whom urban politics is the specific object to be examined, either analyze the relationship between urban politics and the process of urban growth and change in one direction only or ignore altogether that any such relationship exists.

This work, then, is a step towards filling this gap in the literature. It will show that urban politics was more than a passive or dependent variable in the process of urbanization; that urban politics had some part in shaping those changes in the structure of the urban environment cited above as having altered the conduct and organization of urban politics. To do this, the work follows two examples set by the new urban historians. First, it examines one particular city, Philadelphia. Second, it introduces a comparative element into the analysis by examining two distinct periods of the city's political history, 1800 to 1854, and 1890 to 1915, both of which are described above as being transitional.<sup>1</sup>

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1). Sam Bass Warner, Jr., The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of its Growth (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), is a social history which looks at one city in two periods.

By 1854, Philadelphia's government was well on its way in its transition from a pre-industrial to an industrial form. Business elites had begun to withdraw from the municipal political arena and, even as a political machine had not yet taken over control of municipal government, party politicians had become much more influential in the process of decision-making. In the second period, 1890 to 1915, Philadelphia's government was in the midst of its transition from a boss political system to a more modern, bureaucratically-administered one. The case study ends in 1915 when the transition was by no means complete - the city remained in the grip of boss politics at least until the early 1950s. Nonetheless, after 1915 political transition ceased until the 1930s when the structure of the urban polity was radically altered as the New Deal heralded the growing influence of federal government on city politics. Hence, 1915 is the obvious year with which to end the analysis since in that year, Philadelphians elected to repudiate Progressive reformers who had held onto the city's administration from 1912, and hence, to return to boss rule.

A final chapter reflects upon the case studies to show how they can provide useful hypotheses about urban political history generally insofar as they demonstrate how the urban polity may be analyzed as having both a dependent and an independent role in the urban process. As important, it shows how historical studies of the urban process which are expressly concerned with the relationship between urban politics and urban society, can have important ramifications for the sociological, theoretical and strategical debates which, as has been shown above, are often

promoted with analyses of urban politics. In this respect, the work suggests that theoretically informed history (sometimes referred to as historical sociology) need not simply test social scientific theories about political change and/or about urban development, but can in fact contribute a great deal to the development of the theories themselves.

PART I:  
THE DECLINE OF THE WALKING CITY,  
1800-1854

From the end of the American revolution to the middle of the nineteenth century Philadelphia's polity was dominated by the city's business or commercial elites; a community of businessmen and lawyers who shared with one another positions on the boards of the city's most important financial and mercantile institutions and on the city's legislative councils. Their position of political leadership had its origins in the colonial past and was rooted in the social structure of the pre-industrial city. In 1854, after two decades of social unrest which included racial riots in the 1830s and nativist riots in the 1840s, the city was consolidated with the less affluent and politically independent districts and townships in the county which shared the name Philadelphia. The Act of Consolidation which increased the size of the city from 2 to 129 square miles, instituted sweeping reforms in the governmental structure of Philadelphia. It also signalled the end of the political domination of urban politics by the business elites. For both reasons 1854 marks a watershed in the city's political history. Urban political consolidation during the period was not unique to Philadelphia and consequently, it has attracted the attention of historians and urbanists. Their accounts differ as to its origins but all tend to regard the event as the natural political response to underlying social changes and new social cleavages inherent in

phenomena abstractly defined as 'urbanization', 'modernization' or 'industrialization'.<sup>1</sup>

Dahl, Baltzell, and Banfield and Wilson, for example, propose that industrialization caused two basic changes in the urban social structure which together account for mid-nineteenth-century political reform.<sup>2</sup> First, with industrialization, working and business classes became increasingly polarized. As a result, commercial elites' political predominance, once based on city dwellers' deferential voting, declined. Second, antagonisms developed between industrial and commercial business elites. As a result the political consensus was destroyed that had made the business elites' political predominance in the city feasible. The balance of political power in the city was soon tipped in favor of an emerging industrialist class when industrialists entered into alliances with a new breed of professional party politicians who were able to win electoral support in the different working-class communities throughout the city.

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1). See for example, William W. Cutler, III, and Howard Frank Gillette, Jr., 'The Emergence of a Modern Metropolis', in W. W. Cutler, III, and Howard F. Gillette, Jr., The Divided Metropolis; E. K. Spann, The New Metropolitan New York; Jon C. Teafor, City and Suburb: The Political Fragmentation of Metropolitan America, 1850-1970 (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

2). This argument is developed in general by R. Dahl, Who Governs?, pp.11-64; E.C. Banfield and J.Q. Wilson, City Politics, p.149; and Digby Baltzell, Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper-Class (Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1971). Baltzell, Alan Zachary, 'Social Thought in the Philadelphia Leadership Community' (University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1975), and John D. Stewart, 'Philadelphia Politics in the Gilded Age' (Phila., St. John's University Ph.D. thesis, 1973) develop this general argument in relation to the political history of Philadelphia.

Another perspective on the political decline of the urban commercial elite is offered by Warner and Hays. They remain silent about whether industrialization fragmented a political consensus among the business class and claim that business elites simply gave up the time-consuming business of government for the business of business.<sup>1</sup>

Other authors prefer to explain political change in this period with reference to industrialization and its effect on the urban working class. For Ira Katznelson and Michael Feldberg, political reforms were effective mechanisms of social control which curbed the intense social unrest that had developed with the growth of the industrial working class and the concurrent breakdown in traditional means of social control. For Feldberg, the origins of urban violence are to be sought in the mass immigration of Irish workers and the establishment on American soil of traditional Irish communities which were parallel to but separate from communities of Protestant native Americans.<sup>2</sup>

Katznelson, on the other hand, claims that changes in the organization of production were more fundamental causes of urban social unrest and eventual political reform.<sup>3</sup> For him, the introduction of the capitalist wage relation increased firm size and led to the spatial distinction of areas devoted to industry and

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- 1). Sam Bass Warner, Jr., The Private City, Chapter 5; Sam P. Hays, 'The Changing Political Structure of the City in Industrial America', in S.P. Hays, ed., American Political History, pp. 345-6.
  - 2). M. Feldberg, The Philadelphia Riots of 1844; 'The Crowd in Philadelphia History: A Comparative Perspective', Labor History, 15:3(Summer, 1974), pp.323-6.
  - 3). Ira Katznelson, City Trenches, pp.57-61.

community life respectively. As a result, city dwellers' experience of work and community was increasingly bifurcated. The introduction of capitalist productive organizations also provided the structural opportunity for wage workers to organize themselves and press their economic demands both at the work place and in the political arena. At the same time, however, the bifurcation of work and home life enabled the ruling class to exploit ethnic divisions within the working class thereby undermining potentially disruptive class-based political parties.<sup>1</sup>

Despite their different explanations of how industrialization altered the urban social structure and resulted in urban violence, both Katznelson and Feldberg agree that mid-century urban political reforms represented a ruling-class exercise of social control. For Feldberg, party politics in the consolidated city formalized ethnic conflict which had previously been disruptive simply because it was unpredictable. For Katznelson, political reforms occurred as nascent political parties organized the working class around issues of community and ethnicity. Economic conflicts which were potentially much more disruptive of the urban social order were thus excluded from the political arena. They were left instead to trade unions which themselves did not re-emerge as a potent threat to the business class until the 1870s.

There is a great deal of merit to these analyses especially as they accurately depict the consequences of consolidation in terms of the formalization of ethnic politics. They rely, however, on

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1). Ibid. p. 52.

rather abstract notions of determined historical development in which political processes play little active part. Feldberg and Katznelson both agree that the extension of mass party politics and political consolidation redirected social unrest into manageable and hence less disruptive channels. In this respect, political reform was an exercise of power by an urban elite. Yet, not one of the analyses mentioned above shows how urban elites exercised their power. Urban elites are not seen to undermine the potentially harmful political organization of the urban working class as a whole (Katznelson), or simply to put an end to disruptive ethnic conflict by formalizing it in the political arena (Feldberg). Such an analysis would in fact be difficult to support especially insofar as Dahl, Banfield, Baltzell, Warner and Hays are able to show very convincingly that the development of popular parties which helped to precipitate mid-nineteenth-century urban political reform resulted from either the fragmentation of elites' political consensus or from the decline in elites' interest in civic affairs.

Is it possible, then, to explain how urban political reforms at mid-century were instrumental in instituting new means of social control over the expanding working class, but not directed by urban elites? This case study suggests that it is possible by focusing on how the organization and conduct of urban politics influenced political developments and helped to shape the urban process in ways which were not always intended by any one group of political actors. The part that the urban polity played in the urban process is not entirely neglected by the authors cited above - Katznelson shows how

mass party politics actually fostered city dwellers' intense localism - but it is, nevertheless, underanalyzed.

There is an even more fundamental problem with the explanations of political reform outlined above. In chapter one it is shown that existing data do not demonstrate conclusively that the city was becoming spatially and socially differentiated before the consolidation of 1854. Nor does it support the claim that industrialists were at odds with the city's traditional commercial elite. If these data are correct, then explanations of mid-nineteenth-century political reform which are based on social structural change confuse the order of causality. Indeed, chapter one suggests that the fragmentation of the urban community was only a latent tendency in the structure of urban society. It was produced by industrialization, but accelerated by urban political practices.

Chapters two and three, then, turn to examine how activity in local and state governments, respectively, precipitated social and political contradictions which resulted in consolidation. Chapter two assesses functional arguments which suggest that consolidation was a necessary political response to urban growth. Cutler and Gillette, for example, explain mid-nineteenth century urban political reform in terms of the municipal government's function in providing the city with a basic network of public services.<sup>1</sup> As the city's population expanded and as its population density increased, the technical problems of maintaining the network of services became ever more complicated. Urban elites who had employed

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1). W.W. Cutler and H. F. Gillette, op.cit., passim.

an informal committee system of government to administer necessary public works since the colonial era were, by the middle of the nineteenth century, incapable of delivering such works and services on the scale required without major organizational reform.<sup>1</sup>

This analysis provides an accurate description of urban political contradictions which precipitated mid-nineteenth-century reform. It neglects, however, the more interesting and complex analysis of the process by which municipal government changed so as to meet the new demands for public works and services. Too many questions are left unanswered to produce such an analysis. How, for example, did contradictions develop and take shape within the political arena? Why were urban elites incapable of adapting municipal government to the changing needs of the industrializing city? Chapter two, which examines the structure of local government and the business elites' direction of it, addresses these questions directly. It shows that some of the administrative problems that precipitated consolidation can be explained as consequences of urban elites' self-interested direction of a municipal government in which authority was extremely fragmented.

The analysis in chapters two and three also draws in part on Amy Bridges' work on mid-nineteenth-century New York City politics. Bridges reminds us that urban governments are not independent of external political influences. 'City governments', Bridges writes, 'are dependent on the state governments of which they are the

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1). S. B. Warner, op.cit., p.102.

creatures, and the boundaries of the urban polity are highly permeable. The dependence and permeability of the urban polity means that things happen not only in cities, but also to cities'.<sup>1</sup> Bridges' dictum is no less true for nineteenth-century cities than it is for big cities of today. Because nineteenth-century city governments were so utterly dependent on state legislatures, local political leaders often had very little autonomous control over municipal resources which were themselves limited by rural-dominated state legislatures.

This was especially true after the development of the nationally-organized Whig and Democratic parties of the second party system in the 1830s and 1840s. Prior to that time urban commercial elites had some success in exploiting their manifold social and business associations in the highly exclusive circles of state and national governments to secure for themselves some autonomy in the direction of municipal affairs.<sup>2</sup> The emergence of the second party system changed all that. With the development of nationally organized parties, popular political campaigns and near universal male suffrage, municipal administrations were slowly taken over from urban elites by a new breed of professional politicians whose political methods were radically different than those used by the urban elites. Where the elites solicited electoral support informally by relying on their local influence and

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1). Amy Bridges, A City in the Republic: Antebellum New York and the Origins of Machine Politics (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp.14-15.

2). R.P. Formisano, 'Federalists and Republicans: Parties, Yes - System, No', in Paul Kleppner et. al., eds., The Evolution of American Electoral Systems (Conn., Greenwood Press, 1981), p.8.

on their personal wealth, the professionals campaigned for votes with the resources of the nationally organized party and with locally emotive issues taken from the congressional floors of the state and national capitals.<sup>1</sup> The nascent tendency towards social polarization in the city that resulted from industrialization played into the hands of the professional party politicians as is noted by Katznelson and Feldberg, and discussed above on page 29. Urban elites were increasingly replaced in the political arena by professional party politicians, and local political contests became more and more a part of state and national party competitions. As a result city government became more rather than less circumscribed in its autonomy as local elections were contested by state-wide and national parties interested in municipal offices for the coveted spoils that they offered.

Historians dispute the chronology of this scenario. Formisano, for example, is keen to establish that the second party system did not emerge with Jackson's presidential campaigns in the 1820s as is often thought.<sup>2</sup> Instead he suggests that national party organization was put off until the middle or late 1830s.<sup>3</sup> Shade insists that the second party system was only fully elaborated as late as the 1840s.<sup>4</sup>

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1). Amy Bridges, op.cit., pp.77-8.

2). See, for example, Lee Benson, The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy: New York as a Test Case (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970).

3). R.P. Formisano, op.cit., p.43.

4). W.G. Shade, 'Political Pluralism and Party Development: The Creation of the Modern Party System, 1815-1852', in P. Kleppner, op.cit., p.77.

Despite academic debate over the timing of the development of nationally organized parties, there is little disagreement either about the course of their development or their affects on urban politics. Parties had a disruptive influence on urban elites' political consensus, and loosened their grip on municipal governments. At the same time, parties' involvement in contests over local elected office opened up municipal politics to more popular influence. It is also widely acknowledged that the development of the second party system somehow reflected socio-economic changes which accompanied the young nation's transition to a diversified and industrialized society. Benson, for example, claims that the second party system was ushered in as the transportation revolution and resultant economic expansion precipitated a revolution in Americans' economic aspirations.<sup>1</sup> Hays, too, seeks to explain the emergence of the second party system in terms of socio-economic changes which accompanied industrialism.<sup>2</sup>

Chapters two and three do not so much dispute the accepted accounts of the second party system and its effects on the conduct of urban politics. Instead they augment those accounts by demonstrating that the self-interested conduct of the urban elites in city government helps to explain how the administration of city government increasingly succumbed to the influence of competing state-wide parties. The argument, in other words, stresses that the urban polity was not simply a passive agent which was affected by

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1). Lee Benson, op.cit., p.13.

2). S.P. Hays, 'Political Parties and the Community-Society Continuum', pp.152-81 passim. Also see R.P. Formisano, op.cit., pp.62-5.

and not influential in shaping broader changes in the federal system of politics. Finally, chapter three builds on an argument suggested by Katznelson and Bridges to show that the ideological content of popular party campaigns influenced city dwellers' perceptions of their changing urban environment and their behavior in it. In fact, chapter three demonstrates that the social unrest that preceded the consolidation was caused in part by local party contests.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE SOCIAL BASIS OF POLITICAL REFORM ?

William Penn's blueprint of 1683 located the city of Philadelphia on the two square miles between the Schuylkill river in the west and the Delaware river in the east. As Map 1.1 shows, eight parallel streets, all named after trees, extended the two miles connecting the rivers along an east-west axis.<sup>1</sup> These east-west streets were crossed at right angles by streets running north and south roughly parallel to the two rivers. Penn's plan was that the settlement along the Schuylkill and the settlement along the Delaware would expand into one another within the boundaries of Vine Street to the north and Cedar Street to the south. When it was found that the Schuylkill was not deep enough for commercial ships, the population concentrated along the Delaware. By 1800 the city's inhabitants had spread themselves three miles north and south along the Delaware and only one mile westward.<sup>2</sup> Map 1.2 shows that beyond the city's boundaries lay the unincorporated districts of the Northern Liberties and Passyunk, and several other independently incorporated townships which occupied the rest of the county's 129 miles of farmland and forest.<sup>3</sup>

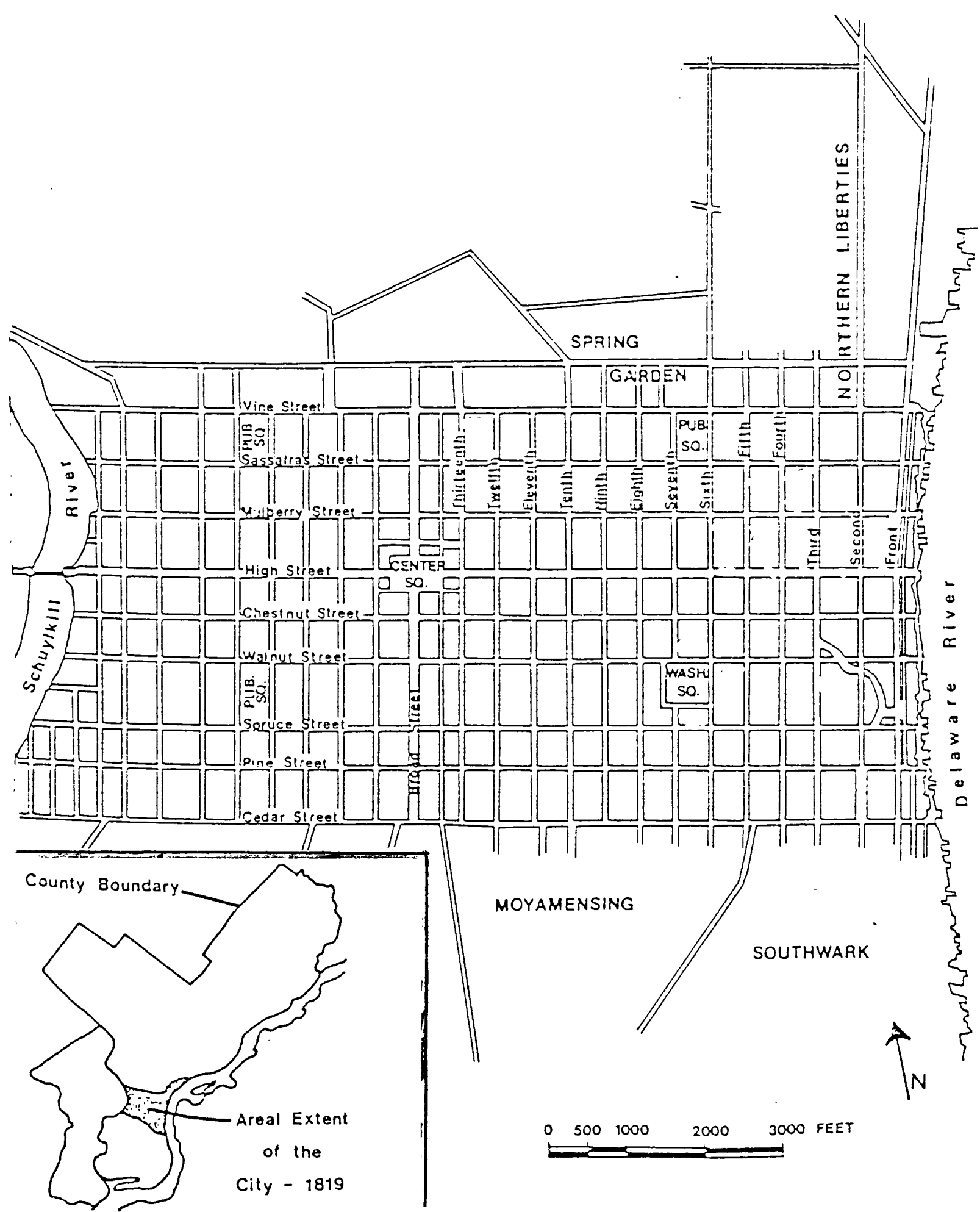
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1). See page 38.

2). Priscilla Clement Ferguson, 'The Response to Need: Welfare and Poverty in Philadelphia, 1800 to 1850' (Phila , University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1977), p.8; Henry Leffman, 'The Consolidation of Philadelphia', Philadelphia History, I (1908), p.27.

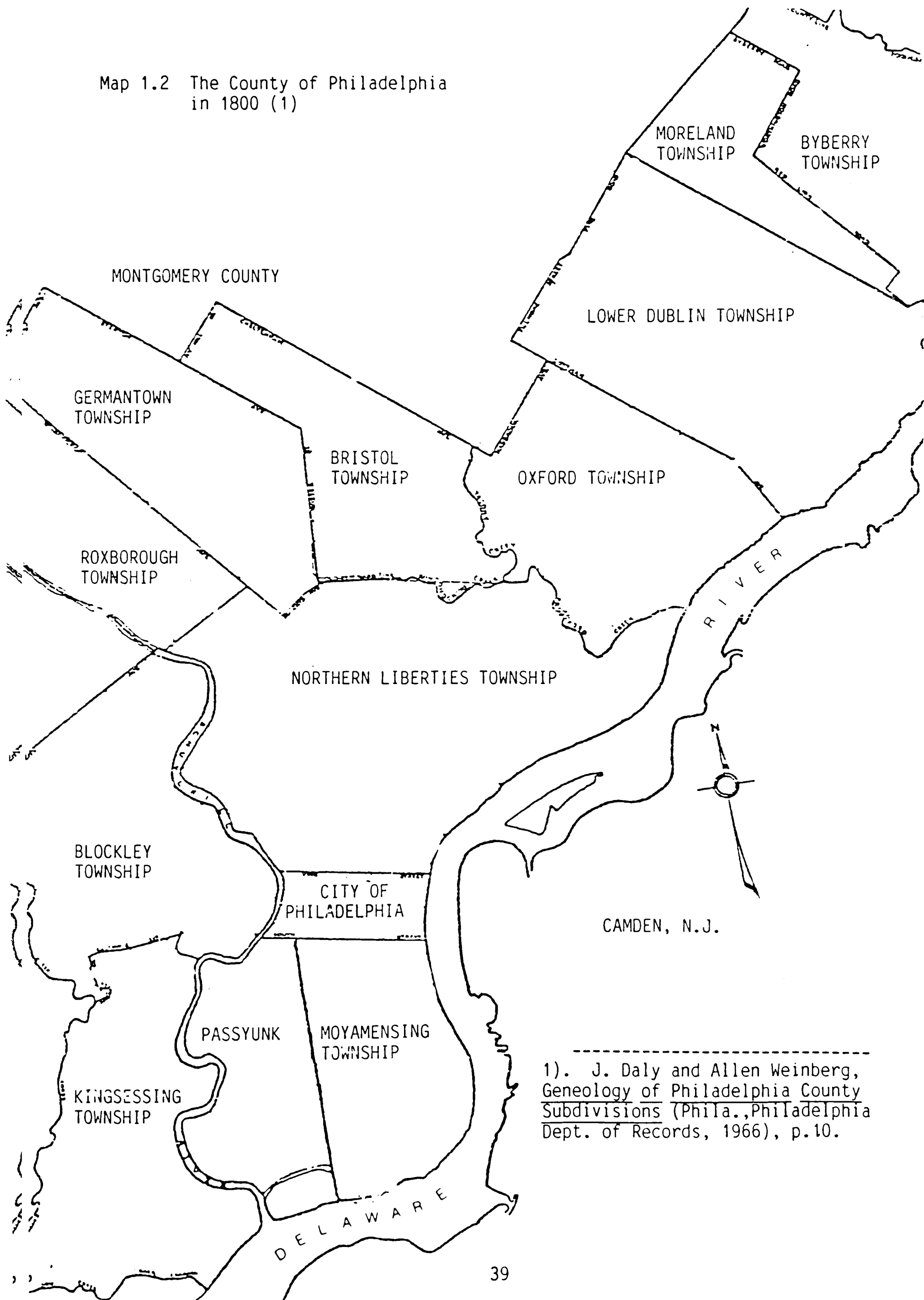
3). See page 39.

Map 1.1 The City of Philadelphia in 1800<sup>1</sup>



1). Marion L. Bell, Crusade in the City: Revivalism in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia (Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press), 35.

Map 1.2 The County of Philadelphia  
in 1800 (1)



1). J. Daly and Allen Weinberg,  
Geneology of Philadelphia County  
Subdivisions (Phila., Philadelphia  
Dept. of Records, 1966), p.10.

Philadelphia at the turn of the nineteenth century was very much a pedestrian or walking city, though the streets were only paved between the Delaware and Sixth Street. Regular two- to four-story brick houses sheltered the city's inhabitants, most of whom lived and worked under the same roof. The only exception to the monotonous style of architecture for which Philadelphia is still known, was the commercial warehouse district along the Delaware. Fresh water from the Schuylkill waterworks, opened in 1801, flowed along the gutters of the paved streets, giving the city a clean and healthy appearance. The affluent could pay the municipal government to conduct water directly into their homes. Even with the advent of fresh water, however, disease remained a chronic problem. Yellow fever epidemics, for example, struck the city in the summers of 1802, 1804, 1805 and 1806.<sup>1</sup>

The city market on High or Market Street extended from the Delaware to Sixth Street and was open six days of the week selling food, clothing and household goods. Unfortunately unwary shoppers were constantly being harassed by pigs foraging around the stalls or in the gutters. Loose hogs and unleashed dogs remained a problem in Philadelphia well into the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Yet one could easily escape the rampant swine by walking west. The end of the market marked the beginning of Philadelphia's suburbs which quickly receded into open farmland.

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1). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.12.

2). 'An Ordinance To prevent the running of swine at large... passed 8 June, 1832'. OAA, p.150; 'An Ordinance To consolidate and amend the Ordinance To prevent dogs from running at large...passed 27 March 1828', OAA, pp.160-1.

Philadelphia was the largest city in the nation in 1800 with 41,220 people.<sup>1</sup> Another 40,000 people lived in the rest of Philadelphia county.<sup>2</sup> Philadelphia's white population was ethnically homogenous in its Anglo-Protestant inheritance.<sup>3</sup> Less than 7% of the city's population was Catholic in 1800.<sup>4</sup> The only segregated urban group, the blacks, made up less than 8% of the total population of the county.<sup>5</sup> Those blacks that did not live as servants in the houses of the city's well-to-do, clustered in the only ghetto south of Lombard Street.<sup>6</sup> Aside from the spatial concentration of the city's poor blacks, there was little if any segregation by class in Philadelphia. The families of artisans and journeymen lived next to commercial merchants and bankers. Day laborers were more likely to occupy the less expensive and less desirable housing in the alleyways that began to emerge off the main streets by the turn of the century.<sup>7</sup>

Philadelphia's economy was organized entirely around mercantile trade with Europe, the West Indies and with other American cities, and in 1800 was second only to New York City in foreign commerce.<sup>8</sup> Financially, the city was the center of the nation, housing the Bank of North America, the Bank of Pennsylvania

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- 1). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.7.
  - 2). E.K. Price, The History of the Consolidation of the City of Philadelphia (Phila., J.B. Lippincott, 1873), p.12.
  - 3). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., pp.11-12.
  - 4). Sister Mary Theopane Geary, A History of Third Parties in Pennsylvania, 1840-1860 (Washington, 1938), p.53.
  - 5). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., pp.30-31; E.K. Price, op. cit., p.12.
  - 6). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.12.
  - 7). S.B. Warner Jr., op. cit., p.59.
  - 8). Diane Lindstrom, Economic Development in the Philadelphia Region, 1810-1850 (New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1978), pp.36-39.

and the National Bank.<sup>1</sup> As a commercial port vending goods produced elsewhere, Philadelphia's tradesmen produced primarily for the home market and thus no single trade dominated.<sup>2</sup> Artisans and journeymen made up more than half of the city's working population at the turn of the century.<sup>3</sup> Shoe making, textiles, shipbuilding and carpentry were among the most important trades. With the exception of some of the building companies and Oliver Evan's Mars foundry which was the city's biggest business in 1812 employing 35 workmen, most tradesmen worked alone or with a few assistants.<sup>4</sup> Businesses too were not spatially separated in the city as small shops, residences and commercial and financial establishments were mixed together throughout the dense urban settlement. In this walking city business elites constantly rubbed shoulders with their less affluent neighbors in the streets and taverns.

Table 1.1 (page 45) indicates that between 1800 and 1850, the most rapid population growth in the county of Philadelphia occurred in the ever-increasing number of townships, boroughs and districts which surrounded the city.<sup>5</sup> Table 1.1 does not, however, indicate how population growth affected the social order of the mercantile, pedestrian city. To answer this question it is necessary to analyze more precisely who the immigrants were, where they settled and why they settled where they did.

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1). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., pp.14-15.

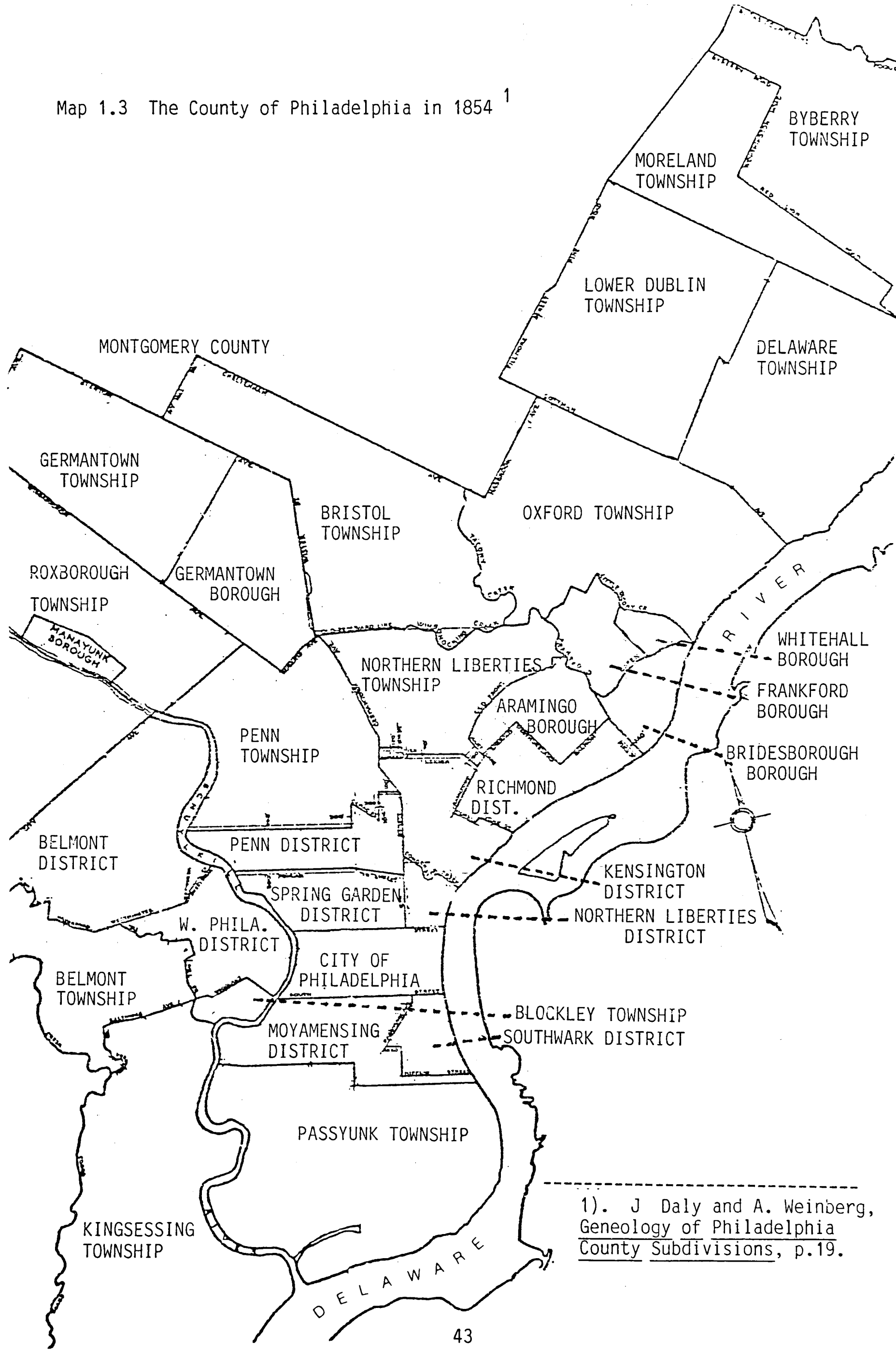
2). Bruce G. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia (Phila., Temple University Press, 1980), p.4.

3). Stuart Blumin, 'Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City: Philadelphia, 1820-1860' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1968), pp.38-39.

4). B.G. Laurie, op. cit., p.13.

5). Map 1.3 on page 43 shows that there were no fewer than 29 independent political corporations on the eve of consolidation in 1854.

Map 1.3 The County of Philadelphia in 1854 <sup>1</sup>



1). J Daly and A. Weinberg, Geneology of Philadelphia County Subdivisions, p.19.

Between 1800 and 1850, rural-urban migration and natural increase accounted for the bulk of the city's population growth.<sup>1</sup> The process of urban-rural migration was dynamic. Throughout the period transportation facilities were constantly being improved and extended in the state of Pennsylvania. As networks and railroads developed, the markets for goods produced in Philadelphia were extended further into the city's hinterland. The extension of demand markets stimulated the development of techniques of mass production in Philadelphia and the city's manufacturers suffered from a chronic labor shortage.<sup>2</sup> At the same time as job opportunities for unskilled workers were expanding in the city, rural sons were being pushed from the countryside because of the diminishing availability of land east of the Allegheny Mountains. Rural migrants, therefore, came to Philadelphia for the jobs which simply did not exist in the same number elsewhere in the eastern half of the state.<sup>3</sup>

Entering the city as semi- and unskilled workers, rural migrants tended to settle in the outlying districts. It has been shown that this settlement pattern affected the socio-economic landscape of the county. In 1820, district dwellers were less affluent than their center-city counterparts. In fact, an indirect relationship existed between the distance of residence from the center of Philadelphia and per capita wealth.<sup>4</sup> This discrepancy

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- 1). B. Laurie, op.cit., chapter 1.
  - 2). D. Lindstrom, op. cit., pp.24-6.
  - 3). B. Laurie, op. cit., pp.9-10.
  - 4). S. Blumin, op. cit., pp.113-130.

widened in each succeeding decade from 1820 to 1850. Hence, per capita wealth in the Northern Liberties was similar to per capita wealth in Spring Garden as both districts were immediately adjacent to the city's northern border. Per capita wealth in both districts, however, was less than that in the city in 1820 and the difference increased between 1820 and 1850. The district of Kensington, which was north of Spring Garden and the Northern Liberties, was the poorest district in the north and the furthest from the city. The districts of Southwark and Moyamensing which together housed the city's blacks, were the southern counterparts of the Northern Liberties and Kensington respectively.

Table 1.1 Decennial Population Growth in the City and County of Philadelphia, 1800-1850.(1)

| Year | City    | Rest of County | Decennial Growth in City | Decennial Growth in Rest of County | Percent Growth in City | Percent Growth in Rest of County |
|------|---------|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1800 | 41,220  | 39,785         |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |
|      |         |                | 12,502                   | 17,673                             | 30%                    | 44%                              |
| 1810 | 53,722  | 57,458         |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |
|      |         |                | 10,080                   | 15,837                             | 19                     | 28                               |
| 1820 | 63,802  | 73,295         |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |
|      |         |                | 16,656                   | 35,208                             | 26                     | 48                               |
| 1830 | 80,458  | 108,503        |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |
|      |         |                | 13,207                   | 55,869                             | 16                     | 51                               |
| 1840 | 93,665  | 164,372        |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |
|      |         |                | 27,711                   | 123,297                            | 30                     | 75                               |
| 1850 | 121,376 | 287,669        |                          |                                    |                        |                                  |

By 1850 the city, the Northern Liberties, Spring Garden, Moyamensing and Southwark formed a contiguous, densely populated settlement which extended four miles north to south and two miles

1). Eli K. Price, op.cit., p.12.

east to west between the two rivers. The rest of the county was much the same as it had been at the turn of the nineteenth century, largely unsettled. Although the politically autonomous districts, boroughs and townships in the outlying areas increased dramatically in their number, they remained at considerable distances from one another, often connected only by a few roads.<sup>1</sup>

We must be careful about concluding from the above data that solidly working-class districts in the county surrounded a mercantile and affluent urban core. In 1850, the urban core was itself a heterogeneous jumble of rich and poor people. By 1820, the city had been divided into two tiers of political wards. The eastern tier, bounded by Fourth Street in the west, occupied one-fifth of the entire area of the city. This tier contained one-third of the city's population, its port, commercial houses, big banks, best shops and most luxurious homes. The western tier of wards was markedly less affluent and settled only between Fourth and Twelfth Streets. The rest of the city was 'largely empty except for a small settlement consisting mostly of farmers and fishermen on the banks of the Schuylkill'.<sup>2</sup>

By 1830, the dividing line between the eastern and western tiers of the city had moved west to Seventh Street as the settlements along the two rivers began to grow into one another according to William Penn's original plan. This was due to the rapid development along the Schuylkill River which accompanied the

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1). William Bucke Campbell, 'Old Towns and Districts of Philadelphia', Philadelphia History 4:5(1942), p.95.

2). S. Blumin, op. cit., pp.113-130.

expansion of the coal trade from western Pennsylvania and the construction of canals and railroads which converged on the river at Market Street.<sup>1</sup> The gap in affluence between the eastern and western tier of wards, however, remained as it had been 10 years earlier.

Socio-economic differentiation within the city, however, was nowhere near complete. In fact, the poorest wards in the city were in the eastern tier.<sup>2</sup> Just as the city was not entirely affluent neither were the districts entirely poor. For example, the per capita wealth of Germantown was the greatest of all the districts in the county even as it was the district farthest away from the city of Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup>

The distribution of each of the county's trades and industries throughout both the districts and the city helps to explain the socio-economic heterogeneity that persisted in the county. Manufacturing was prevented from becoming concentrated spatially by the available productive technologies which assured small firm size, and by the limited means of available transportation.<sup>4</sup> With the city's trades and industries scattered throughout all the districts no area could become completely residential or completely dominated by business

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1). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.127.

2). 'Report to the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia Signed Thomas Taylor, Daniel Barr, etc.'(Phila., n.p., 1832).

3). S. Blumin, op. cit., pp. 113-130.

4). The influence of internal transportation on the spatial organization of the city is the subject of Allen Pred's, The Spatial Dynamics of U.S. Urban-Industrial Growth, 1800-1914: Interpretive and Theoretical Essays (Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1966).

establishments. Instead, mixed land-use patterns prevailed, preventing the bifurcation of Philadelphians' work and community lives and the subsequent formation of homogeneous class or ethnic residential enclaves. Though in 1850 fewer people worked and lived under the same roof than in 1800, most Philadelphians lived within one mile of their place of employment.<sup>1</sup>

Given the spatial decentralization of the city's trades and industries, the most important variable in choosing a place to live for rural and foreign immigrants was the availability of low-cost housing and not occupational preference. As the poorest districts in 1820, the districts of Kensington and Moyamensing offered the cheapest selection of housing and consequently attracted the poorest and the least skilled immigrants. This cycle was mutually reinforcing and, in part, accounts for the general disparity in wealth between the city and the districts.

Spatial differentiation by ethnicity, however, was not readily apparent in the settlement patterns in the county of Philadelphia. This is evident in modern studies of Philadelphia's Germans and Irish, the two largest immigrant groups in the city in the first half of the nineteenth century. Between 1800 and 1850, German immigrants to Philadelphia made up approximately 11% of the adult male workforce located in the skilled trades, especially in

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1). Dale B. Light Jr., 'Class, Ethnicity and the Urban Ecology in a Nineteenth-Century City: Philadelphia's Irish, 1840-90' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1979), pp.25-27. Also see T. Hershberg, Harold E. Cox, Dale B. Light, Jr., 'The "Journey-to-Work": An Empirical Investigation of Work, Residence and Transportation, Philadelphia, 1850 and 1880', in T. Hershberg, ed., Philadelphia, pp.134-5.

shoemaking, tailoring and baking.<sup>1</sup> German settlers tended to cluster to some degree in the Northern Liberties and in Spring Garden but this was due more to the fact that they were amongst the proprietary producers and craftsmen who tended to live and work in these districts than to the immigrants' sense of ethnic identity.<sup>2</sup>

The extent of Irish immigration to the U.S and to Philadelphia between 1800 and 1854 is shown below in Tables 1.2 and 1.3 respectively. Between 1844 and 1851, the proportion of Irish immigrants in Philadelphia more than doubled, though this increase did not result in the development of a segregated Irish community in any one section of the county. Like the settlement patterns of the city's German immigrants, the dispersal of the Irish throughout the county can be explained in terms of the availability of job opportunities and cheap housing.

Table 1.2 Irish Immigration to the U.S. Every Ten Years, 1830 to 1850 Inclusive.(3)

| Number Arriving Yearly |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Year                   | Immigrants Arriving |
| 1830                   | 10,000              |
| 1840                   | 20,000              |
| 1850                   | 36,000              |

Table 1.3 Irish Immigration to Philadelphia Every Five Years, 1835 to 1855 Inclusive.(4)

| Number Arriving Yearly |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Year                   | Immigrants Arriving |
| 1835                   | 1,890               |
| 1840                   | 4,079               |
| 1845                   | 5,767               |
| 1850                   | 10,515              |
| 1855                   | 7,581               |

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1). Bruce Laurie, George Alter and Theodore Hershberg, 'Immigrants and Industry: The Philadelphia Experience, 1850-1880', in T. Hershberg ed. Philadelphia, pp. 93-120.

2). Alan N. Burstein, 'Immigrants and Residential Mobility: The Irish and Germans in Philadelphia, 1850-1880', in T. Hershberg, ed., Philadelphia, pp. 174-203.

3). M. Feldberg, The Philadelphia Riots of 1844, p.20.

4). S. B. Warner, op. cit., p.139.

Coming to Philadelphia without any previously acquired skills, the Irish entered the city's labor market at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy, particularly as day-laborers and as handloom weavers.<sup>1</sup> The handloom weavers especially could practice their trade anywhere in the county as the textile industry remained dependent on outwork throughout the period. The day laborers, too, were able to find work in both the districts and the city. Because the Irish were not tied to crafts which tended to be concentrated in one area of the county, they were dispersed throughout the city and districts in the cheap shacks and shanties that were thrown up between and behind houses along the alleyways which were built off the main streets. By 1850, the Irish were even more spread out in the districts and the city than the German immigrants.<sup>2</sup> In areas such as Kensington and Southwark, the sites of the nativist riots in 1844, cheap housing and a concentration of textile firms coincided to attract a cluster of Irish settlers. Even in these districts, however, the Irish presence was neither dense nor overwhelming much as it may have been obvious to contemporaries.<sup>3</sup>

Philadelphia, then, was an extremely fluid and heterogenous environment. It was not becoming a city of closed social cells each definable by the ethnicity, the wealth or the occupations of its inhabitants. Industrial land-use and immigrant settlement patterns combined to prevent the formation of homogeneous communities in any one section of the county. Instead, rich and poor, Anglo-Saxon,

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1). Richard A. Mcleod, 'The Philadelphia Artisans, 1828-1850' (Missouri, University of Missouri Ph.D. thesis, 1971), pp.38.

2). A. Burstein, op. cit., pp.181-6.

3). Ibid., pp.184-5.

Irish and German continued to live in relative proximity to one another throughout the period. Philadelphia's spatial organization was not conducive, therefore, to the formation of ethnic, religious or class group identity in Philadelphia.

Dale Light has shown quite convincingly that the establishment of a self-conscious Irish community in Philadelphia was neither a natural nor an automatic process for immigrants.<sup>1</sup> Rather, he claims that a disparate population of Irish immigrants had to be made into an Irish community by Philadelphia's Irish elites who organized their fellow countrymen through religious and secular associations. Irish elites were aided in their work by the nativist riots in the 1840s. Nevertheless, the Irish community in Philadelphia was still poorly organized in 1854 when the city was consolidated.

Analyses of the changes in the social and spatial structure of Philadelphia between 1800 and 1850 and of Irish community formation in the city, cast doubt on explanations of mid-nineteenth-century urban political reform which are based on the ethnic fragmentation of the urban social structure. This does not imply that ethnic unrest had no part to play in the process of political reform. It does, however, suggest that ethnic unrest did not stem directly from any obvious changes in the spatial or social structure of Philadelphia. In other words, the causal relationship between social structural changes - in this case ethnic-group formation - and political change that is put forward by historians such as Feldberg, is not supported by this case study of Philadelphia. If

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1). This is Light's thesis in 'Ethnicity and the Urban Ecology'.

social change was not in itself sufficient to account for political change, how far did economic change influence the urban social structure and cause urban political reform?

Between 1800 and 1850, Philadelphia's economic base began to shift from mercantile trade to manufacture.<sup>1</sup> Opportunities for growth in manufacturing expanded as Philadelphia's commercial elites looked to markets in the hinterland to counteract the commercial decline caused by the war with England in 1812 and thereafter by the intense commercial competition with neighboring American cities. Looking westward for markets, the cities' commercial elites helped to stimulate a revolution in the available means of transportation.<sup>2</sup>

City merchants' orientation towards domestic markets had several effects on economic life in the city. First and foremost, it provided for a remarkable degree of continuity in the process of transition from a commercial to an industrial city. The city's commercial elites, although they did not all participate directly in industrial activity, were largely the sponsors and beneficiaries of industrialization since they dominated the directorships of the city's most important financial houses on which manufacturers relied for credit. As importantly, the banks and insurance companies that were controlled by the city's commercial elites provided the capital necessary for the development of transportation between the city and the new markets in the west. The expansion of new markets increased the demand for goods manufactured in Philadelphia and encouraged the

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1). D. Lindstrom, op. cit., p.2

2). Alan M. Zachary, 'The Philadelphia Elite Before Jackson', PMHB 99(1975), pp.293-5.

growth of the city's established industries while enabling the city's merchants to act as middlemen between proprietary producers in the city and the new markets in the west.<sup>1</sup>

The extent to which the city's leading merchants were involved in finance is evident in the database compiled from the names of the directors of the city's major banks, insurance companies and other important economic institutions such as the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' Exchange.<sup>2</sup> A comparison between Scharf's list of eminent merchants who were active in the city before 1840<sup>3</sup> and the information in the database, reveals that most leading merchants were also directors of one or several of the city's major financial houses. For example, Scharf's list of merchants includes Timothy Paxson, a director of the Bank of North America, Jacob Ridgeway of the Bank of Pennsylvania, and Thomas Cope, Henry Pratt, John Bohlen and Paul Beck, all directors of the

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1). S.B. Warner, Jr., op. cit., p.71; B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, pp.20-1

2). Names of the directors of the city's leading banks, insurance companies and commercial institutions were obtained from the appendices of city directories for every fifth year between 1800 and 1855 inclusive. Directories used included Edward Whitely's, The Philadelphia Directory and Registry, Robert DeSilver's, Desilver's Philadelphia Directory and Strangers' Guide, A. M'Elroy's, M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directory, and Harris's Commercial Directory and Merchants' Guide for Philadelphia.

3). J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, pp.2212-18.

Second National Bank. Cope was also a founding member of the Chamber of Commerce where eminent shipping merchants Robert Ralston, Henry Budd and Thomas B. Williams also served as directors during the period. Pratt, who served with Cope on the board of the Bank of Pennsylvania was also a director of the Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania with Gustavus Calhoun, another of the city's leading shipping merchants. Merchant and ship owner Stephen Girard, after whom the Girard Bank was named, was a director of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange and of the Philadelphia Exchange Company along with leading merchant Robert Ralston.

Scharf's eminent merchants were also very active in a number of societies and companies which promoted inland transportation projects. Merchants Samuel Breck, Paul Beck and Samuel Archer were active in the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements which was influential in the promotion of the state-sponsored transportation network of canals and railways between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Girard was a leading member of the Pennsylvania Railroad company when it was first incorporated in the mid-1830s to build a railroad from Philadelphia to the Great Lakes. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company, however, was unable to finance its proposed railway until the 1840s when merchants Thomas Cope and Isaac Hazelhurst were amongst Philadelphia's businessmen appointed by the board of the company to solicit subscriptions to its stock from amongst the citizens of Philadelphia and from the municipal corporation.

Analysis of the directorships of the city's largest banks, the Chamber of Commerce and the Stock Exchange also reveals the extent to which directorates of the city's financial houses were interlocking. The directors of the Second National Bank, for example, included directors of several of the larger insurance companies in the city including Henry Pratt of the Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania, and Thomas Cope and Henry Alexander of the Insurance Office of North America. Cope was also a director of the North American Insurance Company and of the Merchants' Exchange where he shared the board with other Second National Bank directors, Joshua Lippincott, William Platt and Lawrence Lewis. Lewis was also a director of the city's Commercial Bank and the Union Insurance Company, a directorate which he shared with eminent merchants and Second National Bank directors John Bohlen and Lewis Clapier. Clapier, in turn, was a director of the Bank of Pennsylvania with Second National Bank director John Neff. Neff, in turn, was a director of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society along with Lawrence Lewis.

Analyses of the directors of the city's other large financial houses yield similar results. That is, they show that the city's major financial institutions were directed by a small group of merchants and lawyers many of whom held several such positions. An analysis of the directorships of companies and societies which promoted internal improvements reveals that the city's commercial elites were also integrally involved in supporting such projects which linked the city with its hinterland and created new markets for locally manufactured goods. The membership of the Pennsylvania

Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements, for example, included Manuel Eyre and John Sergeant, directors of the American Fire Insurance Company and of the Second National Bank where they served on the Board along with Society members Paul Beck Jr., Nicholas Biddle and Daniel Coxe. Bank of Pennsylvania directors Matthew Carey, Charles Penrose and George Vaux were also members of the Pennsylvania Society as was Peter Richards who, along with Vaux, was a director of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society. The Pennsylvania Society also included John M. Atwood of the Bank of North America, John Naglee and Isaac Norris of the Bank of the Northern Liberties, and Samuel Breck and Samuel P. Wetherill of the Schuylkill Bank.

Commercial elites' domination of the process of industrial growth through their control of the city's financial institutions ensured that they were amongst the beneficiaries of that growth. In 1860, commercial merchants comprised almost two-thirds of the 10% of all Philadelphians who owned 90% of the wealth in the city. Manufacturers made up only 5% of this same group.<sup>1</sup> The class of industrial entrepreneurs that emerged in Philadelphia during this period, developed in part as a result of the commercial elites' economic activities and remained dependent on their investment of capital.<sup>2</sup>

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1). 80% of the population owned only 3% of the city's real and personal property. Denis Clark, 'Rancat and Rittenhouse Square', in H. Gillette and W.W. Cutler, eds., The Divided Metropolis, p.135.  
2). Commercial elites' role in the introduction of industrial capitalism is a significant theme in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, 'The Janus Face of Merchant Capital' in their, Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery and Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983), pp.3-25.

Further evidence of continuity in the commercial elites' pre-eminence within the city is provided by an analysis of the city's political leadership. In 1800, the commercial elites' business and social practices made them the natural political leaders of the city. As Zuckerman has suggested,

they conducted their affairs out of their own homes, and the tempo of their mercantile activity was so relaxed that it was not easy to distinguish their business from their pleasure. They regularly took two- to three-hour lunches. They routinely spent several hours a day strolling around the mercantile exchange to pick up the latest shipping information and the local gossip as well. They rarely managed to accomplish more than a handful of transactions in a day. And exactly their leisurely pace of business provided them the possibility of political involvement of consequence - indeed, entailed upon them a measure of political participation in an extended sense of politics as engagement in the shaping of opinion on public policies - that was the antithesis of the isolation of business men from politics so prevalent in our own time.(1)

Commercial leaders were also the city's natural political leaders in an urban economy almost entirely dependent upon commerce. Even as new productive forms developed the polity continued to be dominated by commercial elites. This is demonstrated in Table 1.4 (page 59) which shows the occupations of every city councilman that served in every third year between 1800 and 1854 inclusive.<sup>2</sup> 60% of

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1). Michael Zuckerman, 'The Irrelevant Revolution: 1776 and Since', American Quarterly, 30:2 (1978), p.234.

2). The names of councilmen were obtained from The Journal of the Common Council, and The Journal of the Select Council, 1800,1803...1854. Occupational information was drawn from the directories listed on page 53, footnote 2, as well as from Byrams Illustrated Business Directory of Philadelphia (Phila., J.H. Byram, 1856); John Downes, Bywaters Philadelphia Business Directory and City Guide for the Year 1850 (Phila., J.Downes, 1850); McElroy's City Directory, 1840,1841,1842,.....1854; Twitt's Directory of Prominent Businessmen in Philadelphia (N.Y., n.p.,1857).

the councilmen in the sample were either professionals or merchants with by far the largest single group of councilmen consisting of commissioning or shipping merchants. 36% of the councilmen in the sample were bank directors, 17% were directors of insurance companies and 43% appeared in at least one leading contemporary biography of the city's most notable and affluent citizens.<sup>1</sup>

A more comprehensive biographical analysis of city councilmen who served between 1841 and 1854 was conducted to discover how far wealthy business elites who were involved in commerce, finance and the professions, continued to predominate on the city councils on the eve of consolidation.<sup>2</sup> The study shows that commercial elites continued to dominate the city councils at this late date, and that this was particularly true in the case of the higher of the city's two legislative bodies, the select council.

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1). Biographical information was obtained from Charles Robson ed., The Biographical Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania of the Nineteenth Century (Phila., Galaxy Publishing Co., 1874); Henry Simpson, The Lives of Eminent Philadelphians Now Deceased. Collected From Original Sources (Phila., William Brotherhead, 1859); ...Memoirs and Auto-Biography of Some of the Wealthy Citizens of Philadelphia With a Fair Estimate of Their Estates Founded Upon a Knowledge of Facts (Phila., The Booksellers, 1846); Stephen N. Winslow, Biographies of Successful Philadelphia Merchants (Phila., James K. Simon, 1864); Wealth and Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of Philadelphia. Containing an Alphabetical Arrangement of Persons Estimated to be Worth \$50,000 and Upwards... (Phila., G.B. Rieber and Co., 1845); Thompson Westcott, Biographies of Philadelphians.

2). Names of councilmen were taken from the councils' Journal for 1841 to 1854 and occupational information was taken from A. M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directories, 1841, 1842...1854. Biographical information was derived from the sources listed above in footnote 1 and supplemented with Thomas M. Coleman, Daguerrotype Sketches of the Members of the First Common Council, After the Consolidation for 1854 and 1855. By the Reporter for the Common Council (Phila., W.H. Sickels, 1855).

Table 1.4 Occupational Analysis of Philadelphia's City Councilmen, 1800 to 1854.

| Occupational Category  | Total in Sample |       | Directors of Banks |           | Directors Insurance Companies |           | Found to be Wealthy |           |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
|                        | No. (1)         | % (2) | No. (3)            | % (3)/(1) | No. (4)                       | % (4)/(1) | No. (5)             | % (5)/(1) |
| Commissioning Merchant | 67              | 35    | 27                 | 40        | 17                            | 25        | 33                  | 49        |
| Lawyer/Doctor Banker   | 47              | 25    | 18                 | 38        | 5                             | 11        | 23                  | 49        |
| Manufacturer           | 11              | 6     | 5                  | 45        | 2                             | 18        | 5                   | 45        |
| Printer Publisher      | 3               | 2     | 0                  | 0         | 0                             | 0         | 2                   | 66        |
| Small proprietor       | 17              | 9     | 6                  | 35        | 1                             | 6         | 5                   | 29        |
| Artisan/Laborer        | 36              | 19    | 8                  | 22        | 5                             | 14        | 8                   | 22        |
| Political Appointee    | 4               | 2     | 1                  | 25        | 1                             | 25        | 1                   | 25        |
| Unknown                | 4               | 2     | 3                  | 75        | 1                             | 11        | 0                   | 0         |
| Total                  | 189             | 100   | 68                 | 36        | 32                            | 17        | 77                  | 41        |

The biographical data on Philadelphia's city councilmen who served between 1841 and 1854 inclusive was organized into the following categories:

- a). **Elite Wealth (W)** - Councilmen were considered to belong to this category if they were mentioned in the handbook of Philadelphia's wealthiest citizens with estates worth \$50,000 or more.(1)
- b). **Notable Wealth (\$)** - Councilmen were placed in this category if their biographers indicated that they had 'acquired a competence' or that their businesses were successful.

1). ....Wealth and Biography of the Wealthy Citizens of Philadelphia.

- c).      **Directorship of an insurance company (INS)**
- d).      **Directorship of a bank (BANK)**
- e).      **Family background (F)** - Councilmen were placed in this category if they were found to be members of established Philadelphia families or if they were Quaker or Episcopalians; religious affiliation, which, according to Klepp and Bell, were indices of high socio-economic standing in Philadelphia.<sup>(1)</sup>
- f).      **Public Appointment (PA)** - This category includes councilmen who had a history of being appointed to chair elite-run philanthropic bodies or to high political office.

Collapsing the categories of elite wealth (W) and notable wealth (\$), we see in Table 1.5 (page 62) that there was an important difference between the common and the select councils. That is that there were more wealthy councilmen on the select council (22/36 or 61%) than there were on the common council (45/98 or 46%) between 1841 and 1853, one year prior to the political consolidation. Considering elite wealth by itself makes this discrepancy even more apparent. 36% of the select councilmen (13/36) and only 21% of the common councilmen (21/98) were placed in this category. The fact that the proportion of the select councilmen with a history of prestigious appointments (PA) was nearly twice that of the common

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1). Marion L. Bell, Crusade in the City, pp.43-8 and Susan E. Klepp, 'Philadelphia in Transition: A Demographic History of the City and its Occupational Groups, 1720-1830' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1980), pp.14-28.

councilmen only confirms the suggestion that the select council consisted of a more elite group than the common council.

A comparison between length of term in office and wealth also reveals that the select council was a body which was reserved for individuals of higher social standing. In the select council there was a direct relationship between the length of term in office and wealth. Of the 11 select councilmen who remained in office for six or more years, 8 (73%) were in the elite wealth category. In the common council on the other hand, there was an inverse relationship between the length of term in office and wealth. Of the 20 common councilmen who remained in office for six or more years, only 2 (10%) had elite wealth and only 7 (35%) had either elite or notable wealth. Common councilmen who served for a shorter period, on the other hand, were more wealthy than those who served for six or more years. Of the 52 common councilmen who served only 1 or 2 years, 26 (50%) had notable or elite wealth. The common councilmen who served from 3 to 5 years were wealthier than those who served for six or more years but less wealthy than those who served for 1 or 2 years. Of the 26 councilmen who served for 3 to 5 years 12 (46%) had elite or notable wealth.

Comparing length of term in office and prestigious political appointments reveals much the same thing. On the select councils individuals who served longer terms were more likely to have had a history of prestigious appointments than individuals who served shorter terms. On the common council on the other hand, individuals who served shorter terms were more likely to have a history of prestigious appointments than individuals who served for longer

Table 1.5 Biographical Characteristics of Philadelphia's City Councilmen by Length of Term in on the Common and Select Councils, 1841-1853 (percents of column totals in parentheses)

| B. COMMON COUNCIL |                 |                  |                  |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Characteristic    | 6+ years<br>(1) | 3-5 years<br>(2) | 1-2 years<br>(3) | total<br>(1+2+3) |
| W                 | 2 (10)          | 4 (15)           | 15 (20)          | 21 (21)          |
| W+\$              | 7 (35)          | 12 (46)          | 26 (50)          | 45 (46)          |
| INS               | 5 (25)          | 8 (31)           | 14 (26)          | 27 (28)          |
| BANK              | 7 (35)          | 6 (23)           | 16 (30)          | 29 (30)          |
| PA                | 2 (10)          | 7 (27)           | 7 (13)           | 16 (16)          |
| Total             | 20              | 26               | 52               | 98               |

| A. SELECT COUNCIL |                        |                    |                |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Characteristic    | 6 or more years<br>(1) | 1 - 5 years<br>(2) | Total<br>(1+2) |
| W                 | 8 (73)                 | 5 (20)             | 13 (36)        |
| W+\$              | 9 (82)                 | 13 (52)            | 22 (61)        |
| INS               | 4 (36)                 | 6 (24)             | 10 (28)        |
| BANK              | 7 (64)                 | 9 (36)             | 16 (44)        |
| PA                | 5 (45)                 | 7 (28)             | 12 (33)        |
| Total             | 11                     | 25                 | 36             |

| C. BOTH COUNCILS |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Characteristic   | All Councilmen |
| W                | 34 (25)        |
| W+\$             | 67 (50)        |
| INS              | 37 (28)        |
| BANK             | 45 (34)        |
| PA               | 28 (21)        |
| Total            | 134            |

terms. All this tends to indicate that elites who served in municipal government for a long period tended to do so in the higher of the two bodies. Commercial elites who did serve on the common council did so for only short periods which may indicate that the common council served as a stepping stone to higher political office.

Despite the differences in the wealth of select and common councilmen, both groups were made up largely of men in commercial or professional occupations. Table 1.6 (page 64) shows the scheme used in categorizing councilmen's occupations. The first category, Merchant I, represents shipping and commissioning merchants dealing in wholesale trade. The second category, Merchant II, includes all councilmen for whom city directories and biographies gave the occupational description simply as 'merchant'. Lawyers, doctors, insurance agents, stockbrokers, two publishers and one sea captains were all placed in the professional category. 'Gentlemen' were placed in a category by themselves owing to the problem of determining exactly what the term actually meant. Contemporary city directories used the term to describe men who had retired from business life with some competence, landowners and farmers in the rural districts of the city and county, as well as wealthy individuals with large estates. Because so few artisans were represented on the councils they were placed together in one category even as Blumin has shown conclusively that artisanal trades were highly stratified by wealth and status.<sup>1</sup> A sixth category was developed, however, in order to distinguish artisans from manufacturers of heavy industrial goods such as chemicals and iron.

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1). S. B. Blumin, *op.cit.*, pp.168-9.

Table 1.6 Occupational Definitions Used in the Collective Biography of Philadelphia's City Councilmen, 1841-1854

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Merchant I    | Wholesale and commissioning merchants in leather- and dry-goods, textiles, luxury products such as porcelain, and heavy goods such as grain, iron and coal.                       |
| Merchant II   | Listed in the city directories simply as 'merchant'; most probaby small proprietors.                                                                                              |
| Professional  | Attorneys, doctors, sea captains, stockbrokers, auctioneers,                                                                                                                      |
| Gentlemen     | Not necessarily a landed family, often used to refer to farmers from the more rural areas of the county as well as large estate owners and retired individuals with a competance, |
| Artisan       | Smiths of iron, tin, gold and silver, builders, brickmakers, painters, hatters, stationers, brushmakers and grocers,                                                              |
| Manufacturers | Manufacturers of surgical instruments, druggist, reed manufacturers, fire-engine builders, and oil, locomotives, paper, textiles, iron and fire-brick manufacturers.              |

Table 1.7 (page 65) examines the occupational characteristics of councilmen in both councils for each legislature between 1841 and 1854. There it is shown that in both councils the number of councilmen in the Merchant I category remains approximately the same throughout the period. There is also no appreciable gain in the number of manufacturers or artisans.

The prosopography of city councilmen in conjunction with the data concerning the economic interests of leading industrial entrepreneurs suggests that the commercial elites survived as the city's political and economic leaders throughout Philadelphia's transition from a mercantile to an industrial center. More importantly, it suggests that commercial leaders profited from, took part in and even directed the development of the industrial sector of the city's economy. It is not possible, therefore, to explain

Table 1.7 Occupational Distribution of Phladelphia's Select and Common Councilmen in Every Year, 1841-1854 (figures represent number of councilmen).

A. COMMON COUNCIL

| Occ         | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | 1849 | 1850 | 1851 | 1852 | 1853 | 1854 |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Merch<br>I  | 7    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 7    | 5    | 6    | 5    | 5    | 8    | 17   |
| Merch<br>II | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 3    | 2    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 12   |
| Prof        | 6    | 7    | 6    | 5    | 7    | 6    | 5    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 11   |
| Gent        | 0    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 3    |
| Art.        | 3    | 3    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 2    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 11   |
| Manuf.      | 1    | 4    | 2    | 3    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 1    | 9    |
| N.A.        | 2    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 3    | 1    | 9    |
| Total       | 20   | 21   | 17   | 20   | 20   | 20   | 19   | 21   | 19   | 21   | 21   | 20   | 17   | 72   |

B.SELECT COUNCIL

| Occ          | 1841 | 1842 | 1843 | 1844 | 1845 | 1846 | 1847 | 1848 | 1849 | 1850 | 1851 | 1852 | 1853 | 1854 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Merch.<br>I  | 5    | 7    | 8    | 8    | 7    | 7    | 7    | 6    | 7    | 7    | 5    | 4    | 3    | 6    |
| Merch.<br>II | 0    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Prof.        | 2    | 3    | 3    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 1    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 8    |
| Gent.        | 0    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 1    | 3    |
| Art.         | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 2    |
| Manuf.       | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| N.A.         | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 2    | 2    | 2    | 4    |
| Total        | 7    | 12   | 13   | 12   | 11   | 12   | 12   | 12   | 12   | 11   | 12   | 14   | 14   | 28   |

political reform at mid-century in terms of intra-class competition between the ascendant industrialists and traditional mercantile business leaders. Political differences divided business leaders increasingly towards the end of the period. The source of these divisions, however, has to be sought elsewhere than in the changing structure of the city's economy. Does economic change, then, help to explain political reform in terms of its effects on the political consciousness of the urban working class?

Merchants' interests in developing markets in the city's hinterland affected the pace and shape of industrial development in Philadelphia as increased demands for goods produced in the city affected existing trades rather than encouraging the development of new industries.<sup>1</sup> Highly skilled and specialized metal trades such as silver, copper, iron and tin-smithing remained unaffected by increasing demand as did butchering and bread-making. Production in these trades maintained its small-scale, artisanal organization. Custom-fitted and quality work in the shoe-making and furniture industries also persisted in artisans' shops which employed one-fifth of the workers in these trades.<sup>2</sup>

The rest of Philadelphia's trades experienced growth in firm size, division of labor and the introduction of the modern technologies. This general course of industrial development, however, did not happen immediately or evenly across one or several trades and there was no sudden emergence of an industrial working

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1). S.B. Warner, Jr., op. cit., p. 71.

2). S. Blumin, op. cit., pp.37-39.

class of wage earners. Instead, there were several forms of production existing simultaneously in the city during this period.

Master craftsmen progressively lost control of the means of production as they became dependent on the bulk orders and often on the capital supplied by local merchants. They were not, however, immediately reduced to mere wage earners. The introduction of merchant middlemen interfered with producers' control over the distribution of their goods, not with their control over the production of them. Instead of introducing new technologies to help fill larger orders, master craftsmen generally tended to employ more workers. Changes in firm size were not, therefore, necessarily accompanied by changes in the organization of production. The number of firms that employed between 6 and 50 people grew to account for a majority of the city's gainfully employed between 1800 and 1850.<sup>1</sup> Only the new industries such as iron milling and tool manufacturing employed mechanized means of production extensively. These industries, however, were mechanized from the outset and workers in them did not experience the changes in the productive organization that were affecting employees in Philadelphia's older trades.<sup>2</sup>

The few old trades that did incorporate mechanized means into the productive process differed significantly from the new iron mills and machine-tool firms. The textile industry, Philadelphia's

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1). B. Laurie and M. Schmitz, 'Manufacturing and Productivity: The Making of an Industrial Base, Philadelphia, 1850-1880' in T. Hershberg, ed., Philadelphia, pp.43-92. Also see S. Blumin, op. cit., pp.23-24.

2). B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.15.

leading industry during the period, is the best example of how the factory system of production encroached upon the city's old trades in fits and starts.<sup>1</sup> By 1840, two-thirds of the cotton spindles in the state were within 30 miles of the city.<sup>2</sup> But the industry was hardly given over to factory production. In 1828 there were 104 warping mills employing 4,500 weavers and more than 5,000 spoolers, dyers and bobbin winders.<sup>3</sup> An equal number of weavers worked in their homes attending simple handlooms. By 1850, the number of outworkers actually increased from 4,500 to 6,000 and they still represented fully one-half of the weavers in the county. Even within one textile factory not all process became mechanized at the same rate. The work of the power-loom operators, the majority of whom was female between 1828 and 1850, was of course defined by the latest technology. The work of the carders, on the other hand, was not defined by machinery but by an intense division of unskilled manual tasks. It was similar, in other words, to the organization of labor mainly associated with sweatshops. Finally, the work of the finishers in a textile factory still required the expertise and the organization of production found in artisans' shops.<sup>4</sup>

Changes in the city's economy did not radically alter the organization of productive techniques. They did, nonetheless, occur and they did diminish producers' opportunities of upward economic and

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1). P.C. Ferguson, op.cit., p.130.

2). Charles M. Snyder, The Jacksonian Heritage, p.9.

3). Nicholas B. Wainwright, 'The Age of Nicholas Biddle, 1825-1841', in Russel F. Weigley et.al. eds., Philadelphia: A 300 Year History (N.Y., W.W. Norton, 1982), p.275.

4). B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.24.

social mobility. Contracting opportunities for occupational mobility are illustrated by the fact that in 1820 more than 34% of the gainfully employed in the county were master craftsmen. In the same year there were as many skilled and unskilled wage-earners as there were proprietary artisans. By 1860 the proportion of master craftsmen had declined to 16% of the labor force and the proportion of wage earners had nearly doubled to over 50%.<sup>1</sup> One study of mobility during the period found that in 1820, master craftsmen's upward mobility was four times as great as their downward mobility. Each decade narrowed the difference until it reached parity in 1850. Although chances of success for the artisan remained about the same during these 30 years, they had, by 1850, become 'clouded by the equal likliehood of failure'.<sup>2</sup>

Change affecting Philadelphia's old trades also altered the relationship between the master craftsman and his journeymen and apprentices. This is demonstrated by the changing meanings of the terms 'master craftsman', 'journeyman' and 'apprentice'. Master craftsman, which once meant an independent proprietary producer, came to mean 'employer' or 'overseer', irrespective of whether or not the individual concerned controlled the means of production. Journeyman, a term which once denoted a level of skill and a degree of accomplishment increasingly came to mean simply 'wage earner'. Apprentice began to be used to describe young wage earners who worked in a trade without any specifically contracted training program, as well as young operatives tending machines in factories and mills.<sup>3</sup>

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1). S. Blumin, op. cit., pp.37-39.

2). Ibid., pp.45-47.

3). R.A. Mcleod, op. cit., pp.64-70.

Overall, artisanal production was changing, albeit at different rates across different industries. The proportion of master craftsmen to the total workforce declined precipitously. Those that remained faced steadily increasing chances of failure. Many of those that did not fail were losing control of the productive process. Journeymen also faced increasingly limited opportunities for socio-economic advancement between 1800 and 1850. Moreover, they frequently found themselves at odds with the master craftsmen-cum-employers when labor costs and piece rates were slashed to enable the master craftsmen to maintain a subsistence profit and to meet merchants' contracts.

Considering the patterns of land use discussed previously, it can now be shown that the diffusion of trades throughout the county generally worked against the spatial concentration of the business leaders involved in any one industry and their employees. In those few areas of the city where there were clusters of workers in one occupation, wage cutting and contracting economic opportunities could produce extremely volatile results. This was the case with the dockers strike of 1836 and the weavers' strike of 1842.<sup>1</sup> But these experiences which fused community and class consciousness were the exception and not the rule.

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1). For an account of the general strike of 1836 see Leonard Bernstein, 'The Working People of Philadelphia From Colonial Times to the General Strike of 1835', Pennsylvania Magazine, 64:3(July, 1950) pp.322-339, William A. Sullivan, 'A Decade of Labor Strife', Pennsylvania History, 17(Jan., 1950) pp.23-38, and B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, pp.85-106. For a discussion of the Kensington weavers' strike of 1842 see David Montgomery, 'The Shuttle and the Cross: Weavers and Artisans in the Kensington Riots of 1844', Journal of Social History, 5(summer, 1972).

In general, then, urban life developed within the parameters dictated by extreme economic, social and geographic diversity. Social unrest and political activity which did involve issues of class, race or ethnicity occurred despite the structure of the urban environment, not because of it. This suggests that the changes in the structure of urban society which accompanied industrialization were not pronounced enough to have caused the social divisions which have generally been seen as the cause of political reform in Philadelphia at mid-century. Equally, it means that it is necessary to look elsewhere for the causes of political reform and for the causes of the social divisions and unrest known to have preceded it. The next two chapters therefore examine the urban polity to find the causes of social fragmentation and political change.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE POLITICS OF MUNICIPAL GROWTH

#### i

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the business elites who dominated municipal government had to respond to the rapid increase in the size of city's population which created the need for more and better municipal services. According to Jon Teafor, these elites acted in the interests of the urban community as a whole in their development and administration of public works and services.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Warner characterizes this period of municipal government 'as a brief and creative union of equalitarian goals and business leadership'.<sup>2</sup> Journeymen and artisans, content with the knowledge that their interests as producers were promoted by the commissioning merchants who were responsible for finding new markets for urban goods, deferred to the political control of their social superiors.<sup>3</sup>

Such arguments are based on two precarious assumptions: first that non-elites deferred to elites political control and second, that the elites' acted in the 'public interest' because the municipal works and services that they developed were generally beneficial to the people of Philadelphia. This chapter argues that it was not deference but a lack of access to the political arena which shaped the behaviour of the non-elites. In chapter three

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- 1). Jon Teafor, The Municipal Revolution in America, p.47.
  - 2). S.B. Warner, The Private City, p.223.
  - 3). See, for example, Amy Bridges, A City in the Republic, p.71.

it will be argued that when such means became available to non-elites towards mid-century with the increasing involvement in local politics of popular parties, the ability of the business elites to direct municipal affairs became problematic.

Chapter two also suggests that the 'public' or 'private' interests of business elites in municipal government cannot be inferred solely from analyses of how the costs and benefits of policies were distributed to different social groups. The city's water works developed during this period, for example, provided for the health and welfare of Philadelphians generally; they also profited the business elites who used their political positions to promote and finance that development. In fact, the chapter demonstrates that the city's business elites generally took advantage of their political predominance in the city to advance their own economic interests by investing municipal revenues into public works schemes from which they profited personally. Municipal works so extended supplied the infrastructure that was essential to commercial, industrial, and population growth in the city. They provided services to the city's growing labor force, and municipal investments in transportation extended geographically the market for goods produced in the city.<sup>1</sup> In this respect, actors in city government were instrumental in fostering urban industrial development and the socio-economic and spatial changes that

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1). Diane Lindstrom, Economic Development in the Philadelphia Region, pp.2-12,91.

accompanied it. Ironically, the political conduct of the business elites, based as it was on their position of political control and on their short-term calculations, had unforeseen consequences which eventually undermined their power in city government and precipitated political reform at mid-century.

In developing municipal works and services, business elites gave little thought to the long-term financial and administrative consequences of the rapid growth in municipal works and services. By the late nineteenth century, therefore, that growth began to place a great strain on the limited financial and administrative capacities of the municipal government.

The developing contradiction between the scale of the municipal service and the administrative and financial organization of city government might have been resolved more easily had its consequences been limited to the urban political arena. The consequences of business elites' local political activities cannot be viewed, however, strictly in terms of their affects on local government. City government was highly dependent upon state government and therefore susceptible to state-wide political forces. By mid-century, in fact, control over municipal government was becoming increasingly subject to contests between the state-wide factions of nationally organized political parties. As chapter three demonstrates, such contests popularized city politics and thereby prevented urban business elites from directing municipal affairs as they had earlier, and from resolving increasingly difficult problems of municipal governance.

After a brief review of the structure of the urban polity as it existed in the early nineteenth century, this chapter will demonstrate how business elites' activities in city government helped to shape the political contradictions which resulted in reform at mid-century. The following chapter will then examine how developments in the related arena of state government only compounded those contradictions.

ii

By 1800, municipal government consisted of 15 aldermen and a recorder who were appointed for life by the governor of the state of Pennsylvania. Together, these officers were vested with judicial authority in the city.<sup>1</sup> Legislative and executive authority in municipal government resided with a bicameral assembly consisting of a select and a common council. Both of these bodies were elected yearly by freemen of the city; 20 common councilmen and one-third the total number of select councilmen. The councils met annually to appoint from amongst the aldermen, a mayor who acted largely as a figure head for the municipal corporation.

The city councils were the most powerful bodies in the city government and they were dominated throughout the first half of the nineteenth century by members of the city's business elites.<sup>2</sup> The business elites on the city councils, however, did not have complete control over the direction of municipal affairs. Political

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1). Roy H. Akagi, 'The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1835', PMHB, 48 (1924) pp.320-322; 'An Act.....passed 11th April 1799 Amending...', OAA, pp.73-75.

2). See Chapter 1, pp.57-65.

authority in Philadelphia was extremely fragmented as it was divided between many bodies which were incorporated by the state government to fulfil specific municipal functions more or less independently of the city councils. The Board of Prison Inspectors, for example, was appointed by the mayor but not responsible to him or to the city councils for its actions. The Board of Health was appointed yearly by the governor and also not accountable to the mayor or to the city councils. The Guardians of the Poor was a third independent municipal corporation. The guardians, appointed by the mayor and the justices of the peace in the county, had the power to assess and levy a poor tax to pay for the maintenance of the almshouse and to support outdoor relief.<sup>1</sup> These boards, like the city councils, consisted of members of the city's business elites though not to the same extent as did the councils. Between 1800 and 1850, of the nearly 800 guardians for whom occupations could be established, nearly one-third were members of the city's commercial and professional classes while another one-quarter were, according to Ferguson, members of the city's 'upper-middle-class'.<sup>2</sup>

Political authority was fragmented even further since the municipal corporation governed only a portion of the people in the contiguous settlement which existed on the banks of the Delaware in the county of Philadelphia. The people in the outlying districts remained politically independent of the city government. In 1796, with the exception of the districts of Southwark and the Incorporated Northern Liberties, the outlying areas fell under the

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1). P.C. Ferguson, 'The Response to Need', pp.16-17 and Appendix 2, pp.433-5.

2). Ibid., pp.46-7, 154-5, 284-5.

jurisdiction of justices of the peace who were appointed by the governor.<sup>1</sup> Between 1796 and 1853, several districts, boroughs and townships were incorporated by the state.<sup>2</sup> The charters of the several districts either provided for the direct election of a board of commissioners or for the appointment of such a board by the governor. The commissioners were empowered to create and distribute public services and to tax independently of the state and the city. By 1854, there were nine incorporated districts, six boroughs and 12 townships, all in the county of Philadelphia and each legally independent of the others.<sup>3</sup>

A survey of the occupations of the commissioners of the districts who served in every third year between 1800 and 1854 reflects the socio-economic differences between the city and its districts that were described in the previous chapter.<sup>4</sup> Only 16% of the 30 district commissioners were lawyers, doctors, merchants or financiers as compared with 60% of the city councilmen who were active during the same period. Conversely 75% of the district commissioners were skilled laborers, all of them builders, while only 19% of the city councilmen held jobs as skilled laborers. Finally, more than one-third of all city councilmen served as the directors of banking or insurance companies. Only six or 20% of the district commissioners held similar positions. Four of the six were

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- 1). H. Leffman, 'The Consolidation of Philadelphia', p.27.
  - 2). Ibid; E.K. Price, The History of the Consolidation, p.28.
  - 3). See E.K. Price, op. cit., p.54; Philadelphia City Digest, 1701-1887 (n.p., n.d. author's initials F.F.B.?, probably published 1887), p.14. Also see Appendix 2, p.436 and Map 1.3, p.43.
  - 4). See Chapter 1, pp.44-5, Footnote 2 for a list of biographical sources. The names of the district commissioners were listed in the city directories.

directors of the Southwark Bank, three were directors of the Southwark Saving Society and one was a director of the Kensington and Spring Garden Bank. None of the commissioners were directors of any of the larger financial institutions in the city. These socio-economic differences between city and district political leaders should not, however, obscure the fact that the political leadership in the districts consisted of local economic elites. Since few of Philadelphia's merchants and professionals lived outside the city,<sup>1</sup> the business leaders in the districts consisted of individuals drawn from the next stratum of the early-nineteenth-century occupational hierarchy which consisted of men in building and other skilled trades.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, although the commissioners were not of the same social class as the commercial elites who dominated the city councils, they occupied the leading place in the socio-economic order of the districts.

By 1820, the state had also incorporated a county government to oversee the administration of county-wide services. County government consisted of three elected commissioners, three elected auditors, a county treasurer appointed by the commissioners, an elected sheriff, a coroner and a variety of court officers appointed by the governor.<sup>3</sup> It had the power to tax independently of all other state and local governmental corporations.

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- 1). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.45; Cynthia Jane Sheldon, 'The Mills of Manayunk: Early Industrialization and Social Conflict in the Philadelphia Region, 1787-1837' (Calif., University of California at Los Angeles Ph.D. thesis, 1982), p. 28.  
2). Susan E. Klepp, 'Philadelphia in Transition' pp. 168-9.  
3). Philip S. Klein, Pennsylvania Politics, 1817-1832: A Game Without Rules (Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Historical Society, 1940), pp.65-66. Also see Appendix 2, p.436.

As the population of the city and county grew together in the first 50 years of the nineteenth century forming one contiguous settlement, the fragmented structure of multiple and autonomous political authorities created problems for the effective administration of an increasing number of public services. Leaders of the different political corporations, for example, argued over the costs and benefits of commonly enjoyed services such as those provided by the Guardians of the Poor or the Board of Health. Contests between local political leaders increasingly became subject to party competition as the second party system introduced into local government nationally organized parties, popular political campaigns and near universal male suffrage. By the mid-1830s, local party competition so exacerbated contests between city and district leaders that it often led to incidents of election-day violence, the repression of which was inhibited by the fragmented structure of government authority in the county.<sup>1</sup>

The political power of the business elites on the city councils was also circumscribed by the limited resources of the municipal corporation and by the city government's subordination to the legislative power of state government. Major public policies that could offset economic downturns or encourage economic growth in the city - policies, for example, which provided for improved transportation between the city and its hinterland, affected rates of taxation, the imposition of tariffs or the design of corporate legislation - could not be implemented by the city's

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1). See Chapter 3, pp.169-71 and Appendix 2, pp.437-8.

business elites with the limited resources available in municipal government. The resources necessary to develop such policies did exist; they resided in the state government of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia's business elites, regardless of how much their local interests were affected by state economic policy, were circumscribed in their influence over the formation and implementation of that policy. Over 90% of Pennsylvania's population was rural in 1800, and the bicameral organization of the state legislature allowed for proportional representation which militated against the domination of state government by Philadelphia's representatives. Confronted with rural-urban conflict over state economic policy, Philadelphia's business elites often found themselves isolated in the state assembly.<sup>1</sup>

Urban business elites' embattled position in the state legislature also restricted their autonomy in the direction of municipal affairs. The state legislature retained the right to incorporate political divisions such as townships, borough, cities and counties, and to alter the charters of those political subdivisions by legislative action. The municipal administration was therefore legally tied to state politics. This particular structural arrangement often prevented the city's business elites from directing municipal government at their will, especially when the balance of urban-rural competition in state government tipped in favor of rural factions. In control of the state legislature, a

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1). This is a major theme in nineteenth-century urban political history. See, for example, L. Hartz, Economic Policy and Democratic Thought in Pennsylvania, 1776-1860 (Camb., Harvard University Press, 1948), pp.10-13.

rural faction could undermine their urban-based opposition by interfering with municipal political autonomy with restrictive state legislation. This situation also exacerbated competition between the political leaders of the city and the districts respectively as district leaders often vented their grievances against city leaders by allying themselves with rural factions in order to promote anti-urban legislation in state government.

Differences between state and local elections reflect the different extent to which the city's business elites could influence local and state governments respectively. In 1800, all males, black and white, could vote in Pennsylvania elections if they were over 20 years of age, had lived in the state for at least two years, and had paid a nominal poll tax.<sup>1</sup> State and national elections drew a greater number of eligible voters to the polls than did local elections. Presidential elections between 1828 and 1848 drew an average of 56% of the eligible voters in Philadelphia to the polls. Gubernatorial elections over the same period drew only 46% of Philadelphia's voters. Local elections, for which voting data are incomplete, drew between 35% and 45% of eligible voters to the polls with some notable exceptions. For example, 60% of the county's eligible voters turned out to elect the county commissioners in the local elections which immediately followed the nativist riots.<sup>2</sup>

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1). Roy H. Akagi, 'The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1838', PMHB, 48(1924), pp.329-330.

2). Data for presidential and gubernatorial elections were recorded from C.M. Snyder, op.cit., P.S. Klein, op.cit. Local voting results were compiled for 1828-50 from The Journal of the Select Council and the Journal of the Common Council.

The standard explanation of why so few eligible men voted in local elections is that voters were deferential to the political leadership of the city's commercial elites. This explanation, however, may be challenged. State and national elections drew large crowds because campaigns between the various factions were events sponsored by rival factions. The people participated in these events as if in celebration of a national rite. Klein describes political campaigns as 'psychological phenomena.' According to him elections 'were sport'.

They gave people a chance to take sides, to shout and swear, to cheer and jump up and down, to get drunk and fight. They were a universal topic of conversation among friends and strangers....The rival arrangement committees, editors and candidates put on a good grandstand show; the voters picked the winner and went home to reminisce and joke about the game until next year.(1)

Electoral tensions frequently ran high enough to incite rioting and violence.<sup>2</sup> This, however, occurred only during contested elections, and local elections were rarely contested. Nominations to municipal offices were made by the city's business elites and there was rarely any disagreement. The public did not participate in local politics because there was no opportunity to do so. State, county and national elections, on the other hand, were often extremely fraught with conflict between regional political leaders. Such conflicts were often brought to the mass electorate, providing both the grandstand event and the opportunity to 'participate' in government.<sup>3</sup>

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1). P.S. Klein, op. cit., pp.65-66.

2). Max Berger, 'The Irish Emigrant and American Nativism as Seen by British Visitors, 1836-1860', PMHB, 70:2 (1946), pp.147-160.

3). Kim T. Phillips, 'William Duane, Philadelphia's Democratic Republicans, and the Origins of Modern Politics', PMHB, 101(1977), pp.365-87.

There is no indication that the city's business elites desired a democratic form of government. Several features of the political process ensured the continuation of their leadership in city government as well as their privileged access to the state government. One serious obstacle to popular participation in city government, for example, was the bond required of officers when elected or appointed. The amount of the bond varied with the position but ranged anywhere from \$500 to \$3,000 for the city constables to \$40,000 for the city treasurer.<sup>1</sup> It was not until 1830 that satisfactory performance was accepted in lieu of a bond for the majority of city offices.<sup>2</sup>

Nomination procedures also acted as an insurance against widespread participation in city government. Candidates for local office would be nominated by the city's local, state, and federal office holders and a few of their friends.<sup>3</sup> When local elections did not coincide with gubernatorial or presidential elections, the public would rarely see a slate of candidates until a few weeks or even days before the election.<sup>4</sup>

Nominations of candidates for state and even national offices were just as secretive.<sup>5</sup> The selection of the city's candidates for state assembly was similar to the nominations for local office. Gubernatorial nominations took place at Harrisburg in legislative caucuses where political cliques (it is impossible to speak of

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1). OAA, 1816, p.106 and 1824, p.140.

2). OAA, 23d December, 1830, pp. 170-1.

3). C.M. Snyder, op. cit., pp.23, 65.

4). Ibid., pp.21-22; Leonard Tabachnik, 'The Origins of the Know-Nothing Party: A Study of the Native American Party in Philadelphia' (N.Y., Columbia University Ph.D. thesis, 1973), p.69.

5). R.P. Formisano, op. cit., pp.67-68.

political parties before the 1830s)<sup>1</sup> consisting of old-boys, business associates, and family relations which contested amongst themselves the selection of political candidates.<sup>2</sup> Nominating conventions consisting of locally elected delegates did not become standard before the late 1840's.<sup>3</sup>

Despite their similar elitism, local and state nomination procedures at the turn of the nineteenth century were significantly different and reflected strict limitations on urban business elites' political power. Nominations for local office were rarely contested. Nominations for county representatives to state government, on the other hand, frequently precipitated conflicts between city and district political leaders. Such conflicts, though often based on disputes over the distribution of mutually enjoyed municipal works and services, were often cast in terms of political contests over issues which were then current in state and/or national governments. In this manner, local political contests reflected competition between nascent state- and nation-wide parties and party factions.

As municipal works and services were extended, the contests between city and district leaders over their costs and benefits became increasingly embittered.<sup>4</sup> This only intensified local political competition and it was not long before city and district political leaders began to employ the extended franchise and the resources of

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1). See the discussion of the first party system in R.P. Formisano, op. cit., passim.

2). Ibid., pp.38,62.

3). William G. Shade, 'Political Pluralism and Party Development', p.82; L.Tabachnik, op. cit., p.69.

4). See pp.121-4 in this chapter.

state- and nation-wide parties and party factions to bring their conflict with each other to the local electorate - albeit in a form obscured by a generous dose of republican rhetoric. As a result, local organizations of state-wide parties became increasingly involved in local politics, popularizing local political contests and so ending the period in which business elites predominated in local government.

The structure of political authority in municipal government, then, was extremely fragmented at the turn of the nineteenth century. Despite their social and economic contiguity, the city and districts each had their own autonomous governments whose leaders constantly competed over the costs and benefits of mutually enjoyed services. The federal structure of government which bound the several local governmental corporations to the state legislature only intensified competition between city and district leaders and aided in the local development of state- and nation-wide political parties. In a political arena so organized, urban business elites' strictly self-interested activities in local and state governments rapidly produced political and social tensions which destroyed their privileged access to the local political arena and precipitated reform at mid-century.

### iii

From the incorporation of the city of Philadelphia by the state of Pennsylvania in 1789, the promotion and execution of public works was largely determined by the availability of private capital. Consequently, only the wealthier inhabitants of the city had any opportunity to benefit directly from municipal expenditures. As

early as 1807 the city councils received a petition from citizens living in the under-developed and less affluent section of the city west of Broad Street asking to be relieved of the burden of local taxation from which they were obtaining little if any benefit. 'Our situation now' the petition read, 'is deplorable. Our streets are worked into a mere quicksand; our footwalks are destroyed, so that communication with the market seems almost impossible; and we are insulted by the calls of tax gatherers for moneys from which we derive no benefit'.<sup>1</sup>

The councils replied to the petition by claiming that public works were generally inadequate in the city owing to a chronic shortage of municipal revenues. The conditions that existed in the western half of the city were, therefore, not unique to the area and tax relief would only compound the municipality's poverty and exacerbate the problem of poor public services. One month later, despite the councils' claims that the municipality was impoverished, the municipal corporation provided for the paving of Market Street between Ninth and Twelfth Streets on the east side of Broad Street. This municipally-funded project was initiated by residents of the area who could afford to lend the city money at interest for four years. The city's wealthy inhabitants, in this instance, were able to benefit from the extension of public services, and to profit from their loans to the city corporation.<sup>2</sup>

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1). J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1184, I, p.527.

2). Ibid., p.543.

Large-scale municipal projects such as the gas and water works, and investments in transportation, were similarly promoted. The municipal corporation borrowed money from private investors to pay for works and utilities which were provided by the companies which the business elites invested in and directed. If such utilities were provided for the public welfare, as Teaforde suggests, it was only in the sense that some of the business elites' entrepreneurial self-interested activities also satisfied specific public needs.<sup>1</sup>

The development of the water works illustrates this proposition. The provision of a pure water supply was discussed in the councils when, in 1790 upon Benjamin Franklin's death, it was discovered that his will proposed that the city avoid the contaminated wells along Dock Creek by having water fed by gravity from nearby Wissahickon Creek.<sup>2</sup> The proposal, however, was never adopted and no formal bid for the work was submitted to the city councils. It was not long before the issue of a pure water supply for the city was again brought before the councils; this time by the Union Canal Company.

The Union Canal Company was incorporated by the state legislature to build a canal between Philadelphia in the east and the Great Lakes and the Ohio River in the west. In 1797, the company proposed to supply the residents of the city with water from the local section of its canal as a means of offsetting the cost of the

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1). See p.72 in this chapter.

2). C.E. Chichester, Department for Supplying the City with Water: History of the Works, and Annual Report of the Chief Engineer of the Water Department of the City of Philadelphia, presented to Councils, February, 9, 1860 (Phila., n.p., 1860), p.6.

canal's construction.<sup>1</sup> The company, however, was under-represented both on the councils and in important financial and mercantile circles.

To establish the extent of a given company's representation on the city councils, the names and occupations of the men who served as the company's directors during the first half of the nineteenth century were collected from city business directories. These were then added to the database of the names and occupations of Philadelphia councilmen who served over the same period. The sets of names were then checked against one another to see whether any company directors ever served on the city councils. The error in record linkage was minimized by referring to data on councilmen's and directors' occupations. Where there was still uncertainty, information on residential addresses was also used. The exercise proved that in the case of the directors of the Union Canal Company, only R. Rundle Smith was ever on the city councils. Smith, however, did not serve on the councils until the city was consolidated in 1854.

The database was also used to see how far a company's directors were associated with the city's political leaders through their joint participation in leading financial and commercial institutions. The names of the directors of the city's leading banks and insurance houses, its economic booster associations, and its major transportation companies were taken from the city directories every fifth year from 1800 to 1850 and added to the

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1). Ibid., p.8.

database. In all, the names of the directors of nearly 100 of the city's leading commercial and financial firms - a sample of which is shown below in Table 2.1 (page 90) - were added to the database. The database was then searched for the names of those company directors who sat on the boards of major financial and commercial institutions, and then to see whether city councilmen also sat on the same boards.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of the Union Canal Company, it was shown that no company directors had any association with city councilmen on the boards of the city's leading banks, insurance and transportation companies, or booster associations. Isolated from the city's political and financial leadership, the Company's directors were unable to secure sufficient financial aid from the municipal government to make their proposed scheme economically feasible.<sup>2</sup>

The water issue was tabled until the following autumn when, after a yellow-fever epidemic had taken the lives of 12,000 Philadelphians, several proposals to supply the city with pure water were submitted to the city councils. Private capital was, however, too scarce to initiate the construction of an adequate water supply or to guarantee the successful flotation of municipal loans to support such a project. The councils therefore settled on the least costly of the water works proposals which promised to provide the city with water pumped by steam engine from the Schuylkill River.<sup>3</sup>

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1). The record-linkage software was written by Daniel Greenstein using MACRO-SPITBOL, an implementation of the programming language, SNOBOL4. MACRO SPITBOL was initially designed and implemented by Prof. Robert B.K. Dewar, The Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, N.Y.

2). C.E. Chichester, op. cit., p.9.

3). Ibid., p.10.

Table 2.1 The Economic and Financial Institutions Whose Directors  
are Included in the Database on Philadelphia's Economic  
and Political Elites, 1800 — 1854

|                                            |                                     |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| American Fire Insurance Co.                | North American Insurance Co.        |
| Annuity Fire and Life Insurance Co.        | Penn Mutual Life Insurance Co.      |
| Atlantic Insurance Co.                     | Pennsylvania Insurance Co.          |
| Bank of North America                      | Pheonix Insurance Co. of Phila.     |
| Bank of Pennsylvania                       | Pennsylvania Railroad Co.           |
| Bank of the United States                  | Pennsylvania Society for the        |
| Central Railroad                           | Promotion of Internal Improvements  |
| Chamber of Commerce                        | Phila.'s Largest Ship Owners        |
| Citizens Mutual Insurance Co. of Pa.       | (listed in Scharf and Westcott)     |
| Commercial Bank                            | Phila. Bank                         |
| Commercial Mutual Insurance Co.            | Phila. Board of Trade               |
| City Committee to Promote the Pa. Railroad | Phila. Contributionship for the     |
| Consolidated Insurance Co. of Phila.       | Insurance of Houses...              |
| Corn Exchange                              | Phila. Exchange Co.                 |
| Delaware Mutual Safety Insurance Co.       | Phila. Insurance Co.                |
| Equitable Mutual Insurance Co.             | Phila. Loan Co.                     |
| Exchange Insurance Co.                     | Phila. Mutual Live Stock Insurance  |
| Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank               | Phila. Railway Caucus               |
| Frankford and Southwark Passenger Line     | (committee to lobby for a railway   |
| Gas Works (stockholders and trustees)      | connection between the              |
| Girard Bank                                | Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers)     |
| Girard Insurance Co.                       | Phila. Saving Fund Society          |
| Girard Life and Trust Co.                  | Phila. Stock Exchange               |
| Harrisburg and Lackawana RR Co.            | Phila. and Norristown RR            |
| Hemphill Railroad                          | Phila. and Savanna Steamship Co.    |
| Independent Mutual Fire and Marine         | Phila. Wilmington and Baltimore RR  |
| Insurance                                  | Pro-Consolidation Consolidation     |
| Insurance Co. of the State of Pennsylvania | Committee                           |
| Insurance Office of North America          | Real Estate Savings and Loan Co.    |
| Keystone Insurance Co.                     | Reliance Mutual Co.                 |
| Lancaster Schuylkill Bridge Co.            | Ridge Turnpike                      |
| Little Schuylkill Navigation Railroad      | Saving Fund Society                 |
| Manufacturers' and Mechanics' Bank         | Schuylkill Bank                     |
| Mechanics' Bank                            | Schuylkill Navigation Co.           |
| Merchants' Exchange                        | Society for the Promotion of        |
| Merchants' and Mechanics' Mutual           | Internal Improvements               |
| Insurance Co.                              | State of Penn. Insurance Co.        |
| Mine Hill Railroad Co.                     | Susquehanna and Tioga Turnpike Road |
| Miners' Bank of Pottsville                 | Union Canal Co.                     |
| Mutual Association Insurance Co.           | Union Insurance Co. of Phila.       |
| Mutual Assurance Co.                       | U.S. Life Insurance Co.             |
| New Jersey Communication Co.               | Wilmington and Susquehanna RR       |

To fund the project the councils authorized a \$150,000 loan at 6% interest and provided further incentive to investors by offering them a \$15 rebate for every \$100 invested, and free water for three years after the system was completed.<sup>1</sup>

For 20 years the scarcity of local capital forced the city councils continually to provide for make-shift repairs and extensions of its water works which were fundamentally incapable of meeting the needs of Philadelphia's growing population. As a result the water works proved to be much more expensive than predicted. When the works were eventually completed in 1801 the system had cost the city \$700,000, almost five times the originally estimated figure and by 1812, the works which were supposed to have made some return to the city, were not even furnishing revenues sufficient to meet the cost of fueling their steam-driven pumps.<sup>2</sup> By the time the wooden mains had been replaced with iron ones in 1818 and replaced once again in 1830 the works' total cost to the city had increased to \$1,500,000.<sup>3</sup> These unexpected costs were absorbed by the municipality; they interfered neither with investors perquisites of free water nor with their interest payments.

The next phase of the development of the city's water works was initiated by a consortium of investors but was eventually developed at the expense of the municipal corporation. In 1815, the state legislature incorporated the Schuylkill Navigation Company to

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1). J.H. Moore, Philadelphia's System of Loans (Phila., n.p., 1902), pp.7-8.

2). By that time the city had spent \$657,398.91 on the water works and received only \$105,429.68 in water rents. C.E. Chichester, op. cit. p.16.

3). J.H. Moore, op. cit. pp.9-10.

build a canal connecting the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers.

Although the canal was planned to provide transportation through the city, it also promised Philadelphia a better and more accessible water supply than could be had from the 1801 works. Hence, when the new company ran out of money prior to the completion of the canal it managed to obtain financial aid from the municipal corporation by appealing to the councils through a number of its directors who held seats thereon.<sup>1</sup> In fact, of the company's 54 directors between 1800 and 1854, 22 were city councilmen while three of the company's directors were active councilmen in the late 1810s and early 1820s.

Although the three directors of the Schuylkill Navigation Company who served on the city councils made up only 10% of the city's 30 select and common councilmen, they did not by themselves represent the only associations between company directors and municipal leaders. One-time city councilman and trustee of the Schuylkill Navigation Company, Joshua Lippincott, for example, served on the board of the city's largest and most important bank, the Second National Bank, with councilmen Thomas Cope, Thomas Dunlap, Lawrence Lewis and Matthew Newkirk. He was also one of the founders of the Merchants' Exchange in the early 1820s along with councilmen Cope, Lewis and Thomas Rockhill. Active councilmen also shared directorships with Schuylkill Navigation Company directors who were not members of the city councils but who were represented on the boards of financial institutions. Councilmen Thomas Cave, Henry Horn, M.E. Israel, William J. Leiper, Mark Richards and George

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1). See J.T. Scharf and T. Westcott, op. cit., vol. I, pp.499-500 for then names of the company's directors.

Vaux all served with Jonas Preston, a director of the Navigation Company, as directors of the Bank of Pennsylvania. Councilmen William Gerhard and Robert Toland were co-directors of the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank along with Schuylkill Navigation director Samuel Richards. These manifold relations between the company's directors and the city's political leaders on the boards of leading financial and commercial institutions effectively extended the company's political influence and enhanced its ability to secure financial support from the municipal government for the completion of its canal.

As important to the company's successful application to the city for financial aid was the fact that the project on which the company had embarked promised to connect the city's seaport on the Delaware River to the inland port on the Schuylkill River. The project therefore, promised to benefit the city's business elites generally as it promoted both coastal and inland trade. It is none too surprising, then, to find that city councilmen, shipping merchants and Schuylkill Navigation Company directors acted in concert some years later in petitioning the state government to build a transportation network which would rival New York's Erie Canal as a route to the midwest.<sup>1</sup>

With its directors' many and influential connections with mercantile and financial elites both on and off the city councils, and with a proposal for a canal which promised to benefit the city's

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1). See Chapter 1, pp.55-6, Chapter 2, pp.99-102 and Chapter 3, pp.141-5 for a discussion of the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements and the state-built cross-Pennsylvania transportation system built in the 1820s and 1830s.

commerce generally, the Schuylkill Navigation Company was able to secure the city's financial assistance in the form of a municipal subscription for 500 shares of its stock. As important, the councils promised to underwrite the expense of the company's dam in the Schuylkill River at Fairmont.<sup>1</sup> The agreement provided that two of the company's trustees, Josiah White and James Gillingham, would have the rights to the pool of water created by the dam and that the city government would have the free use of any water power that might be harnessed there.<sup>2</sup>

Within the year, White and Gillingham offered to supply the city with 3,000,000 gallons of water per day for 20 years from their pool.<sup>3</sup> They were unable, however, to rally support in the councils for their scheme. It is likely that Gillingham's and White's scheme failed because the two men were its sole beneficiaries. Moreover, the connections between Gillingham and White and members of the city's political and economic leaders were limited. Neither man served on the councils nor as directors in any of the city's financial institutions. The councils rejected their offer and opted instead for another proposal for a water works at Fairmont which promised an extendable water-works system at a cost to the city of

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1). J. H. Moore, op. cit., p.13; Walter S. Sanderlin, 'The Expanding horizons of the Schuylkill Navigation Company, 1815-1870', Pennsylvania History, 36:2(April, 1969), pp.174-191.

2). Fred C. Dunlap, Chief of the Bureau of Water, Description of the Filtration Works and Pumping Stations, Also a Brief Historical Review of the Water Supply, 1789-1900 (Phila., n.p., 1909), pp.65-6.

3). Report of the Water Supply for the City of Philadelphia, Made by the Commission of Engineers Appointed by the Mayor Under the Ordinance of Councils, Approved, June 8, 1875 (Phila., E.C. Markley and Son, 1875), p.13.

\$400,000. White and Gillingham did manage, however, to derive certain benefits from the project since it required the use of water in their pool, a right for which the city corporation paid \$150,000.

In order to build the new Fairmont works, the city corporation issued its first ever 30-year loan which was taken out at 6%.<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that the Fairmont works were initially more expensive than the old water-works scheme, they proved to be more successful financially. By 1837, the municipal corporation had paid back its water-works debt and even accumulated \$100,000 in surplus revenues from its sale of water. In the same year the works served 196,000 inhabitants of the county through its street hydrants and its private connections.<sup>2</sup> The water works' profitability to the municipal corporation, however, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that municipal resources had been directed into a necessary public utility by entrepreneurs who took profitable advantage of their leading role in urban politics. This proposition is further demonstrated by the fact that in 1824, the Schuylkill Navigation Company was able to obtain payments from the city in return for the right to use the water power generated at the city-built Fairmount dam; a right which the city had previously purchased from Gillingham and White.<sup>3</sup>

Business elites similarly took advantage of their political dominance to profit from the development of the municipal gas works. As early as 1803 the mechanic, J.C. Hentry, proposed that the

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- 1). S. B. Warner, The Private City, pp.104-6.
  - 2). Ibid., p.107.
  - 3). C.E. Chichester, op. cit., p.19.

councils adopt his plan to light the city with gas lamps placed on top of high towers. Hentry's name is not to be found on lists of the directors of the city's leading economic institutions and this was undoubtedly one reason that he could not gain support for his plan amongst the city's business elites. The same may be said of James McMurtrie who introduced a similar plan in 1817, and of Henry Robinson and Robert Carey Long who together attempted unsuccessfully in 1826 and again in 1828 to obtain from the councils a contract to supply the city with gas lights.<sup>1</sup>

Proposals to light the city using gas lamps were not seriously considered until 1830, when a town meeting organized by a number of the city's leading businessmen petitioned the councils for funds to establish a gas works. The councils responded by commissioning Samuel Merrick, an engineer who was soon to become one of the leading American locomotive manufacturers, to visit Europe to study gas works in large cities. Upon Merrick's return, a proposal for a city-built gas works was presented to the councils and adopted, and in 1835 the Philadelphia Gas Works was established with a charter whose provisions reflected private investors' ability to influence the direction of municipal resources.<sup>2</sup> Under the municipal scheme the city was to borrow \$100,000 to build the works. Although public revenues were at stake in the project, the city government was allowed very little control over the administration of the works. In fact, the works were administered by a board of its stockholders, the same individuals who had subscribed the city's

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1). J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, op. cit., I, pp.643-5.

2). Ibid.

\$100,000 loan. The municipal corporation only reserved the right to set the rate at which the Trustees of the Gas works were to repay the loan.<sup>1</sup>

Business elites' self-interested participation in municipal government is as evident in the development of the city's gas works as in the development of the water works. 17 of the 52 major stockholders and directors of the Philadelphia Gas Works between 1835 and 1845 were also councilmen. The stockholders and directors of the gas works had other associations with municipal leaders on the boards of leading local banks. Sometime councilmen Leiper, Richards, Horn, Israel, Scull and Vaux were directors of the Bank of Pennsylvania along with councilman and gas works stockholder Thomas Cave. Councilmen Cave, Jackson, Rockhill and Wetherill were all co-directors of the Girard Bank along with gas works stockholder Lex. Councilmen Hurt and Wilcox were co-directors of the Mechanics' Bank with councilman and gas works stockholder Lamb. Finally, of the directors of the Schuylkill Bank who served on the city councils, Meredith, Trucks and Price, Price was an active supporter of the Philadelphia Gas Works.

Because the promoters of the gas works were so well connected with the business elites on the councils, they were able to obtain legislation which guaranteed the profitability of the works to its stockholders, even after the financial performance of the works fell far short of original predictions. By 1841, unforeseen development

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1). The city was forced to pay interest at what was then considered to be a very high rate in order to raise scarce capital. As a result, gas works investments proved to be very profitable. See J.H. Moore, op. cit., pp. 8,24 and C.A. Howland, Philadelphia's Gas Problem (Phila., Phila. Bureau of Municipal Research, 1926), p.6.

costs had begun to interfere with the works profitability to its investors especially since a portion of the net earnings of the works had to be reserved to sink the principal of the city's gas debt. Unable to rely on annual dividends, the stockholders placed the entire burden of financial risk on the municipal corporation, reserving for themselves a secure annual income by selling their shares to the city in return for municipal securities bearing 5%.<sup>1</sup>

Business elites also took advantage of their position in city government to direct municipal revenues into private transportation companies. Transportation connecting the city to its hinterland and transportation within the city itself was essential to the city's commerce. The pressure for more and better transportation was particularly acute when the War of 1812 ended. At that time, America lifted its trade embargo on English goods, and Philadelphia's markets were consequently glutted with English goods.<sup>2</sup> The need for transportation was even greater in the 1820s when the city's importance as a commercial port began to decline relative to New York City.<sup>3</sup> Business leaders, unable to find private investors in what were considered highly speculative railroad and canal projects, turned to local and state governments for the lion's share of their necessary capital costs.<sup>4</sup>

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1). 'An Ordinance For providing for the final settlement with the stockholders of the Philadelphia Gas Works, passed 1st July 1841', OAA, p.261-2.

2). Alan M. Zachary, 'The Philadelphia Elite Before Jackson', p.293-5.

3). See Chapter 4, pp.141-4.

4). Louis Hartz, *op.cit.*, pp.141, 168.

One of the municipal corporation's first investments in a transportation company occurred in the first decade of the nineteenth century when the city became the major stockholder in the Schuylkill Permanent Bridge Company, a group which provided a bridge over the Schuylkill at High Street to accommodate traffic entering the city from the west. In 1818, the city sold its shares in the bridge company to pay for its investment in the Schuylkill Navigation Company.<sup>1</sup>

By the mid-1820s Philadelphia's commerce was being seriously threatened by competition with New York City where merchants and manufacturers benefited enormously from the new western markets which became accessible with the completion of the Erie canal.<sup>2</sup> In response to competition with New York, a number of Philadelphia merchants organized the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements. Under the leadership of manufacturing promoter, Matthew Carey, the society vigorously petitioned the state government to build a public transportation system that would connect Philadelphia with Pittsburgh on the Great Lakes and so compete with the Erie canal.

In his analysis of the society's successful petition to the state legislature, Richard Selling claimed that the petitioners were men who were motivated by a sense of civic responsibility and not by purely commercial interests. His claim, however, is based on the fact that only two of the eight founders of the society, Nicholas

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1). J.H. Moore, op. cit. p.13; W.S.Sanderlin, op. cit., passim, and page 94 in this chapter.

2). See Chapter 3, pp.141-4.

Biddle and Joseph P. Norris, both directors of the Second National Bank, could be shown to have had 'business interests'.<sup>1</sup> By adding the names and occupations of the society's founders to the database of Philadelphia's business and political leaders, it was found that Selling's occupational profile is incomplete. Biddle and Norris shared the directorship of the Second National Bank with four one-time city councilmen and leading members of the Merchants' Exchange including Philadelphia's famous shipping merchant Thomas Pym Cope, as well as with Lawrence Lewis, Joshua Lippincott and Thomas C. Rockhill. The bank also had as its directors two members of the Philadelphia Board of Trade, members of the boards of directors of the Commercial Bank, the Chamber of Commerce, the Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania, the Schuylkill Bank, the Union Insurance Company, as well as a total of six one-time city councilmen. Norris also served as a director of the Manufacturers' and Merchants' Bank and the Philadelphia Exchange Company and was a founder of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange along with several directors of the Bank of Pennsylvania, the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank, and the Philadelphia Contributionship for Granting Annuities on Lives which was a company in which Norris was also a director. Norris also shared the directorship of these companies with councilmen Cave, Henry, Israel, Leiper, Richards, Scull, Waln, George Vaux, Joseph S. Lewis, Thomas Morris, and Stephen Girard.

Nicholas Biddle's brother Thomas, who later became an active member of the Pennsylvania Society to Promote Internal Improvements also

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1). Richard I. Selling, 'Philadelphia and the Agitation in 1825 for the Pennsylvania Commission', PMHB, 62(1938), p.177.

became the director of the Philadelphia and Norristown Railroad with city councilman Henry Troth and with several representatives of the Girard Bank, the board of which included councilmen Butcher, Cave, Washington, Rockhill and Wetherill as well as several directors of the Saving Fund Society and the Schuylkill Navigation Company.

Richard Peters Jr., who was a lawyer, was a director of Philadelphia's Saving Fund Society along with one-time councilmen Lawrence Lewis, Vaux, Warner and Winebrenner, and with numerous directors of the Bank of Pennsylvania, the Commercial Bank, the Merchants' Exchange and the Second National Bank. John Sergeant, also a lawyer, was a director of the American Fire Insurance Company along with Schuylkill Navigation promoter and one-time councilman Manuel Eyre and with several other members of the Schuylkill Navigation Company and the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society.

The association which was eventually established by Carey was so well connected with business elites in city government that it had little trouble in obtaining legislation from the city councils authorizing a \$600,000 municipal loan to the state to support the project.<sup>1</sup> Promoters of this scheme included active councilmen Duane and Eyre, ex-councilman George Vaux, and future councilman Samuel Breck. These men acted together with 30 other Philadelphians in the Pennsylvania Society including one-time councilmen and directors of the Bank of Pennsylvania Cave, Horn, Israel, Richards,

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1). 'An Ordinance ... concerning the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad, passed 21st March 1831', OAA, p.200-1.

directors of the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Warner, Leiper, and Scull, one-time councilmen Winebrenner and Lawrence, and councilmen Harper, Lewis, Lippincott, and Troth all of whom were also directors of the Schuylkill Navigation Company.

In return for its \$600,000 loan to the state, the city acquired from the state the necessary enabling legislation to extend the state-built transportation system from the western bank of the Schuylkill where the line ended, across the city to the Delaware River Wharves. The extension included an inclined bridge over the Schuylkill River and a street railway between the two rivers.<sup>1</sup> At this juncture, however, the consensus amongst the members of the Pennsylvania Society was disrupted over the routing of the city railway. The railway promised to benefit most those businesses located closest to it. Hence, two factions developed in the city; one representing businessmen whose firms were north of Market Street and the other representing businessmen whose firms were south of Market Street.<sup>2</sup> The two sides eventually came to agreement over a plan to build the railway along Market Street. Compromise, however, was affected at the city's expense since the adopted scheme provided that the city also build a railway extension running north and south along Broad Street.<sup>3</sup> It also entailed the added expense of

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1). Philadelphia Councils' Joint Special Committee in Relation to the Pennsylvania Railroad, Report of the Joint Special Committee Appointed...to Consider the Petitions and Communications Relative to the Pennsylvania Railroad (Phila., L.R. Bailey, 1846), pp.43-44; 'An Ordinance Relating to... the Columbia and Philadelphia Railroad....., passed 21st March, 1831', OAA, p. 171.

2). J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, op. cit. III, pp.216-7.

3). 'An Ordinance Providing for the superintendence of the Broad Street railroad....., passed 27th February, 1834', OAA, pp.200-201.

dismantling the city's market stalls on Market between Front and Eighth Streets and moving them to another part of town.<sup>1</sup>

The municipal corporation also invested in other railroads in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1846, for example, the councils permitted the city to issue bonds to the sum of \$2,500,000 for the purchase of 50,000 shares of stock in the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; fully one-third of the total number of shares initially issued by the company.<sup>2</sup> The legal battle which prevailed over the right of the city corporation to invest in strictly private companies was won by four of the 12 local supporters of the Pennsylvania Railroad who were then active city councilmen. The success of councilmen Cope, Derbyshire, Godley and Toland in obtaining a municipal subscription in the stock of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company established a precedent for future municipal expenditures. This precedent was clearly stated in the preamble to the 1846 act which declared that the Pennsylvania Railroad,

will add immensely to the amount of [Philadelphia's] internal and foreign commerce, enhance the value of real estate, augment the corporate income, lessen the burthen of taxation on the citizen, and greatly increase the general prosperity.' The preamble went on to say that it was 'the interest and duty of the corporation's authorities to stimulate private enterprise [in pursuit of the] great objects of the corporation, which in the charter are declared to be, the welfare of the city and the promotion of trade, industry and happiness therein.(3)

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1). J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, op. cit. III pp.216-7.

2). H.W. Schotter, The Growth and Development of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company; A Review of the Charter and Annual Reports of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, 1846-1926 Inclusive (Phila., Allen, Lane and Scott, 1927), pp.6-7.

3). 'An Ordinance To authorize a subscription on the part of the City, to the capital stock of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and to provide for the payment of the installments thereon, passed 12 November, 1846', OAA, pp.303-4.

The city's subscription for stock in the Pennsylvania Railroad was only its biggest investment in a private company. Having made this investment, however, other such investments followed soon thereafter and between 1846 and 1854 a total of \$3,850,000 were invested in no less than four other railroad companies.<sup>1</sup> Although transportation companies paid dividends to their stockholders, increasing the city's revenues was not the motive behind the municipal corporation's purchase of railroad stock. In fact, municipal investments in railroad stocks were not at all profitable for the city. To purchase such stock the city had to borrow money at 6% on long-term loans in order to meet its subscription costs. Dividends from transportation companies were rarely so high. Hence the municipal corporation stood to lose money even through its investments in revenue-generating ventures with a consequent adverse affect on the city's debt which grew in relation to the number of municipal investments in railroad and other companies. By the 1850s, interest payments on the municipal debt represented the greatest proportion of the city's annual expenditures.<sup>2</sup> Revenues from company dividends on the other hand hardly figured into the calculation of municipal income.<sup>3</sup>

Municipal investments in transportation companies fostered economic growth and encouraged the development of the manufacturing sector in Philadelphia as new transportation lines opened up inland markets which increased the demand for goods produced in the

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1). See Appendix 1, Table A1.3, p.425.

2). See Appendix 1, Table A1.2, p.424.

3). City loans were taken at 6% while the biggest single investment in railroad stock made by the city in the Pennsylvania Railroad company only paid 5%; H.W. Schotter, op. cit., p.20.

city.<sup>1</sup> Representatives of an emergent manufacturing class did not, however, direct municipal policy in respect to investments in transportation. Data on the occupations of the men who served on the city councils in the 1840s, the decade when municipal railroad investments were at their peak, reveal that there was no significant increase in the number of manufacturers on the city councils.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, a review of the directorships of the railroad companies shows how far the companies were bound to established commercial and financial institutions in the city.

Let us take, for example, the local promoters of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Linking the names and occupations of these men with the names already in the database, it was found that councilmen Dunlap, Lippincott, Lawrence Lewis and Newkirk, for example, were directors of the Second National Bank along with councilman, eminent ship owner and Pennsylvania Railroad director, Thomas P. Cope. Meredith also participated with councilmen and railroad directors Cope and Toland as a booster of the railroad in the city. Cope and Toland were also members of the Philadelphia Board of Trade along with councilmen Hart, Newkirk and Thomas C. Rockhill. Councilmen Rockhill, Cave, Jackson and Wetherill were all directors of the Girard Bank along with councilman and director of the Pennsylvania Railroad Thomas T. Butcher. Finally, Rockhill also shared the board of directors of the Merchants' Exchange with councilmen Lawrence Lewis, Joshua Lippincott and

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1). D. Lindstrom, Economic Development in the Philadelphia Region, chapter 1, esp. pp.2-12, 91.

2). See Table 1.7, p.65.

railroad director Thomas P. Cope. Pennsylvania Railroad directors were also well established as directors of other major financial institutions in the city including the Bank of the Northern Liberties, the Bank of Pennsylvania, the Schuylkill Bank and the Stock Exchange.

Commercial merchants and financiers, then, were extremely active in fostering transportation and the related growth of industrial manufacture in the city. This assertion is supported generally by analyzing the database using two different methods: first by examining groups of leading merchants to see how far they were connected to railroad companies; second, by examining the directorship of the railroad companies to discover how far commercial and financial elites were present on their boards. Of the 17 most important ship-owning merchants in the city of Philadelphia listed by Scharf and Westcott, seven were found to have served as the directors of several of the city's important financial institutions. Among them J. Bohlen and Manuel Eyre were co-directors of the Second National Bank (which became known as the Bank of the U.S. in 1835)<sup>1</sup> with directors of several other inland shipping companies and societies for the promotion of manufacturing and inland trade including the Schuylkill Navigation Company, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the Little Schuylkill Navigation and Railroad and Coal Company and the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements. Manuel Eyre was himself a director of the Schuylkill Navigation Company and the Pennsylvania Society. Stephen

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1). See Chapter 3, p.144.

Girard, another leading shipping merchant, was a director of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company when it was first incorporated in the 1830s as well as the founder of the Girard bank. Shipper Henry Nixon was a director of the Lancaster Schuylkill Bridge Company which provided an important service to coal companies and other merchants involved in inland trade. Other directorships held by these and other leading promoters of transportation and manufacture included positions on the boards of the Pennsylvania Company for Insurance on Lives, the Union Insurance Company, the Bank of Pennsylvania, the American Fire Insurance Company, the Philadelphia Stock Exchange and the Bank of North America.

Railroad company directors' extensive association with the directors of the city's leading financial and commercial institutions lends further support to the contention that manufacturing interests were inseparable from commercial and financial interests in the city.<sup>1</sup> The board of directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and its political supporters in Philadelphia included no less than five directors of the Bank of the U.S., five directors of the Girard Bank, four members of the Merchants' Exchange and six directors bank of the Philadelphia Board of Trade. On the board of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad were six directors of the Bank of the U.S., five members of the Philadelphia Board of Trade and two directors of the Schuylkill Bank. The situation was similar with the Central, Hemphill and Little Schuylkill Navigation Railroad and Coal Companies respectively.

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1). See Chapter 1, pp.52-6, 64-5.

Clearly, then, the development of municipal works and services that aided industrial economic growth was fostered by consortia of merchants and financiers who predominated in municipal government. Undoubtedly, business elites' direction of municipal works and services did benefit the people of Philadelphia generally. This does not necessarily demonstrate, as Warner and Teaforde tend to assume, that business elites in government were interested in promoting the 'public' good. On the contrary, it can be shown that business elites' interests in municipal government were primarily motivated by narrow economic considerations as little thought was given to the administrative and financial consequences of the rapid growth in municipal public works. Since commercial interests took precedence over the planned growth of municipal government, administrative and fiscal policies developed haphazardly. They were often no more than the accumulation of short-term reactions to the impending and immediate problems associated with corporate growth and financial stress. By mid-century, irrational administrative and financial practices made it virtually impossible for the municipality to provide necessary public works and services without first introducing major structural reforms in government.

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Data on the city's finances are both scarce and unreliable for the period 1800 to 1850. Nevertheless, it is possible to show that municipal investments in works and services threatened the financial stability of the city corporation even as the same works profited private investors. Throughout the period, the councils passed a series of ordinances designed specifically to re-establish

the city's financial stability and to offset previously incurred losses. The development of the water works at the turn of the century, for example, increased the city's annual expenses and the total of its floating debts. In 1807, fears that the city would be unable to meet its obligations on its several outstanding debts led to the establishment of a sinking fund to which money was appropriated annually in order to meet the aggregated principal of the city's funded debts.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year the councils passed an ordinance to ensure that long-term loans were issued for capital-intensive permanent improvements only and that tax revenues were used to meet the operating expenses of the city. The ordinance was an attempt by the councils to correct the nearly annual practice of borrowing money on a short-term basis at high interest rates to meet costs at the end of the year.<sup>2</sup> The councils also took steps to minimize municipal expenses as they passed ordinances designed to control the flow of public money out of the city treasury throughout the period and particularly in the mid-1830s.<sup>3</sup>

Together these measures, however, eliminated only minor sources of wasted municipal expenditure. Despite the councils' attempts to rationalize the city's financial structure, the entrepreneurial spirit of the city councilmen and their associates proved greater than the impulse to provide a municipal budget. Consequently, the city's debt expanded exponentially. In 1800, the

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1). J.H. Moore, op. cit., p.11.

2). Ibid., pp.7-8.

3). See pp.118-20 in this chapter.

city's debt was \$4,000.<sup>1</sup> By 1827 the city's debt, both funded and floating, had reached \$1,686,600.<sup>2</sup> Before the city invested in the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1846 its total debts equalled \$3,110,500.<sup>3</sup> In acting 'to promote the public welfare, industry and trade' of the rapidly growing city, Philadelphia's political leaders dangerously extended the city's resources. In fact, the dissenting opinion of the Councils' Joint Special Committee on the Pennsylvania Railroad was based on the fear that the further extension of the city's debt would have two serious consequences for the city's financial stability: it would undermine the confidence of municipal bond holders, and depress the price of city bonds.<sup>4</sup>

By mid-century, financial practices had not been established as a matter of policy. Rather they had developed as an accumulation of make-shift responses to a variety of different immediate and short-term needs. Hence, by the 1850s, the city's financial structure was a confused and inconsistent agglomeration of different and often competing practices. The lack of a coherent financial policy for

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1). James Allen Scott, 'The Businessman, Capitalism and the City: Businessmen and Municipal Reform in Philadelphia from the Act of Consolidation (1854) to the Bullitt Bill (1885)' (Delaware, University of Delaware Ph.D. thesis 1974), p.46.

2). Edward P. Allinson and Boies Penrose, City Government of Philadelphia (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Studies, Series I-II, 1887), pp.44-7.

3). The figures are calculated from the statements of the treasurer of the corporation of the city of Philadelphia and the president of the Philadelphia Gas Works in Philadelphia Councils' Joint Special Committee in Relation to the Pennsylvania Railroad, Report of the Joint Special Committee, pp.43-46. Also see Appendix 1, Table A1.1, p.423.

4). Ibid.

meeting both operating expenses and capital costs of municipal improvements, however, must have limited the opportunities for municipal expenditure. Poorly-planned expenditure on public works which benefited private investors left the municipal corporation with an institutionalized debt. By the 1840s, the scale of the city's debt began to constrain the city councils from maintaining and extending existing municipal services to Philadelphia's growing population. In fact, the size of the municipal debt figured largely in the calculus of charter reform and consolidation.

On the eve of the Consolidation Act, fully one-third of the city's annual appropriations were made over to the finance committee which was responsible for repaying the interest on the city's debt and the sinking fund.<sup>1</sup> As much as half that amount was used to pay the interest on the loan for the subscription to the stock of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The rest was used to pay the interest and sink the principal of loans for investment in the other transportation companies and in the city's gas and water works. Given the relatively large population of the districts, the proposed Consolidation Act of 1854 promised the city corporation a vastly increased tax base from which it could derive the revenue necessary to meet its obligations. But political consolidation, however compelling its financial motives, was a highly contested issue amongst members of the city's business elites; it threatened their autonomy in local government by promising to place them in a

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1). See Appendix 1, Table A1.2, p.424.

minority in city councils that were to be elected jointly by city and district voters.<sup>1</sup>

Administrative procedures mirrored financial practices and developed largely as reactive measures to meet the immediate needs of the growing municipal business. More works projects entailed more workers and more elaborate divisions of authority and responsibility in the corporate organization of the city government. Providing the necessary administrative organization, however, proved difficult given the fragmented structure of authority in city government. The difficulties involved in centralizing the municipal administration were only compounded as the municipal corporation grew richer in its resources and in the potential for patronage which attracted ever greater interference from nascent state-wide political parties and party factions.

By 1838, the mayor was responsible for the appointment of 43 civil employees. The councils appointed 82 municipal employees but only eight of these drew salaries directly from the city. The rest worked in the independent governmental corporations which will be examined below. By 1848, the mayor was responsible for appointing 325 municipal officers, most of them policemen, while the councils were responsible for 109 appointments including all the key posts in the municipal service.<sup>2</sup> These figures reveal only a few of the opportunities available in municipal government for patronage. The city councils also had a number of standing committees, many of

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1). See Chapter 3, pp.171-6.

2). The appointments are listed in Appendix 2, pp.426-8.

which were empowered to employ, contract and purchase equipment as necessary as were the city commissioners, but to a more limited extent. Since appointments were within the authority of these bodies they do not appear in the legislative record of the councils.

The councils' annual appropriations are therefore a better index of the growth in the municipal administration. In 1800, total appropriations made by the councils did not exceed \$80,000;<sup>1</sup> a figure which is higher than average for the period as it includes expenditures on the Schuylkill water works which were completed in 1801. In 1827, the councils' total appropriation had increased to \$230,000.<sup>2</sup> By 1850, average yearly appropriations were in the neighborhood of \$1,000,000 before taking account of expenditures on projects for which the city borrowed money.<sup>3</sup>

The councils also had a great deal of influence over the services supplied by other independent incorporated bodies as they shared appointments with the commissioners of the surrounding districts and/or with the governor of the state. In 1818, with the establishment of public schools in Philadelphia, the city councils appointed 24 school directors who acted in conjunction with the 30 directors appointed by the commissioners of the districts of Moyamensing, Southwark, the Northern Liberties and Spring Garden.<sup>4</sup> In the same year, the councils also began appointing six members of the Board of Health who worked in conjunction with five men appointed by the

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1). E.P. Allinson and B. Penrose, op. cit., p.44.

2). J.A. Scott, op. cit., p.46.

3). This calculation is worked out in Appendix 1, Table A1.2, p.424.

4). 'An Act Providing for public education.....passed 3d March, 1818', OAA, pp.111-112.

commissioners of the districts.<sup>1</sup> The councils also made appointments to the Guardians of the Poor and the Board of Port Wardens.<sup>2</sup> These independent bodies controlled the construction, repairs and employment associated with the county's public schools, the City Hospital, the health office at the Lazaretto (the port where immigrants disembarked), the almshouse, the administration of outdoor relief, and the maintenance of the port of Philadelphia.

As the business of municipal government expanded, the opportunities increased for elected officers to build political organizations by distributing patronage to their supporters. Consequently, appointments to the directorships of the various departments became highly coveted perquisites. Since municipal appointees often had the power to employ individuals, procure materials and contract for public work, they became the cornerstones of attempts to build up party organizations, and local organizations representing state-wide parties became increasingly involved in local politics for this very reason.<sup>3</sup> This is evident in business elites' constant struggle to use their power in the councils to assert and maintain their authority over political appointees in the executive branches of government.<sup>4</sup>

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1). 'An Act To establish a health board as a corporation....., passed 29th January, 1818', OAA, pp.109-110.

2). 'An Act To establish a board of wardens....., passed 28th April, 1851, OAA, pp.380-381; P.C. Ferguson 'The Response to Need', pp.43-44.

3). Kim T. Phillips, 'William Duane', passim; Sam Bass Warner, Jr., op.cit., p.91.

4). Unless otherwise noted, the discussion of the organization of authority in the municipal administration is drawn from the following sources:

a. 'An Act to Incorporate the City of Philadelphia, 1789', OAA, pp.50-62;

At the turn of the nineteenth century, a board of three city commissioners (later a fourth was appointed to act as president) maintained and repaired public pavements, lamps and wells, pitched and paved public streets, collected rents from the market stalls, directed 39 day watchmen and four night police and employed the necessary labor necessary to do all of the above. The commissioners also assessed and collected the rent from citizens using public property and supervised the clerks of the market who were appointed by the mayor. A watering committee of the councils supervised the maintenance of the Schuylkill waterworks from 1801 to 1819 and the larger Fairmont waterworks after it was built in 1819. Though the councils had control of the watering committee, the mayor appointed the water rent collectors who were in turn made responsible to the city treasurer.

When the need arose, the councils established various ad-hoc committees to supervise the work of the city commissioners on various public projects. By 1835, there were committees in charge of

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- b. 'An Act To Alter and Amend the Several Acts of the General Assembly for this commonwealth, incorporating the city of Philadelphia, passed 4th April, 1796', OAA, pp.62-63;
- c. 'An Ordinance Providing for the appointment of a treasurer of the Corporation, prescribing his duties and ascertaining his pay, passed 14th April, 1797', OAA pp.65-7;
- d. 'An Act Amending the Act to Incorporate...passed 22d May, 1797', OAA, p.67;
- e. 'An Act Amending the Act to Incorporate...passed 1st January, 1798', OAA, p.69;
- f. 'An Act.....passed 11th April 1799 Amending...', OAA, pp.73-75;
- g. 'A Supplement To the several ordinances providing for the appointment of city commissioners, treasurer, city clerk,....,passed 24th December, 1818', OAA, pp.118-119;
- h. 'An Ordinance Providing for the appointment of the president of the board of city commissioners...,passed 26th December, 1833', OAA, p.198;
- i. P.C. Ferguson, 'The Response to Need', p.16.

cleansing the streets, the public parks, the public buildings, and the Delaware Schuylkill wharves. Each of these committees would assess the needs of the city within their scope and make suggestions to the councils. If the councils approved the committees' suggestions in joint assembly then the committees would provide the city commissioners with the plans and the estimated costs of the proposed developments. The city commissioners would then apply to the councils for the necessary funding and take charge of executing the work proposed. The administrative chaos was compounded because the city commissioners who were in charge of overseeing the execution of public works, were accountable directly to the city treasurer for their expenditures and only indirectly to the mayor.

Before 1835, a series of legislative acts was passed by the councils in an attempt to reduce the inefficiency and financial loss occasioned by the fragmented distribution of authority in government. But these measures only added to the problem by fragmenting still further the structure of authority in local government. Take as an example the changes in the responsibilities vested in the city treasurer.

By an act of the councils in 1797 the treasurer was made responsible to the mayor although he was appointed by the councils. In 1806, he was vested with the power to assess the rents for public properties, to submit the assessment to the city commissioners for collection and to audit the records of the city commissioners to assure that all the rent collected was deposited in

the treasury.<sup>1</sup> By 1811, the job had become too much for the treasurer alone and the office of the city clerk was established. The city clerk was to report the receipts of the city commissioners and their expenditures to the accounts committee of the councils and to report quarterly all other money coming to the city commissioners and the amounts the city commissioners gave to the treasury.<sup>2</sup>

In 1822, the treasurer was made responsible for examining the water rents supplied by the water rents collectors and if he found that the collectors were delinquent in their payments, he was to report them to the city solicitor for prosecution.<sup>3</sup> By 1824, the treasurer was to receive all requests for money from the various committees of the councils and the city commissioners and, upon approval of the mayor, give the money over to those bodies. The requests made by the committees themselves had to be approved by joint meeting of the councils before they were submitted to the treasurer. To further ensure against embezzlement, duplicate accounts of committees' receipts and expenditures were to be submitted to the city clerk. The treasurer and the city clerk were themselves made responsible to the councils' accounts committee.<sup>4</sup>

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1). 'An Ordinance For the comptroll of moneys which are received into the city treasury, and for other purposes, passed 11th June, 1806', OAA, pp.84-6.

2). 'An Ordinance Establishing the office of city clerk, and for other purposes... passed 28th June, 1811' OAA, pp.90; 'A Supplement To the several ordinances providing for the appointment of city commissioners...passed 10th December, 1829, OAA, pp.165-7.

3). 'An Ordinance For better collection of water rents, passed 26th December, 1822', OAA, p.136.

4). 'A Supplement To the several ordinances providing for the appointment of city commissioners...passed 10th December, 1827', OAA, pp.165-7.

In 1827, the councils took steps in an attempt to control directly the city commissioners and other administrative officials.<sup>1</sup> They passed an act which provided that the city commissioners were not to pave city streets without first notifying the city surveyors who were to inspect the work and report an estimate of its cost to the councils. The act also specified that the city commissioners keep two receipt books; one for the market rents and another for other money taken in by them. They were to submit the duplicate receipt book to the city clerk. The city clerk, in turn, was to enter and sign in duplicate all receipts for the money that that city commissioners paid into the city treasury. Finally, the act specified that the city commissioners, the treasurer, the city clerk and the city surveyor regularly report to the councils their respective receipts and disbursements, and that these reports be printed quarterly for the use of the councils' committee on accounts.

In 1835, the councils took steps to rationalize the administration of municipal services and established nine standing committees - the committees for water works, finance, police, public highways, cleansing the city, city property, legacies and trusts, the Girard estate and the Girard College - each to be made up of an equal numbers of representatives from the two councils.<sup>2</sup> Each committee was to report to the councils from time to time and to

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1). Ibid.

2). 'An Ordinance For auditing and controlling the expenditure of the city, passed 1st October, 1835', OAA, pp. 211-215. The Girard Estate and the Girard College were both left to the city by Stephen Girard in the 1820s. Also see Appendix 2, pp. 428-40.

submit a budget for the coming year every January. Moreover, the committees were not to exceed their annual budgets unless authorized by the councils with a special ordinance.

With this act, expenditure of public money and the distribution of municipal services were consolidated under the control of the city councils. The powers of the city commissioners were severely circumscribed. The city was divided into three districts and one city commissioner was appointed to take charge of the public works in each district. A president of the city commissioners was also appointed and made responsible for collecting from the city commissioners all claims made against the city for work done under them. He had to endorse these claims and then submit them to the councils for payment. Finally, in conjunction with the committee on city property, the president of the city commissioners was to prepare quarterly a rent roll of the income of the public property and place this in the hands of that committee for collection.<sup>1</sup>

Under the 1835 act the city commissioners became auditors and employees; they were no longer independent employers and directors. The distribution of municipal services, however, remained confused. For example, if the committee on city property was authorized to purchase a vacant lot which the councils wanted for the purpose of building a new street, the finance committee would negotiate the deal and control the property. The councils would then appropriate the necessary funds to the committee on public highways to build a

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1). Ibid., p.214.

new street. Finally, the committee on cleansing the city would have to secure authorization from the councils to tidy the mess left by the employees of the committee on public highways.<sup>1</sup>

Had urban elites been able to administer municipal affairs without external interference from state government, administrative problems might have been resolved. The city corporation, however, was a creature of the state legislature. Major reforming legislation, therefore, could not be enacted without the assent of the state legislature. Such assent was almost impossible to procure when rural and urban interests were competing in state government over issues which had nothing to do with city governance. Municipal governance suffered from external interference throughout the period. As the the mayor's office was the most important executive office in the city, and one which was filled by a gubernatorial appointee, the struggle between local elites and unfriendly state administrations often adversely affected the working relationship between the city's legislative and executive branches. In 1826, for example, the councils obtained legislation from a friendly state administration which empowered them to appoint the mayor from amongst the citizens of the city at large and not just from amongst the aldermen.<sup>2</sup> In 1839, the councils increased their control over the executive in a major act of reform under which they assumed all

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1). James Allen Scott, op. cit., pp.00.  
2). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., pp.132-133.

of the mayor's appointative authority save his power to select the city's policemen.<sup>1</sup> The mayor, stripped of executive authority, was given over to popular election beginning in 1841, and the office remained without much prominence in city government until the city police department was expanded dramatically from 1848.<sup>2</sup>

Just as state interventions in municipal government could emanate from forces completely external to the city and county, they could also be initiated by leaders of the districts who were in conflict with business elites on the city councils. The political corporations of the townships, boroughs and districts in the county of Philadelphia were extremely modest in their dimensions. Most of them employed only a handful of night watchmen and a commissioner whose primary concern was paving, lighting and cleansing the streets.<sup>3</sup> As the population of the county grew, whole areas became densely settled, blurring the distinction established by political boundaries. District commissioners took advantage of the situation to maintain low-budget governments by relying on services already being supplied by the city of Philadelphia.

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1). 'An Act To provide for the election of the mayor of the city of Philadelphia....., passed 21st June, 1839', OAA, pp.240-242; 'A Supplement To the act providing for the election of the mayor.....,passed 29th August, 1839', OAA, p.243; John William Crum, 'The Citizen Against the City: Municipal Bureaucracy in Nineteenth Century Philadelphia' (Delaware, University of Delaware Ph.D. thesis, 1980), p.12.

2). Elizabeth N. Geffen, 'Violence in Philadelphia in the 1840s and 1850s, Pennsylvania History 36(October, 1927), p.404. Also see Appendix 2, pp.437-8 and p.427 for the mayor's appointments.

3). Ibid., p.390; William Bucke Campbell, 'Old Towns and Districts of Philadelphia', p.139.

The districts' ability to benefit from municipal services for which they did not pay was the source of perpetual conflict between city and district leaders. The city's political leaders were not innocent, however, in their chronic quarrels with the districts' leaders over payment for mutually-enjoyed services. The water works, for example, located in the district of Spring Garden, charged more to district customers than it did to its customers who lived in the city. In 1843 the state authorized the districts of Spring Garden and the Northern Liberties to establish their own water works along the Schuylkill unless the city equalized its rates. When the city did not lower its rates the districts began to erect their own steam pumps. The city obtained a court injunction against the district works claiming that it had acquired the right to the Schuylkill water from Gillingham and White in 1817.<sup>1</sup> The court eventually ruled in favor of the districts claiming that the right that the city purchased was not owned by Gillingham and White in the first place and so was not in this case binding. The distribution of gas also engendered competition between city and districts as differential rates were charged between the city and the districts.<sup>2</sup>

Although district leaders continued to minimize their corporate expenses by relying on Philadelphia for essential services, they constantly competed with the city councils for control of the county-wide political bodies whose funds were largely

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1). W.B. Campbell, op. cit., p. 140; also see T. Westcott, Biographies of Philadelphians I, p. 21 and see Chapter 2, pp.94-5.  
2). W.B. Campbell, op. cit., p.140.

contributed by the city councils. In 1794, the Board of Health was established by the governor to maintain the City Health Office and the City Hospital.<sup>1</sup> The members of the board were all appointed by the governor until 1818 when it was reorganized to consist of 11 people, six appointed by the councils of the city and five by commissioners of the districts.<sup>2</sup> In 1852, the number of the board members was increased to 18, nine appointed by the councils and nine by the district commissioners.<sup>3</sup>

The Guardians of the Poor were also reorganized several times as a result of conflict between the city and the districts. Initially, 12 guardians were appointed by the city and eight by the districts. In 1803, the districts came closer to parity with the city when the number of guardians was increased to 30, 16 of these to be appointed by the councils.<sup>4</sup> In 1828, the guardians were again reorganized diminishing their number and equalizing appointments between the city and the combined districts.<sup>5</sup> In 1844, three more guardians from the districts were added to the board giving the districts effective control of the Guardians of the Poor.<sup>6</sup> The Board of

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1). 'An Act Establishing an health office and for otherwise securing the city of Philadelphia from the introduction of pestilential and contagious diseases, and for regulating the importation of germs and other passengers...passed 22d April, 1794', OAA, pp. 58-9. Also see Appendix 2, pp.432-3.

2). 'An Act Establishing an health board as a corporation...passed 29th January, 1818', OAA, pp. 109-10.

3). R.A. Smith, Philadelphia as it is, in 1852 (Phila., n.p., 1852) p.375.

4). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.43-5.

5). Ibid., pp.214-6; An Act Providing for the relief and employment of the poor of the city of Philadelphia and the district of Southwark, and the townships of the Northern Liberties and Penn...passed 5th March, 1828', OAA, pp.156-7. Also see Appendix 2, pp.433-4.

6). P.C. Ferguson, op. cit., p.284.

Public Education established in 1818 gave 24 seats to the districts of Moyamensing, Spring Garden, Northern Liberties and Southwark.<sup>1</sup> In 1827 the city gained control of the board when the number of representatives allowed to it was increased to 36.<sup>2</sup> But the districts regained control in 1842 when the total number of directors was increased to 111, only 54 of which were to be appointed by the city.<sup>3</sup>

Contests between the city and the districts over the provision of and the payment for municipal services and over the control of county-wide political bodies such as the Guardians of the Poor, provided the framework in which a competitive party system could develop locally. The increasing involvement of parties in city politics threatened the business elites' control over municipal government as the district leaders could align themselves with that state-wide party or party faction (usually Democratic) which opposed the interests of the city's political leaders in the state legislature. The district leaders could then draw on the support of these state-wide, anti-urban coalitions to press for legislation in state government and alter the charters of the various political corporations in the city in order to minimize city leaders' political control.<sup>4</sup>

Political conflict between the city and the districts made the Consolidation Act, first proposed in 1851, a highly disputed

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1). 'An Act Providing for public education...passed 3rd March,, 1818', OAA, pp.111-12. Also see Appendix 2, p.435.

2). 'An Amendment to An Act Providing for public education...passed 12th February, 1827', OAA, pp.151-2.

3). 'An Amendment to An Act providing for public education... passed 1842', p.269.

4). Kim T. Phillips, op. cit., passim.

issue.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the promise of effective administration of the municipal corporation and, more importantly, the financial benefits that consolidation offered to both the city and the districts, were two compelling reasons for the passage of the bill by the legislature in 1854. The consolidation, then, can be seen in part as another in a series of administrative reforms designed to eradicate internecine political strife and competition within the city government's many affiliated departments. None of these reforms, however, sufficiently reorganized the executive departments of the municipal administration to make much of a difference to administrative practices. Moreover, the resulting growth in the scale of the municipal bureaucracy only increased state-wide parties' involvement in city politics as the perquisites and patronage available therein continued to expand exponentially.

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Elites' self-interested direction of the municipal administration had one other consequence which threatened their ability to remain in political control of the city government. In several ways, the administration of city government, perhaps quite unintentionally, increasingly began to reflect the nascent social class differences between the business elites who predominated in the local government and the majority of the people of Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup>

Business elites' administration of municipal government perhaps first reflected social class divisions in the city in 1817

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1). See Chapter 3, pp.171-6.

2). See Chapter 1 pp.68-70 for a discussion of social divisions.

when the city councils passed an ordinance which established the city solicitor's office. The city solicitor had two roles: to draft the bonds, obligations, contracts, leases, conveyances and assurances for the city which were necessary in an expanding corporation, and to protect the corporation in legal defense and prosecute on its behalf.<sup>1</sup> Some of the cases brought by the city solicitor involved non-compliance with the city's regulations in relation to the payment of taxes, water rents and the maintenance of private and public property.<sup>2</sup> Though such cases were rare during this period, the apparatus for their prosecution was established, heralding the development of a new relationship between the business elites who directed the city corporation and the citizen. The emergent relationship was a bureaucratic one. It involved in increasingly complex rules and regulations, the city, personified by its growing number of appointed agents, and the citizen, turned client or user of the city's services.

The establishment in 1850 of a system of ward representation on the city councils also reflected in the municipal political organization the growing class divisions between the business elites who dominated city government and their predominantly working-class constituents.<sup>3</sup> The city's charter of 1789 provided for Philadelphia to be divided into 12 political wards. Each ward elected its own tax assessor, collector and constable of elections.

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1). 'An Ordinance Providing for the appointment of an attorney and solicitor for the corporation of the city of Philadelphia....., passed 10th April, 1817', OAA, pp.108-109.

2). J.W. Crum, op. cit., pp.53,62-63.

3). W.W. Cutler, III and H.F. Gillette, Jr., 'The Emergence of the Modern Metropolis', p.12.

Yet voters in every ward saw a full slate of candidates for city offices.<sup>1</sup> As the population of the city grew, political wards were subdivided so that by 1846 there were 17 wards in the city.<sup>2</sup> In 1850, the 17 wards were made election districts, each running its own candidates for city council.<sup>3</sup>

Developments in the police force also reflect growing class divisions in urban society. From the 1790's the only police force in the city consisted of 39 night watchmen and 15 day police appointed by the city commissioners.<sup>4</sup> 54 policemen were sufficient in a city small enough to rely upon voluntary assistance in the apprehension of criminals.<sup>5</sup> Policemen earned their pay primarily by collecting debts, delivering warrants and serving papers.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, their jurisdiction extended only to the city's boundaries. A thief on the run simply had to step across Vine or South Streets into one of the districts to avoid arrest. When this eighteenth-century policing system encountered mid-nineteenth-century urban violence, it of course proved inadequate. After the

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1). 'An Act For dividing the city into fifteen wards and providing for the choice of judges of general elections and for other purposes, passed 3d March, 1826', OAA, pp.145-147.

2). Ibid.; Division of Wards....., passed 4th February, 1846', OAA, p.296.

3). 'Resolved by the select and common councils of the city of Philadelphia, that the several wards in the said city be and they are hereby divided into the following described election precincts, and that hereinafter named places are appointed for the holding of the elections therein, in obedience to the requirements of an Act of Assembly approved 28th day of April, A.D. 1851.....', OAA, pp.387-393; 'An Act Regulating the election in the city and incorporated districts of the county of Philadelphia....., passed 28th April, 1851', OAA, pp.382-385.

4). P.C. Ferguson, 'The Response to Need', pp.6-7. Also see Appendix 2, p.437.

5). Ibid., p.17; S.B. Warner, Jr., The Private City, pp.115-132.

6). M. Feldberg, The Philadelphia Riots of 1844, pp.6-7.

nativist riots in 1844, leading members of the community formed a temporary voluntary patrol the largest contingent of which consisted of 70 men from the Philadelphia Bar Association.<sup>1</sup>

A patrol group of gentlemen lawyers, however, was neither a realistic nor a long-term solution to the recurring problem of urban violence; property was too valuable and was becoming too expensive to insure to risk testing how long such a solution would succeed.<sup>2</sup> The councils, therefore, appropriated sufficient revenues to provide adequate protection and the police force was expanded accordingly.<sup>3</sup> In 1844, the councils successfully appealed to the state legislature to create a city militia to assist the police force until the force could be reorganized and expanded, and in 1851 a consolidated county police force consisting of well over 1,000 men was established.<sup>4</sup> The provision of an adequate police force, however, only compounded the city's financial crisis: by 1850, expenditures on the police department represented 22% of annual expenditures, second only to interest payments on the city's loans.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the enlarged police force was placed under the control of the office of the mayor. This made control of the mayor's office the key to literally thousands of political appointments. The introduction of a consolidated police force, therefore, only provided greater incentive to state-wide parties to compete for the spoils available in local government.

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1). Ibid., pp.115-132.

2). See p.130, footnote 2.

3). See Appendix 2, pp.437-8 for the growth in the police force.

4). Elizabeth Geffen, 'Violence in Philadelphia in the 1840s and 1850s', p.404.

5). See Appendix 1, Table A1.2, p.424.

The final example of how social class divisions were reflected in the business elites' handling of municipal affairs is revealed in the history of the city's fire department. Fire companies traditionally consisted of volunteers organized by Philadelphia's leading citizens, most notable among them Benjamin Franklin and Roberts Vaux. In 1824, the councils established a committee on legacies and trusts which was responsible for distributing the annual grants of the councils to the various companies. Its only sanction was to withdraw its financial support.<sup>1</sup> But such measures were not normally taken. After all the fire companies consisted of the same men who sat on the city councils and on the boards of its banks, insurance companies and merchants' societies.

As the city's population and the area of settlement expanded, so too did the need for more fire companies, and between 1823 and 1846 the social profiles of the volunteer firemen changed. The companies became workingmen's associations and fraternal organizations. Putting out fires was only one activity in which the fire companies participated. Parading on the Fourth of July in smart uniforms bearing the colors and insignia of the company was a favorite annual event. Brawling with neighboring companies could be enjoyed more frequently. Travelling to various cities to visit other companies and entertaining at home were also part of a fireman's life. As a result of all this, effective fire fighting

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1). Andrew Held Neilly, 'The Violent Volunteers: A History of the Volunteer Fire Department of Philadelphia, 1736-1871' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis 1960), pp.48-50.

suffered; brawls tended to arise when two or more companies simultaneously reached the same fire plug nearest the blaze.<sup>1</sup> The increase in fire insurance rates between 1832 and 1853 depicts the extent of the problem; they rose by over 200%.<sup>2</sup>

The city's leaders could do little to check the raucous behavior of the fire companies as they were dependent on their services and on their electoral support. In 1832 a special joint committee of the councils was formed to investigate a rapid growth in the number of fire alarms in the city. That year there had been 60 false and 50 real fire alarms in Philadelphia. As many as 30 of the real alarms had been called for supposed incendiaries. The committee found that both false alarms and arson had a common cause; they were both means by which antagonistic fire companies drew one another into pitched battles in the streets.<sup>3</sup>

Establishing the nature of the problem was not, however, tantamount to solving it. The councils could not simply abolish the volunteer fire companies and replace them with a consolidated municipal fire department. The fire companies filled a necessary and useful role. They put out fires and, despite their disreputable record, they often saved lives and property. Moreover, they rendered their services to the city at a very minimal cost to the municipal government. As important a constraint upon the councils' ability to reform the fire companies was the fact that the

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1). Ibid., p.60.

2). J.W. Crum op. cit., p.54; 'Bruce Laurie, 'Fire Companies and Gangs in Southwark', in Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller, eds., The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Group and Lower-Class Life, 1790-1840 (Phila., Temple University Press, 1973), passim.

3). A.H. Neilly, op.cit., p.60.

companies were powerful local workingmen's associations which, if provided with generous contributions from the city councils and from local insurance companies, could influence popular electoral behavior. It is not surprising, then, to find in the database that 17% of the city councilmen that served between 1800-1854 were trustees of insurance companies. In the later period, 1841-1854, nearly one-third of the city councilmen were directors of such companies. This may suggest that insurance companies' contributions to the fire companies became increasingly important to the business elites as a means of maintaining their political support amongst the urban working class. Philadelphia's councilmen were, therefore, reluctant to reform or abolish the fire companies even as they desired certain reforms in the firemen's behavior.

If the city's business elites were unable to sustain themselves politically without the fire companies' support then they had to accept the lesser of two evils and tolerate the volunteers' behavior. But they could not condone it. In 1837 a Board of Control of the Fire Department was established to oversee the distribution of municipal funds to the fire companies, and to withhold funds from any company found guilty of inciting brawls with other companies.<sup>1</sup> Despite numerous complaints there were never any prosecutions. In 1840, the councils added to the board of control two members from each company. In addition, the mayor appointed one member of each company to protect private property and quell riots at the scene of a fire and to report miscreants to the board of control.

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1). Ibid.

These acts represented political leaders' 'concern' over firemen's practices but were completely ineffective in establishing the councils' control over the fire companies' behaviour.<sup>1</sup> Given elites' reliance on the fire companies for political support, these feeble attempts at their reform probably did more harm than good. Indeed, they only met with the fire companies' disdain and stimulated firemen's discontent with business elites' political leadership.

During the period, then, commercial elites took advantage of their political dominance in the city to use municipal resources to their personal advantage through their direction of public works and services. Elites' self-interested direction of municipal works and services had a number of unforeseen consequences, particularly because political outcomes were shaped by the fragmented structure of city government. First, since personal rather than public interest governed the municipal administration, sound financial management and long-term planning of municipal works and services was rarely taken into consideration. Hence, financing the expanding business of municipal works and services soon became something of a problem. In a series of responses to impending financial crises, elites consolidated their control over the administrative and executive authority in government. This alleviated the problem to a certain extent, but had the unintended consequence of making elected offices the key to control over the city's financial resources and over numerous appointments in the

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1). 'An Ordinance Appropriating to fire companies, passed 21st May, 1840', OAA, pp.247-248; A.H. Neilly, op.cit., p.68.

municipal civil service. With the development of a two-party system, this organization of municipal authority encouraged political parties to compete for control of municipal government and its resources which were valuable in building up state-wide party organizations. The intensification of conflict between the city and the districts was a second consequence of business elites' self-interested political activities in local government. City-district competition also enabled state-wide parties to develop locally by anchoring themselves to existing local contests.

Finally, developments in the city solicitor's office, the introduction of a ward system of council elections and the operation of the fire department, indicate a third consequence of business elites' administration of municipal government. That is they reflected in local government social class divisions and conflicts that were developing in the city as the result of industrialization. As long as the urban working class had no access to the political arena, such conflicts had little effect on business elites' direction of municipal government. As we shall see in the next chapter, however, the increasing involvement in local government of mass political parties changed all that. Popular parties expanded the opportunities that were available to non-elites to influence city government and consequently restricted business elites' ability to direct or even to predominate in the local political arena.

CHAPTER THREE  
PARTY POLITICS AND URBAN CHANGE

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The administrative, financial and political problems which developed in a significant measure from the business elites' self-interested administration of municipal government were only compounded by political developments at the state level, particularly the development of a competitive party system. Prior to 1800, political parties in Pennsylvania and in the nation generally were informal and frequently shifting associations between men with broadly similar ideological views about the proper role for democratic government.<sup>1</sup> The Federalist party emphasized that national and state governments should play an active role in protecting and stimulating the nation's commerce. Jefferson's Democratic Republicans, on the other hand, emphasized the value of preserving the individual rights of the yeoman farmer and of limiting prerogatives of the state and federal governments. Paradoxically though, after Jefferson won the presidential election of 1800, the Federalist party all but ceased to exist. By 1812, the promotion of commerce and industry had been established by the Democrats.<sup>2</sup>

By the 1820s, highly contested issues of economic policy had moved some states back towards a two-party system. Pennsylvania was

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1). R. P. Formisano, 'Federalists and Republicans: Parties, Yes - Systems, No', p.38.

2). Amy Bridges, A City in the Republic, pp.27-8.

no exception. Moreover, in Pennsylvania, as elsewhere, contests over state economic policy more often than not tended to divide representatives from the cities and their immediate hinterlands, and the representatives of the rural areas of the state.

It was in this context of urban-rural political competition that the second party system developed in Pennsylvania between the 1820s and the early 1850s. While the Whig and Democratic parties of the second party system may not have been direct descendants of the Federalist and Democratic parties, it is safe to say that the Whigs of the second party system, like the Federalists of the first party system, tended to promote an economic role for state government which promised to benefit the economy of the city of Philadelphia. The Democratic party in each party system, on the other hand, promoted the interests of workingmen in the trades and in agriculture which, the Democrats claimed, were threatened by the limited privileges of a minority, wealthy and implicitly urban-based business aristocracy.

The urban polity was not a passive agent in the development of the second party system. As has been seen, the administration of municipal government by the business elites prepared the way for the local elaboration of parties. This chapter will show first how urban business elites' activities in state government augmented the process of party development and second, the effects of party development upon urban politics specifically and on urban society generally.

The city's business elites had to participate in state government if only because locally-available resources were insufficient to benefit the city's economy to any great degree. Larger fruits were available for that purpose at state level, but there Philadelphia's political representatives had to compete with other regional political leaders whose interests in the development of state economic policy often made them oppose bills which promised to benefit the city's economy. Legislation which benefited the city could not always be won, therefore, without political alliances with other regional factions. By the mid-1830s, therefore, parties began to develop from the necessity of creating state-wide coalitions which could advance legislation without reproducing regional divisions over economic policy.

Municipal government was not unaffected by these developments. As state-wide parties became increasingly involved at the local level, they introduced into local politics issues which were drawn from national and state politics. Hence, urban business elites who had once agreed on matters of municipal governance found themselves divided when local campaigns were fought on issues imported from the state and national political arenas.

To demonstrate this proposition a database was constructed consisting of the names of 196 people whose voting preferences were known in elections occurring between 1818 and 1825.<sup>1</sup> During this period, business and political leaders in the city of Philadelphia

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1). Names from J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884, I, pp. 595-611.

were becoming increasingly insistent that the state should build an intra-state transportation system of canals and railroads to compete with the Erie Canal in providing a route from eastern seaports to the western territories on the Great Lakes. The names in the sample were chosen from amongst the presidential electors for the various party factions in the county of Philadelphia in 1820 and in 1824, and from the names of committees of correspondence and party associations which were active in nominating candidates for county offices between 1814 and 1824. These elections were chosen because they were not contested over issues of state economic policy. County electors and members of committees of correspondence were selected because the voting preference of these individuals was certain.

The names of over 50 of these known voters also appear in the database which was compiled to assess how far the city's political leaders were members of the city's community of leading merchants and financiers. 25% is, in this case, a sizeable percentage considering that the greatest number in the sample had to be taken from county political associations with which few if any city residents were likely to be associated. When individuals were grouped according to their participation on boards of the city's leading economic institutions, it was found that there was no relationship between type of business - bank, transportation company or commercial institution such as the stock exchange - and voters' preference. Within companies where the voting preferences of several directors could be established, it was also found that directors were divided in their partisan choices in county and

national elections. Even the directorate of the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements which actively lobbied in state government for the public works projects, was found to be politically divided in its members' choices for county elections and for the presidential election of 1824. In state elections which were frequently fraught with regional conflict over economic policy, on the other hand, it was found that the directors of internal improvement societies, and banking and commercial institutions for whom voting preferences could be established, supported the factions of the Democratic party which supported and eventually inaugurated a transportation policy favorable to urban commerce. Contests over state economic policy, then, seem to have fostered political consensus amongst Philadelphia's business leaders who were otherwise prone to political divisiveness in county and national political contests.

These data question explanations of urban political reform which are based on the development of class conflict between industrial and commercial capital respectively. The disruptive effects of non-economic issues on the urban elites' political consensus were apparent as early as the 1820s. In fact, a number of internalist accounts of Pennsylvania politics show conclusively how divisive party politics were amongst Philadelphia's business elites. Their arguments need not be rehearsed here.<sup>1</sup> What is less well

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1). See the series published in Harrisburg by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission which includes: C.M.Snyder, The Jacksonian Heritage, R.L. Brunhouse, The Counter Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776-1890 (1942), H.M. Tinkcom, Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790-1801: A Study in National Stimulus and Local Response, (1950), and S.W. Higginbotham, The Keystone in the Democratic Arch: Pennsylvania Politics, 1800-1816, (1952). Also see Alan Zachary, 'Social Thought in the Philadelphia Leadership Community';

documented is the affect of party politics on urban government as party competition exacerbated the contradictory tendencies that were already developing from the business elites' municipal administration.

In Philadelphia, the emergent party system provided a framework in which city-district competition over the costs and benefits of municipal services developed. Consequently, conflicts between city and districts were often expressed in terms of issues then current in state politics. Similarly, issues arising from the arena of state politics began to influence factional competition in matters of local government. A further consequence of party competition was that it popularized political issues which began to inform city dwellers' interpretations of the class, ethnic, racial and religious heterogeneity of the industrializing urban community and to intensify latent conflicts between class, ethnic, racial and religious groups. In turn, conflicts between urban social groups provided competing party factions in the city with the opportunity to build their organizations. In this respect, the development of party politics promoted changes in the structure of urban society. Importantly, popular politics and conflicts between different urban social groups had a dramatic impact on the organization and conduct of the local polity; they constrained the opportunities available to business elites to dominate elected office, to direct municipal

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Douglas Eugene Bowers, 'The Pennsylvania Legislature, 1815-1860: A Study of Democracy at Work', (Chicago, University of Chicago Ph.D. thesis, 1974); John Frederick Coleman, 'The Disruption of the Pennsylvania Democracy, 1848-1860' (Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Ph.D. thesis, 1970); H.R. Mueller, The Whig Party in Pennsylvania (N.Y., Columbia University Studies in Political Science, 1925).

resources according to their economic interests and to overcome the growing financial and administrative problems of municipal government.

The second party system emerged in Pennsylvania between 1800 and 1850 in three distinct phases of rural-urban competition over state economic policy, although each phase was initiated under similar conditions. Philadelphia's business elites, responding to imminent economic problems, sought to utilise the resources available in state government. The policies and legislation necessary for Philadelphia's commercial interests were not, however, always politically practical in state government where rural factions predominated and were suspicious of urban political advances.<sup>1</sup> When legislation beneficial to the city did manage to pass the state assembly, it did so only after legislative log-rolling had transformed the initial legislation into something radically different than which had been proposed initially. Such legislation, in fact, often created qualitatively new economic problems for the city's businessmen, thereby altering their interests in state government and beginning the political cycle again. With the commencement of each new period, new political means were found of consolidating the necessary regional coalitions that would support urban interests in the state legislature. After 50 years, the political cycle had become fully elaborated and politics in the

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1). L. Hartz, Economic Policy and Democratic Thought, pp.10-13. He argues that sectional competition over state economic policy forced antagonistic regional groups (urban and rural) to present their interests under the cover of a liberal ideology which did not threaten to reproduce regional conflict.

state of Pennsylvania were dominated by state-wide political organizations which competed over issues that were carefully designed to avoid the intense regional conflicts which arose over state economic policy.

The first period began immediately following the Revolution, when Philadelphia's commercial leaders began to lobby aggressively for legislation to incorporate locally-owned banking and transportation companies.<sup>1</sup> Their political activities were intensified when the Embargo Act of 1807 caused a recession in foreign trade, so making internal commerce more important and the private capital necessary to support it more scarce.<sup>2</sup> With respect to banking legislation, Philadelphia elites were politically so successful that in 1803 the Philadelphia Bank succeeded in obtaining a charter from the state despite the fact that the state government was already heavily invested in the Pennsylvania Bank which was also located in the city and hence a natural competitor. The state's reluctance to charter an organization which was in direct competition with its interests was overcome when the Philadelphia Bank offered a \$135,000 bonus to the state for the privilege of its incorporation.<sup>3</sup>

The period also witnessed the liberalization of transportation charters as the state began to incorporate and invest in turnpike and canal companies.<sup>4</sup> Liberal incorporation legislation

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1). Thomas Cochran, Frontiers of Change: Early Industrialism in America (N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1981), p.21.

2). D. Lindstrom, Economic Development in the Philadelphia Region, pp.2-3.

3). L. Hartz, op. cit., pp.52-56; J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, History of Philadelphia, I, p. 525.

4). Louis Hartz, op. cit., pp.82-9, 129.

could not, however, succeed if its benefits were seen to be uniquely urban. Rural factions, therefore, began to acquire the necessary legislation to establish regional banks, highways and canals. The liberalization of state banking policies promoted a period of wild speculation after 1814 resulting in a panic in 1819 and a subsequent recession which lasted until 1823.<sup>1</sup> The state government, however, had become so dependent on the income that it derived from the bonuses that banks paid in return for their charters that the banking act of 1824 only reiterated the state's liberal position on banking corporations.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the liberal incorporation of transportation companies, the system of state-wide transportation that had emerged by 1820 was disconnected and chaotic. At the same time, Philadelphia had fallen second to New York City in foreign commerce and was being threatened by Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> When the Erie canal commenced operation in 1825, members of the city's business community established the Pennsylvania Premium Society to petition the state to provide an inner-state canal and railroad network.<sup>4</sup> Philadelphia's business leaders, unable to find sufficient capital for such a system in the private sector, proposed that the state overturn its policies which supported local and private transportation companies by underwriting the expense of the project. The second period of urban-rural political contests began,

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1). Ibid., pp.47-52.

2). George Terry Madonna, 'The Pennsylvania Jacksonians and the Bank War' (Del., University of Delaware Ph.D. thesis, 1975), p.13.

3). D. Lindstrom, Economic Development, p.40.

4). For further discussion of the Pennsylvania Society see Chapter 1, pp.55-6 and Chapter 2, pp.99-102.

therefore, as internal transportation became increasingly important as a means to revive the city's depressed economy.

In 1829, the Pennsylvania Society managed to push through the state legislature its planned transportation project, which provided for canals and portage railways between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.<sup>1</sup> At a total estimated cost of \$11,000,000 the public works were to be paid for out of state tax revenues and by state loans subscribed to by the various benefiting localities.<sup>2</sup>

Philadelphia's business elites, however, could not direct the administration of the state works. Although no political faction contested the utility of the works or the right of the state government to pay for their construction, sectional conflict did emerge over their routing as representatives of communities which were not along the projected main-line lobbied for state-built branch-lines.<sup>3</sup> The political log-rolling that ensued resulted in the state undertaking the construction of both main- and branch-lines simultaneously.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the state works which were completed after seven years were poorly connected, and extremely costly. In 1835, the total cost of the works, including original investment, operating expenses and interest on loans, was \$101,611,234. Over \$22,000,000 of the total cost of the works had been paid for by state borrowing and by 1835 the public works debt accounted for almost 90% of the state's total debt. In the same

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1). Joseph S. Clarke Jr., 'The Railroad Struggle for Pittsburgh. Forty-Three Years of Philadelphia-Baltimore Rivalry, 1828-1871', PMHB, 48:1(1924), pp.1-2.

2). N.B. Wainwright, 'The Age of Nicholas Biddle', p.270.

3). George Terry Madonna, *op. cit.* p.13.

4). C.M. Snyder, The Jacksonian Heritage pp.23-6.

year, income from the state works amounted to \$684,357, only slightly more than half of the \$1,169,455 due in interest on the state's public works debt.<sup>1</sup>

The financial loss to the state caused by the expense of the public works was compounded in 1832 when Andrew Jackson vetoed the charter of the Second Bank of the United States, one of Pennsylvania's primary sources of credit.<sup>2</sup> In 1835, the state of Pennsylvania came to an agreement with financial leaders in the city of Philadelphia designed to save both the public works and the bank. The state incorporated the Second National Bank calling it the Bank of the U.S. In return for its charter, the bank cancelled some of the state's public works debts and subsidized public expenditure in rural areas. In all, the bank subscribed to stock in four railroad companies, one navigation company and five turnpike companies; its subscriptions ranged from \$5,000 to \$200,000 and totalled \$675,000. Grants of financial assistance were also given to ten turnpike companies ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 and totalling \$139,000.<sup>3</sup> The bank proved incapable of meeting these financial obligations and it was forced to close in 1841. By this time, however, capital

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1). L. Hartz, op. cit., p.149.

2). The bank wars, like the development of the state works were linked to Philadelphia's competition with New York City, Harry N. Scheiber, (ed.), 'Some Documents on Jackson's Bank War', Pennsylvania History, 30:1(1963), pp.46-47; L. Benson The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy, pp.47-54. Other comprehensive works on Philadelphia and the Bank Wars include George Terry Madonna, op. cit., Reginald Charles McGrane, The Panic of 1837: Some Financial Problems of the Jacksonian Era (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965).

3). C.M.Snyder, op. cit., pp.78-80, 137-8; L. Hartz, op. cit., pp.46-47. Also see S.B. Warner Jr., The Private City, p.137; J.S. Clarke Jr., 'The Railroad Struggle for Pittsburgh', p.3.

in the private sector was more widely available to be invested in transportation than it had been in the mid-1820s. Urban businessmen especially were becoming increasingly hostile to the public ownership of the state works and as they began to lobby for the restriction of the state's interference in commerce, they instituted a third period of urban-rural political conflict over state economic policy.<sup>1</sup>

The laissez-faire approach to state economic policy was advocated at the state constitutional convention in 1837 by the Whigs, a new political party in Pennsylvania which had the support of many of Philadelphia's leading businessmen.<sup>2</sup> The appeal was partially successful, as the convention adopted an amendment to the state constitution which prohibited the passage of omnibus bills which had, in and of themselves, increased the state's involvement in banking and transportation companies.<sup>3</sup> The Whigs also managed to advance their position on laissez-faire in 1841 and 1842 when the incumbent Democratic state administration was forced, as a matter of financial necessity, to reduce state aid to public works and to suspend interest payments on public works loans. In 1843, interest payments were again suspended. At the same time, the state was forced to liquidate most of its public holdings in order to raise sufficient revenue to meet the interest owed on its public works debt.<sup>4</sup>

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1). L. Hartz op. cit., p.168.

2). George Terry Madonna, op. cit., pp.191-2; R.H. Akagi, 'The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1838', pp.301-333; C.M. Snyder, op. cit., p.97.

3). L. Hartz, op. cit., pp.40-46.

4). Ibid., p.82.

Legislation restricting the state's interference in the economy, however, awaited the incorporation of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1846.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, the state's hold over transportation corporations, and business corporations generally, was progressively relaxed until finally in 1857, the state legislature authorized the sale of the public works to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company at a cost of \$7,500,000.<sup>2</sup> By the end of the period, legislation had been passed forbidding the state to invest in mixed corporations bringing an end to an era of publicly sponsored economic ventures.<sup>3</sup>

Members of Philadelphia's business elites, from the first decade of the nineteenth century, had turned to the authority and resources of the state to pursue their economic interests. At first they sought to establish private banking and mixed transportation companies to offset the affects of the recession occasioned by the Embargo Act of 1807, to increase the amount of available capital and to improve transportation between the city and potential markets in its hinterland. Private and largely local transportation

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1). The state legislature provided that the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company be allowed to connect its southeastern road with the city of Pittsburgh if the newly incorporated Pennsylvania Railroad Company could not raise \$3,000,000 in capital subscriptions with \$900,000 paid in by the end of July, 1847. At the eleventh hour, the Philadelphia city government, encouraged by a petition from a group of the city's business elites, subscribed \$2,500,000 for 50,000 shares to save the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. See J.S. Clarke Jr., 'The Railroad Struggle for Pittsburgh', pp.3, 9-11; G.H. Burgess and M.C. Kennedy, The Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, p.38; H.W. Schotter, The Growth and Development of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, pp.5-6.

2). H.W. Schotter, op. cit., p.20, 36-44; OCP, April 4, 1849, p.1398.

3). L. Hartz, op. cit., p.40.

companies, however, did not adequately improve Philadelphia's commercial position relative to other cities and its business and political leaders turned once again to the state to initiate a major, publicly-owned transportation project which was at that time beyond the means of private enterprise. By 1840, large-scale transportation networks were well within the means of the private sector and the publicly-owned system was beginning to be seen as interfering with commercial growth. During the third period, then, Philadelphia's business elites pressed the claim that the state should become less involved in private commercial interests.

The development of political parties in Pennsylvania and the dynamic of their competition were intimately linked with changing urban interests in the state's economic policy during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Urban interests were successful in the state government when they could be aligned with rural factions whose degree of enthusiasm for urban interests was related to their current share in the governance of the state. Urban-rural coalitions so established would then attack the current administration for its inegalitarian practices and its bestowal of aristocratic privileges on various political groups. Reformers used such inflammatory rhetoric to expand their popular support. Other methods of overthrowing incumbents included attempts to reform the nominating process which at least initially was open exclusively to political elites at city, county, state and national levels of government. The result of reformers' activities, of course, was the increasing

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1). Ibid., pp.10-13.

popularization of current political issues and the development of greater opportunities for wider political participation.

Philadelphian political leaders managed to gain control of the state administration in this way several times throughout the period. Moreover, each wave of Philadelphian ascendancy in state government preceded changes in state economic policy. A Philadelphia faction dominated state government in the 1800s when the state adopted a liberal incorporation policy towards urban banking and transportation companies, in the late 1820s as the public works was begun and in the late 1830s as the state began to withdraw from its direction of capital-intensive transportation projects.

Each period of urban political success in state government was quickly followed by a period of decline, and this helps to account for Philadelphians' inability to direct the economic policies that they had introduced. Having obtained office, one-time reformers themselves became the objects of reform and the new opposition employed mechanisms of reform created by the then current incumbents. Moreover, in a highly factional political system, an incumbent coalition could not hope to satisfy every interested party with the distribution of patronage. Keeping spoils exclusively within the incumbent coalition subjected the coalition to impulses for reform from without. Distributing patronage to mollify political opposition often lead to the dissolution of the central coalition or to the creation of the basis for a coup from within the coalition itself. If the incumbent faction managed to distribute patronage to the general satisfaction of the greatest

number of political factions, it was bound to create opposition as it went about passing its favored pieces of legislation.

During the period, state-wide political party organizations emerged as the dialectic of urban political advance and retreat became more fully elaborated. With each wave of urban political success, coalitions were formed around issues that had no local importance which did not threaten to reproduce regional conflict over state economic policy. By the late 1820s, state factions competed with one another by appealing to the electorate in terms of national issues arising from presidential politics, the tariff issue and slavery and, by mid-century, political competition had become a matter for well-organized political parties capable of mobilizing mass support.

Another consequence of political activity at state level was that the content of American political rhetoric became rich with egalitarian and republican language; this was aggressively taken to the voters when regional conflicts over the state's economic policy became particularly intense.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, periods of particularly intense competition between various factions (and later parties) forced political leaders to mobilize greater electoral support. The 'grandstand' electoral events that occurred every three or four years for gubernatorial and presidential campaigns respectively, required better-organized and better-funded political factions than those that had existed previously. Party growth and development, by its own dynamic, encouraged wider popular participation in politics and, by the 1840s, the public's political

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1). Ibid.

activity was no longer restricted to voting once every few years. Rather, popular political participation was encouraged by parties which, by virtue of their competition with one another, were continuously forced to extend their organizations.

The development of a state-wide party system had a profound impact on urban politics; party contests gradually permeated the existing conflict between city and district governments. In 1820, the Federalist party dominated local elections to city offices but had absolutely no support beyond the city's boundaries, as was evident in its failure even to nominate candidates for county offices. In state and national government the city's Federalist political leadership threw its support behind and often led the Democratic faction which promoted pro-urban economic policies in state government.<sup>1</sup> District governments, on the other hand, were solidly Democratic and were generally opposed to the pro-urban factions of their party. Local politics continued to be based on the conflict between the city and the districts as the city's Federalists increasingly contributed to efforts to build a state-wide anti-Democratic organization. This is evident in their support of the Whig party in the 1830s and the Republican party in the mid-1850s. In fact, the success of the Consolidation Act in 1854 may in part be seen as a tribute to the success of the city's Whig politicians in undermining the Democrats' support in the county by exploiting the issue of nativism which proved to be so divisive amongst the county's working-class population.<sup>2</sup>

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1). J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, op. cit., I, pp.595-611.

2). See pp.174-6, this chapter.

The chronic competition between the city and its immediate periphery over the distribution of the costs and benefits of necessary municipal services was, therefore, reproduced in the political arena. In turn, issues which emanated from factional contests in state government often spilled over into and exacerbated city-county political conflict. On these occasions, urban interest groups which would otherwise have had little access to the public world were able to take advantage of the balance of party politics and enter the political arena.

This pattern of politics, therefore, raises doubts about those explanations of early-nineteenth-century urban politics which claim that business leaders dominated local government because, in the pre-industrial social order, workingmen were deferential to their social superiors.<sup>1</sup> Such explanations cannot account for the fact that in Philadelphia, workingmen freely and willingly organized to protect their wages and their right to organize trade unions.<sup>2</sup> This paradoxical situation suggests that the political mobilization of previously quiescent urban groups occurred when opportunity to participate in the political arena permitted. Generally, in early-nineteenth-century Philadelphia, opportunities for popular participation in politics were non-existent. It does not follow, therefore, that because non-elite groups were not active in politics, they had no interest in politics or were always content with

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1). S.P. Hays, 'Politics and Society: Beyond the Political Party', in P. Kleppner ed., The Evolution of American Electoral Systems (Conn., Greenwood Press, 1981), p.251.

2). See W.A. Sullivan, 'Philadelphia Labor During the Jackson Era', Philadelphia History, 15(October, 1948), pp305-320.

the urban business elites' political activities. Workingmen's interests did exist. They are, however, not easily discernible as being distinct from the business elites' interests since workingmen adopted elites' republican political rhetoric.<sup>1</sup>

For example, the defense of Philadelphia cordwainers, the first group of workers to be indicted for conspiring to combine to raise wages, was couched in terms of American republicanism:

If you are desirous of introducing the spirit of inequality into our government and laws, if you think that the laborer and the journeyman enjoy too great a part of liberty....such disposition...will lead you to convict the defendants. If on the other hand,...you are content with the blessings enjoyed under our constitution which secures to the citizen an equality of rights which recognizes no distinction of classes - I shall look for the verdict of acquittal.(2)

In the same year a petition to amend the constitution of Pennsylvania was submitted to the state legislature. This was one of many frequent attempts to obtain access to the resources of state government made by opposition faction. The petition, like the cordwainers' defense, was written in terms of American republicanism, equal rights and the 'prerogative of the sovereign people'.<sup>3</sup> This does not suggest, of course, that there was any

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1). This idea is developed in essays by G. Stedman-Jones published in G. Stedman-Jones, ed., Languages of Class: Studies in English Working-Class History, 1832-1982 (Camb., Cambridge University Press, 1983), see especially 'Rethinking Chartism', pp.90-178.

2). John R. Commons, History of Labor in the United States, pp. 172ff. cited in L. Bernstein, op. cit., p.326.

3). From petitions for constitutional amendment presented to the state legislatures of 1805 and 1809 respectively and recorded in the House Journal of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as cited in R.H. Akagi, 'The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1838', p.303.

direct parallel between the first period of agitation for state constitutional reform and the cordwainers' strike in November 1805. Instead, it suggests that the language of conflict was identical even if, on the one hand, the conflict was between regional political leaders with different interests in the state's economic policy while, on the other hand, the conflict was an economic one between journeymen and their employers.

As the competitive party system developed, more opportunities became available to different non-elite urban groups to participate in local politics and a number of popular political movements swept Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century. Though the various popular political movements differed in particular, they were similar in three fundamental respects. First, they occurred as a consequence of developing party competition which, on occasion, divided the city's political leadership of merchants and financiers. Second, non-elite urban groups who attained some access to the political arena shared or used issues current in the political arena to enhance their public visibility and organizational success. Third, as non-elite groups increased their public visibility and organizational success through their political participation, they helped to shape popular interpretations of social and economic changes that were occurring in urban life, occasionally giving rise to periods of violent conflict between different urban groups.

It is this last characteristic of non-elites' participation in local politics which had the most profound affect on the conduct and organization of urban politics as it dramatically altered the

context in which business elites conducted municipal affairs. City dwellers' increasing awareness of class, racial and ethnic differences that popular politics cultivated, forced urban business elites to direct municipal resources into developing the city's police force. This only compounded the financial problems which had resulted from the rapid development of municipal works and services. More important, business elites experienced a diminution of their political power in the city as their direction of municipal affairs was increasingly subject to unpredictable reactions from the urban electorate. These changed circumstances affected elites' ability to resolve the impending financial and administrative problems that had developed in municipal government since the turn of the nineteenth century; their development therefore helps to explain the evolution of the Consolidation Act of 1854.

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By 1827, the pro-urban faction of the Democratic party which had come to dominate state government in the mid-1820s had alienated many of its influential supporters. Throughout the state, disgruntled Democratic elements moved to break the hold of the so-called 'Family party' over state government by rallying popular support claiming that the incumbents were using the resources of government to advance their limited economic privileges.<sup>1</sup> This breach in the incumbent coalition of urban and rural factions coincided with a strike for a ten-hour day amongst Philadelphia's journeymen carpenters. The strike spread over several trades whose

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1). P. Klein, op.cit., pp.120-60; C.M. Snyder, op. cit., p.9.

workers combined by the end of 1827 to form the Mechanics' Union of Trades Association.<sup>1</sup> Factional competition within the Democratic party provided the opportunity for the MUTA to play some role in public politics as various factions adopted the demands of the workingmen as their own. The result was that the MUTA achieved more public recognition than would otherwise have been possible.

The MUTA's demands were based upon their recognition of emerging social inequality in the city:

The production of wealth...which must take place before it can be either exchanged or distributed, and which is of necessity first in the order of nature, instead of being made an employment of the first importance, held in the highest estimate, and the surest means of a gradual and certain accumulation, is on the contrary rendered one of the meanest, most precarious, and most unprofitable modes of obtaining a subsistence, while the mere exchange and distribution of it, is made, to the greater part of mankind, the only available means of accumulation, or even ordinary enjoyment.(2)

The source of this inequality, however, was not to be found in the economy but in the domination of government by 'the useless hoards of insatiable monopolizers'.<sup>3</sup> The legislators, according to W. Heighton, the head of the MUTA, were the worst element of the non-producing class because they were the most learned and responsible to the people, yet they favored the capitalist class with charters and corporations.<sup>4</sup> Social and economic inequality were, according

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1). W.A. Sullivan, 'Philadelphia Labor', p.315.

2). An Address to the Members of Trade Societies, and to the Working Classes Generally...By a Fellow Laborer, cited in B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.76-77.

3). Mechanics' Free Press, 10 October 1828, cited in R.A. Mcleod, 'The Philadelphia Artisans', p.135.

4). Louis H. Arky, 'The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations and the Formation of the Philadelphia Workingmen's Movement', PMHB, 76(April, 1952), p. 149.

to the MUTA, the result of the imperfect practice of republican government which if continued 'would prepare the minds of the possessors (of wealth) for the exercise of lawless rule and despotism and fight away that shadow of freedom which lingers among us'.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, the solutions which the MUTA offered were to be carried out by political elites, even as those elites were identified as the source of the problem. Educate the workingman, said W. Heighton, so that he is able to choose responsible legislators. The demands of the MUTA were demands for the rigorous application of the American republican ideal in government, not for a struggle against capitalism or the political system. The MUTA, then, was not so much a radical expression of working-class protest but the manifestation of urban artisans' interpretation of current political issues. The fact that these artisans achieved some measure of publicity is explained by the existence of conflicts both between city and district political leaders and within the city's political leadership, over the viability of investment in the public works.<sup>2</sup> The MUTA's demands, as presented in its journal, the Mechanics' Free Press, reflected its growing belief that social and economic ills could be changed within the existing structure of government provided that the republican aspects of government were

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1). Mechanics' Free Press, 25 October 1828, cited in L. Bernstein, op. cit., p.329.

2). L. H. Arky states that associations of radical artisans antedated the MUTA in 'The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations', p.142.

protected from those who sought to bestow legal privileges upon themselves.<sup>1</sup>

For example, the abolition of all licensed monopolies was for the members of the MUTA a campaign against men of wealth purchasing legal privilege in the form of corporation charters from the government; a reassertion of individual independence and equality:

Those who labor, while acquiring to themselves thereby only a scanty and penurious support, maintain in affluence and luxury the rich who never labour...[should the wealth of the nation be] absorbed by the coffers of the unproductive...the products of our labour may be accumulated by a few into vast pernicious masses calculated to prepare the minds of the possessors for the exercise of lawless rule and despotism and to fright away that shadow of freedom which still lingers among us.(2)

In their campaign to abolish licensed monopolies, however, the MUTA was simply invoking an issue - the state legislature's right to incorporate private companies - which had been the source of heated regional conflicts in state government at least since 1805, and was central in state politics in the 1820s as it underlay regional contests over the state's involvement in the public works.<sup>3</sup>

The MUTA's imitation of the then current political leadership was reflected in the very organization of its reform political party. The so-called Workingmen's party revitalized organizational techniques used by an urban-based reform movement in

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1). W.A. Sullivan, 'Philadelphia Labor', pp.313-314. Also see Edward Pessen, 'The Ideology of Stephen Simpson, Upper-class Champion of the Early Philadelphia Workingmen's Movement', Pennsylvania History, 22:4(Oct., 1955) 328-40, passim.

2). Mechanics' Free Press, cited in L. Bernstein, op. cit., p.329.

3). See N.B. Wainwright, 'The Age of Nicholas Biddle', pp.279-280.

its successful attempt to overturn rural factions' domination of state nominating conventions in the 1810s. The same movement went on to produce the Family party which dominated state government in the 1820s. The Workingmen's party, like its successful role models, formed political clubs throughout the county. The clubs elected delegates to city and county nominating conventions which then chose the party's candidates for office.<sup>1</sup>

Organizational, procedural and ideological similarities that existed between the Workingmen's party and the Family party go some way in suggesting that the Workingmen's party was little more than an opposition faction which had previously been a part of the incumbent faction. A profile of the Workingmen's political leadership confirms this view. Of the 31 leaders of the Workingmen's party in 1829, all but one were producers. They were, however, producers who belonged to specialized trades or trades over which industrialization had so far had little effect.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, both the MUTA and the Workingmen's party excluded from their ranks all casual laborers; their popular support did not come from wage earners but from proprietary producers.

Whereas the leadership of the Workingmen's party consisted almost entirely of producers, the political candidates whom they supported were consistently non-producers. In 1828, for example, the Workingmen's party supported 39 candidates for local and state offices. Only eight of these candidates ran on an exclusively

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1). P.S. Klein, op.cit., pp.128-262, passim for a discussion of the rise and fall of the Family party. L. Bernstein, op.cit. pp.331-2 for the Workingmen's party's organizational techniques.

2). See B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.85 and Chapter 1, pp.66-7.

Workingmen's party ticket. Of these only two were producers. The other 31 candidates whom the Workingmen supported were drawn from business elites initially nominated by the main political factions.<sup>1</sup>

A similar analysis of all of the candidates supported by the Workingmen's party between 1828 and 1830 found that only 10 were working men. 23 candidates were professionals, a category which included lawyers, doctors, teachers, druggists and artists, and 53 were merchants and manufacturers.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, included amongst the ranks of the Workingmen's party candidates were Charles Alexander, publisher of the conservative Philadelphia paper the Daily Chronicle, Joseph Chandler, editor of the US Gazette, and Elhanan Keyser and John Moss whose names are mentioned in Memoirs and Autobiography of Some of Philadelphia's Wealthy Citizens as having estates worth \$150,000 each. Henry Horn and Henry Troth were also Workingmen's candidates who, according to the same source, had estates worth \$50,000. Moreover, with the exception of Chandler, the names of these men appear in the database of Philadelphia's economic and political leaders. Alexander was included in Scharf's list of eminent manufacturers. Horn was a director of the Bank of Pennsylvania and the Mechanics' Bank. Moss was a director of the Commercial Bank and the Pennsylvania Company for Granting Insurance on Lives. Finally, Henry Troth was a director of the

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1). Louis H. Arky, 'The Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations', pp.171-3.

2). William A. Sullivan, The Industrial Worker of Pennsylvania, 1800-1840 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1955), pp.178-9. Three individuals had no recorded occupation.

Philadelphia and Norristown Railroad Company and the manager of the Schuylkill Navigation Company.

The party dissolved in 1831 amidst internal disputes as to whether it should continue to consider 'friends of the workingmen' as candidates even if they were non-producers. But internal divisions were only one cause of the party's demise. By 1830, the rift in the state's Democratic organization had healed somewhat as the structure of elite politics shifted from a one- to a two-party basis. The two political parties that emerged in the 1830s localized their competition by reproducing the political tensions that existed between the districts of the county and the city. As the city's Federalist leaders threw their support behind the emergent Whig party, the Democrats consolidated their political control in the districts by claiming to support the workingmen of the county in their conflict with the aristocratic and usurping merchants who dominated city politics.<sup>1</sup>

With state-wide party organizations monopolizing the interests of working men during the 1830s, there was no opportunity for an independent political movement organized by the trade unions. Philadelphia's general strike of 1836 was well organized but short-lived. The General Trades Union that it inspired was strictly concerned with working conditions and wages. Workingmen's political interests were met by the Democratic party, and many leaders of the union

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1). Kim Phillips claims that party divisions began to reproduce district-city conflicts as early as 1805 in her 'William Duane' passim. Also see B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, pp.111-5.

actively participated in local Democratic politics.<sup>1</sup> The absorption of class issues into party politics, therefore, worked against the emergence of a workingmen's party based strictly upon such issues. Nevertheless, party divisions did, to some extent, reflect differences in the social-class composition of the city and districts' populations respectively. They also provided a political ideology which informed urban groups' perceptions of those divisions and a framework in which responses to them were to be channelled.

The history of the Workingmen's party illustrates how party factionalism in state government generated issues which, when they spilled over into local politics, provided opportunities for the political mobilization of urban groups which previously had been absent from the public world. The racial riots of the 1830s and the nativist violence in the 1840s equally demonstrate how party contests generated issues which politicized different urban groups. Together the politicization of racial, ethnic and class issues compounded the social differentiation which was becoming apparent in the city. Urban social groups adopted party rhetoric to define and to organize themselves. They also publicized their interests and enhanced their organizations through participation in local politics when the opportunity arose. Such an opportunity was provided in the 1830s as party competition between Whigs and Democrats popularized conflict over abolitionism and the issue of race in general.

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1). B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, pp.111-5.

The abolitionists made their debut in Pennsylvania politics in the Anti-Masonic campaign of 1829. Though Anti-Masons never captured more than 5% of the vote in Philadelphia their campaigns popularized the issue of abolition thereby benefiting abolitionist organizations. When the Anti-Mason party was absorbed by the Whig party in the early 1830s the abolitionists' publicity continued.<sup>1</sup>

The Whig party's affinity to abolitionism is not altogether surprising. The Quaker city traditionally had been hospitable to its black residents, and black voters were faithful supporters of the city's political leaders who tolerated the large influx into Philadelphia of black refugees escaping the reaction to the Nat Turner rebellion. Black voters and abolitionists who promoted racial tolerance were, therefore, a source of electoral support for the nascent Whig party in the 1830s. As the Whigs' influence in local and state government increased towards the end of the decade, the racial issue became a source of party competition.<sup>2</sup>

In 1835, city Whigs participated in a successful gubernatorial campaign which reflected, in part, the emergence of the urban-based coalition which was discontented with the state's costly involvement in the public works. In the constitutional convention in 1837, the Democrats responded to the Whigs' political success by appealing to racial prejudice in a successful bid to exclude blacks from the franchise in Pennsylvania so as to undermine one source of the urban

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1). H.R. Mueller, The Whig Party, p.55. Also see Frank Garrity, 'The Masons, the Antimasons, and the Pennsylvania Legislature, 1834-1836', PMHB, 99(1975), pp. 180-206, for a discussion of the relationship between Anti-Masons and Whigs between 1834 and 1836; also see George Terry Madonna, op. cit., pp. 75-6.

2). E.N. Geffen 'Violence in Philadelphia', pp.383-9.

Whigs' electoral strength.<sup>1</sup> As the racial issue was popularized by party competition in the run-up to the convention, abolitionism received a great deal of publicity. One result of this was that the city of Philadelphia which traditionally had been tolerant of its black community, erupted in racial violence.

In party circles the racial issue was subject to discussions phrased in the highest moral terms. At the constitutional convention one abolitionist harangued the delegates 'to do everything...to elevate the condition of the colored race, and to make them fit to enjoy the benefits of our laws'. An opponent replied that 'to alter the order of nature, would, in all probability bring about the war between the races; a state of things that every lover of his country must reject'.<sup>2</sup> In Philadelphia, the political contest over the racial issue was, for the urban electorate, modified by parochial experience:

'Why you see a party of us one Sunday Afternoon, had nothin' to do, so we got up a nigger riot. We have them in Phi'delphy, once or twice a year, you know? I helped to burn a nigger church, two orphans' asylums and a school-house and happenin' to have a pump handle in my hands, I askedentally hit an old nigger on the head. Konsekance wos he died.'

'And you was tried for this little accident?'

'Yes I was. Convicted too. Sentenced, in the bargain. But the judge and the jury and the lawyers, on both sides, signed a paper to the governor. He pardoned me.(3)

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1). H.R. Mueller, op. cit., p.37.

2). R. H. Akagi, op. cit., pp.318-319.

3). George Lippard, The Quaker City (Philadelphia, 1876), p.409, cited in E.N. Geffen 'Violence in Philadelphia', p.388.

That racial violence in the city was, in fact, encouraged by appeals which were phrased in terms of the issues and rhetoric then current in the political arena is evident in a placard that was posted in front of the abolitionists' Pennsylvania Hall only days before it was burned to the ground. The placard read:

'A convention to effect the immediate emancipation of the slaves throughout the country is in session in this city, and it is the duty of the citizens who entertain a proper respect for the constitution of this union and the right of property to interfere'.(1)

Abolitionist Thomas Earle, used similar terms when he appealed to the constitutional convention to maintain universal male suffrage:

All exclusions which are not absolutely indispensable are pernicious. First because they are oppressive, as opposed to the natural equality of man, which is declared in our Declaration of Independence....Treat a man as an outcast and he becomes an outcast in fact, and he is ready to aid any set of men who desire to destroy your Government. There could be no doubt, then, that the strongest Government was that which exists by the voice of the whole people.(2)

The economic independence of the workingmen and the political rights of white males, two ideas which were prevalent in Workingmen's party's campaigns in the 1820s, informed reaction against the abolitionists who, less than ten years later, had gone beyond demanding political equality for blacks (which in Pennsylvania had been achieved in 1789) by touching on issues of integration.<sup>3</sup>

The racial issue, then, emerged as a consequence of state-wide party competition which, by necessity, revolved around issues which did not reproduce regional economic conflicts in Pennsylvania.

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- 1). J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, op. cit., vol. I., p.651.
  - 2). R.H. Akagi op. cit., p.318.
  - 3). S.B. Warner Jr., The Private City, pp. 129-132.

In Philadelphia, the parochial interpretation of parties' popularization of the racial issue resulted in widespread racial unrest.<sup>1</sup> Racial conflict also reinforced the existing spatial segregation of blacks and whites and the experience of belonging to different and occasionally competing urban groups.

Nativism was, like abolitionism, an issue which, when popularized through party competition, provoked violent conflict between urban social groups. Moreover, the popularization of the nativist issue provided a number of moral, religious and social reform associations with some opportunity to participate in the political arena. Party contests sparked nativist violence in Philadelphia for the first time since the XYZ affair in 1799 when, in 1835, Philadelphia's Whigs nominated an Irish candidate for the state senate in an attempt to undermine the Democrat's domination of both native and Irish working men in the county.<sup>2</sup> The difference between the ethnic unrest of 1799 and that of 1834 is that after the campaign of 1799 nativism did not continue to inform factional contests. After the 1834 campaign, however, nativism was slowly embraced by reform associations throughout the city inspiring a wave of Protestant revivialism in Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup> When, in the early

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1). See A.M. Zachary, 'Social Disorder and Philadelphia's Elite Before Jackson', passim for a discussion of business elites, Whigs and abolitionism. Also see David McBride, 'Black Protest Against Racial Politics: Gardner Hinton, and The Memorial of 1838', Pennsylvania History, 46:2(1979), pp.149-62

2). Robert James Gough, 'Towards a Theory of Class and Social Conflict: A Social History of Wealthy Philadelphians, 1775-1800', (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D.thesis, 1977), p.537-8.

3). For a general work on revivalism in Philadelphia see Marion L. Bell, Crusade in the City. Also see B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.117.

1840s nativism was once again an issue over which parties competed for local popular support, Philadelphia erupted in the worst violence that the city has ever known.

In 1837 when the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians split into two factions, the so-called 'new school' faction organized the Orange Society which, among other things denounced the evils of popery as being responsible for social and political disorder, and moral decline.<sup>1</sup> Initially, the Orange Society met with the disdain of most of Philadelphia's Protestant and Catholic leaders alike. Over the next five years, however, especially in the wake of the prolonged depression after 1837, both the membership and the popularity of many of the city's moral and social reform associations experienced something of a revival. Many such associations embraced nativism in response to perceived social disorder and moral decline. By 1842, nativist sentiment had become such a fundamental part of moral and social reform crusades that the 94 clergymen who represented 12 denominations (including the new school of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians) in Philadelphia's American Protestant Association, wrote and endorsed a constitution which pledged to bring the evils of popery to their pulpits.<sup>2</sup> By 1844, religious associations in general had firmly adopted the position that immigration and Catholicism were jointly responsible for the decaying urban moral order and as a result they became decidedly anti-papist and anti-Irish.

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1). E.N. Geffen 'Violence in Philadelphia', p. 397.

2). E. N. Geffen, 'Philadelphia Protestantism' Reacts to Social Reform Movements Before the Civil War', PMHB, 30:2(April, 1963), p.208.

Catholic groups also attempted to boost their membership by taking advantage of the growing anti-Catholic emphasis of moral and social reform associations. After 1842, Bishop Kenrick of Philadelphia and leading members of the city's Irish Catholic community intensified their efforts to give some organizational and ideological coherence to the otherwise disparate Irish citizens. Such efforts, however, produced a great deal of conflict within the Irish weaving community especially as weavers identified Catholic associations with their Irish bosses' interests. Hence, as Protestants began to focus their attention on the Irish Catholics as the cause of moral decline and social disorder, the Irish-Catholic community was involved in a violent internal struggle which increased its overall visibility as a disruptive element in the city.<sup>1</sup>

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1). David Montgomery, 'The Shuttle and the Cross', discusses how class conflict informed Irish unrest in 1842 and 1843. Wage rates for handloom weavers declined over 100% between 1835 and 1845. The Irish weavers' antagonists in their wage battle were the same Irish Catholics who posed as protagonists in Irish beneficent and religious associations. During the 1830s, weavers expressed their economic grievances within lawful bounds in negotiations with their employers over wages. In 1842 and 1843, however, Kensington and Moyamensing weavers struck against their employers' wage offers fueling a number of violent incidents which included a racial riot in 1842 and another riot in January 1843. The latter required the sheriff and 8 companies of the local militia to restore order. Unrest within the Irish community was also directed against other targets. The 1842 weavers' strike, for example, coincided with a violent protest against the Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad Company which announced plans to construct a railway through Kensington along one of the district's main arteries.

In the same year as Kensington's Irish weavers were involved in violent disputes with their Catholic bosses, nativism was re-introduced into local politics from an altogether different source as an issue over which parties competed. In 1842, temperance advocate and editor of the Temperance Advocate, Lewis Levin, attended both the Whig and the Democratic nominating conventions to lobby for the selection of candidates who supported the temperance cause. After being rebuffed by both parties, neither of which nominated pro-temperance candidates, Levin wrote that the leaders of both parties were corrupt and under the control of rumsellers. Committing himself to the eradication of local political corruption, and with the encouragement of the conservative faction of the county Democratic party, Levin, who headed a movement with over 17,000 members, established the Native American party.<sup>1</sup>

The new party initially was unable to make inroads into local politics. In 1843, it failed to elect even one of its candidates to local office. As hostility towards foreign immigrants intensified both through party contests and through the growing popularity of nativist reform associations, the Native Americans began to undermine the Democrats' hold on the districts in which the bulk of the Irish population lived.<sup>2</sup> In April 1844, the Native American party finished a very close second to the Democrats in three by-elections

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1). B. Laurie, The Working People of Philadelphia, p.37, Asa Earl Martin, 'The Temperance Movement in Pennsylvania Prior to the Civil War', PMHB, 30:3(1925), pp.195-230. The best general history of the American Republican Party in Philadelphia is in L. Tabachnik, 'Origins of the Know-Nothing Party'.

2). Ibid., pp.24-25.

for district commissioners. The party's gains only intensified the politics of ethnicity and enhanced the popularity of nativist reform associations. The nativist riots in August and September of 1844 simultaneously resulted from and perpetuated this situation.<sup>1</sup>

In the aftermath of the riots, thousands of Philadelphia's Irish Catholics scattered throughout the swamps and forest of New Jersey as the victims of the city's worst-ever violence. The perpetrators of the unrest, the Native Americans, won the support and sympathy of the public and of the courts which tried the cases for civil unrest, murder and assault. The party could not, however, turn public sympathy into electoral success and it failed to break the Democrats' stronghold over the county even as it succeeded in maintaining nativism as a salient issue in local politics.

Levin was unable to make political capital of the nativist issue. The social unrest which his Native American party helped promote, however, prompted political leaders in the city and districts to introduce certain reforms in the hope of preventing further outbreaks of election-day violence. These reforms which were specifically designed as short-term solutions to immediate problems achieved the unintended result of furthering the nascent social fragmentation of the urban community.

To reduce incidents of violence during political campaigns the district commissioners separated particularly volatile communities by redrawing ward boundaries thereby formalizing

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1). M. Feldberg, The Philadelphia Riots of 1844, p.167.

social divisions which had begun to become apparent in the settlement of urban space.<sup>1</sup> In 1847 the commissioners of Spring Garden altered ward boundaries making the district's only area in which the Irish were concentrated a separate political subdivision. Likewise, Kensington commissioners partitioned Protestant and Irish Catholic communities by dividing the district's third ward and, in 1848, the boundaries of Moyamensing and Passyunk were altered establishing Moyamensing as a largely Irish and Democratic stronghold. By redrawing ward boundaries, political leaders in the districts gave formal political expression to what was then only limited spatial concentration of Irish immigrants. In so doing, political leaders augmented the process of ethnic group formation, at least with respect to the Irish community.

Increasing the size of the police force was another means by which district commissioners and city councilmen attempted to restrain social unrest. But increasing the scale of the police force only compounded the financial and administrative problems of municipal government. Municipal revenues were too limited to sustain a vastly increased police force in 1844. This is evident in the city councils' petitions to the state legislature to provide a state-sponsored city militia. The state eventually did send a militia unit to the city but it arrived too late to be of any use in the summer of 1844.

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1). W.W. Cutler, III and H.F. Gillette, Jr. 'The Emergence of the Modern Metropolis'. p.7.

The state militia remained in Philadelphia until 1850 when a county-wide police force was established. The county force divided the cost of policing between the city and the districts. It was not, however, entirely effective since local sections of the force struggled to maintain their autonomy by subjecting directives from the elected marshal to local discretion. In 1851, for example, when the marshal ordered an increase in policemen's salaries, the commissioners of Moyamensing refused to pay their portion of the cost.<sup>1</sup>

The creation of the county force also compounded the city government's growing financial crisis. As shown in Table 3.1 (page 175), Philadelphia's population was twice that of the largest district in the county. The city councils were therefore made responsible for the largest share of the cost of the county-wide force at a time when the city's debt structure was already weakened with the burden of its investment in transportation companies.<sup>2</sup>

The consolidation movement amongst some of the city's business elites was another outgrowth of the 1844 riots and the subsequent establishment of the county-wide police force. From that time, a growing number of business elites were converted to the idea of entering into political coalition with splinter factions of the county's Democratic party in order to pass an act of consolidation through the state legislature.<sup>3</sup> This is evident from a comparison

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1). W.B. Campbell, 'Old Towns and Districts of Philadelphia', p. 139, and see Appendix 2, pp.437-8 for a description of the police forces in Philadelphia.

2). See Chapter 2, pp.108-11.

3). E.K. Price, The History of the Consolidation, p.18.

of the directorships and business affiliations of those members of the city councils who were amongst the organizers of the Native American party in 1844, and those city councilmen and affiliates who signed a petition in favour of consolidation in 1849.<sup>1</sup> Amongst the councilmen in the Native American party in 1844, relatively few held directorships of any of the city's major financial or commercial institutions. Amongst those who did hold such positions most were found to be affiliated with financial institutions which had offices in the districts. The pro-consolidation committee, however, was replete with several directors of the city's leading economic institutions including the Bank of Pennsylvania, the Commercial Bank and the Saving Fund Society. The committee also included Henry Gilpin and Thomas Sparks who had been active in soliciting local subscriptions to the stock of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Joel B. Sutherland who had been instrumental in the establishment of the state works.<sup>2</sup>

The city's business elites had several other good reasons to press for alliances with groups in the county which favored consolidation. By 1850, the city corporation was at a point of fiscal crisis having over-extended itself in railroad investments since 1846. The cost of policing, which had increased directly with the emergence of ethnic and racial unrest in the 1830s and 1840s, compounded the municipal corporation's financial problems. By the 1850s, the police force accounted for between one-fifth and

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1). Ibid., pp.14-15 for a list of members of the consolidation committee; L. Tabachnik, op.cit., pp.273-6 for a list of councilmen who were members of Native American Party.

2). T. Scharf, and T. Westcott, op. cit., I, pp.595-611.

one-third of the city's total annual expenditures.<sup>1</sup> Financial reform was, therefore, a chief concern of the advocates of consolidation who insisted that a consolidation act provide that 'no debt [should] be incurred by the... City, without contemporaneous appropriation of a sufficient annual income or tax, exclusive of loans, to pay the interest and sink the principal of such debt in 30 years'.<sup>2</sup> This 'pay-as-you-go' policy, in fact, became part of the Consolidation Act along with a number of other provisions designed to increase the city corporation's income by centralizing the administration of tax collection and by offering discounts to taxpayers for early payment.<sup>3</sup>

The administration of municipal works was also a source of economic loss to the city corporation which reformers hoped to eradicate by dividing the city's legislative and executive functions between the city councils and the various municipal departments. To ensure that a strict division of administrative and executive labor was maintained, the proponents of consolidation ensured that the reform legislation provided that no member of the city councils would 'make disbursements of public money or audit accounts thereof or perform any other executive duty'.<sup>4</sup>

Conflicts between the city and the districts also added to the city corporation's financial burden. District representatives

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1). See Statement of the Finances of the County of Philadelphia From the First Day of July, 1853, to the 30th Day of June, 1854 (Phila., n.p., 1954). Also see Appendix 1, Table A1.2, p.424.

2). E.K. Price, op. cit., p.88.

3). W.B. Campbell, 'Old Towns and Districts of Philadelphia', p.139.

4). Albert A. Bird, 'The City Councils of Philadelphia', The Citizen, (October, 1895), p.186.

controlled most of the autonomous political corporations in the county such as the Guardians of the Poor and the School Board. The districts, therefore, indirectly controlled the share of municipal expenditures which were provided for the support of these bodies. Moreover, district residents could no longer be counted on to provide the city with revenues through their use of city water as four district water works had been built since the 1830s and others were either being planned or under construction in the 1850s.<sup>1</sup> Finally, as Table 3.1 demonstrates, the population growth in the districts far outstripped that in the city. Consolidation with the districts therefore, promised a short-term increase in the city's tax base as well as greater annual increase in tax revenues.

Business elites in the city could not, however, pass the Consolidation Act without first establishing a political coalition of city Whigs and county Democrats. They therefore sought to encourage and exploit divisions in the county Democratic party. The opportunity to form a sufficiently powerful city-district coalition to pass the Consolidation Act through the state legislature came in the 1850s when nativism re-emerged as an issue in local politics.

The ethnic issue was again introduced into local politics in the 1850s as the Know-Nothing movement took hold in Philadelphia fragmenting the Democratic party once more into traditional and Native American factions. The latter were willing to enter into a pro-consolidation alliance with city Whigs in return for Whigs' advocacy of nativist policies which included the introduction of

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1). C.E. Chichester, History of the Works, pp.26-47

Sunday blue laws and other temperance measures.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Eli K. Price, a member of the city's business elites and a founder of the consolidation movement, was elected to the state legislature in 1853 by a city Whig-county Democrat coalition on a temperance-consolidation platform.<sup>2</sup> Once a member of the state legislature, Price was instrumental in the passage of the Consolidation act but never actually supported any liquor-law reform bills.

Table 3.1. The Population in the City and Districts of Philadelphia Every Ten Years, 1830 to 1850.(3)

|                    | 1830<br>(1) | 1840<br>(2) | Percent<br>Increase<br>1830-40<br>(2/1*100) | 1850<br>(3) | Percent<br>Increase<br>1840-50<br>(3/2*100) |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------|
| City               | 80,462      | 93,665      | 16%                                         | 121,376     | 30%                                         |
| Southwark          | 20,581      | 27,548      | 34                                          | 38,799      | 41                                          |
| Northern Liberties | 28,872      | 34,474      | 19                                          | 47,223      | 37                                          |
| Kensington         | 13,394      | 22,314      | 74                                          | 46,774      | 110                                         |
| Spring Garden      | 11,140      | 27,849      | 150                                         | 58,894      | 111                                         |

The extent to which the city's business elites were able to use both social reform and nativism to exploit existing divisions in the Democratic party to forge a Whig-Native American coalition is evident in the number of councilmen elected to the councils of the newly-consolidated city in June 1854. Ten select councilmen and 58 common councilmen were elected on Whig-Native American tickets as

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1). R.E. Francis 'Religious Revival of 1858 in Philadelphia', PMHB,70:1(1946), p.55.  
2). E.K. Price, op. cit., p.22.  
3). The table is derived from the 5th, 6th, and 7th censuses of the U.S. for 1830, 1840 and 1850 respectively.

opposed to the five and 14 Democrats who were elected to the select and common councils respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Although the county Democrats could not block the consolidation legislation, they could make reform less appealing to its proponents. Between the time that the consolidation bill was introduced into the legislature and the time it was signed by the governor, the district commissioners added more than \$3,500,000 to the cumulative standing debt of the districts which, after the consolidation, would be taken over by the city.<sup>2</sup> The district commissioners' last-minute spending orgy did not stop consolidationists in the city from pushing ahead with the charter reform. It produced, however, a last-minute revolt amongst the city's Whigs who feared that the districts' hastily encumbered debt would only add to the city's financial problems. The commissioners' spending spree also ensured that the municipal government's financial problems would not be resolved by the consolidation to the extent that the promoters of the reform had hoped.<sup>3</sup>

The competitive party system which evolved from rural-urban competition over the direction of state economic policy led to the popularization of politics through its own internal dynamic. The content of popular political issues informed different urban groups' interpretations of the changing city environment and even provided

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1). J.A. Scott, 'Capitalism and the City', p.145.

2). See Statement of the Committee on Finance...for the year 1853. Also see Appendix 1, Table A1.3, p.425.

3). H. Leffman, 'The Consolidation of Philadelphia', p. 30.

some non-elite groups with access to the political arena. The process was a dynamic one. Urban social cleavages engendered the creation of local interest groups whose participation in the political arena compounded the process of social differentiation in the city. The mobilization of non-elite groups into local politics, and the general disruption of business elites' political consensus occasioned by party competition also defined the context in which municipal decision-making and public policy formation took place in the city. The Consolidation Act, then, reflects in part how the dynamic development of a competitive party system had altered the structure and conduct of local government. Eventually passed by a close margin, it provided for a new approach to municipal governance. Henceforth, leadership in municipal government would be dependent upon the creation and maintenance of effective political coalitions of ward leaders. Such men developed their political organizations within an increasingly differentiated urban society by using the resources available in the rapidly expanding business of municipal government to fund those political organizations. Public policy formation, therefore, was to be directed less and less by members of the city's established commercial and financial communities. Instead, it was increasingly governed by the competition between local party factions over their share in the patronage that was available in the city's several departments.

The political consolidation of the city and county of Philadelphia was not simply a necessary political response to one or several changes in the urban social structure. Dahl, Baltzell, Warner and Hays have all suggested that mid-nineteenth-century urban political reforms resulted from developing competition between urban commercial elites and a growing class of industrialists. In Philadelphia, however, political competition between different sectors of the business class was not prominent in 1854. The commercial elites were themselves both the instigators and beneficiaries of the city's transition from a commercial to an industrial economy. Hence, there is little reason to argue that political change in the period resulted from changes in the urban economy which threatened the economic hegemony of the traditional commercial elite and disrupted the political consensus among them. If political reform was preceded by the disruption of business elites' political consensus, then the sources of that disruption must be sought elsewhere than in the structure of the city's economy.

In Philadelphia, as in other cities, the municipal administration grew as the city's resources were invested by urban business elites into public works and services. Such municipal investments undoubtedly served a public good. At the same time, municipal works, no matter how publicly useful and/or necessary, were provided for only when urban elites could agree upon, finance and together profit from their development. Had elites acted entirely according to the public interest, the water-works

developments suggested by Benjamin Franklin in his will would have been built. The works might even have saved the city from the full impact of the yellow fever epidemic of 1798. Gas and water would have been provided to city and district residents at equal rates. Intra-city railroad routes would have been suited to the municipal corporation's budget; they would not have been extended according to the interests of Philadelphia's business elites who lived and worked on either side of Market Street.

In the walking city of 1800, the elite political consensus that was necessary to promote and build municipal works was easily obtainable. Leading businessmen lived within a city block or two of one another. In fact, most city dwellers occupied a small geographic area and therefore stood to gain directly from the city's provision of water, paving or gas. Moreover, many of the city's business leaders shared between them the directorships of Philadelphia's leading financial institutions and so stood to gain indirectly from the municipality's arrangements to finance its municipal works and services.

Urban growth, however, changed the context within which elites could establish the political consensus that was necessary for investment in municipal works and services. At the turn of the nineteenth century, most city dwellers, including the elites, lived in an area defined by a few square city blocks. Public works that were good for some of the city's inhabitants were therefore good for most of the city's inhabitants. As the undeveloped wards of the city became populated, some municipal services were discovered to benefit particular areas of the city more than others. This

situation threatened business elites' consensual administration of municipal government as happened, for example, with the routing of the intra-city railway in 1835.

Business elites' political consensus was further threatened by their activities in state government. State-wide political parties were introduced in Pennsylvania as the result of intense regional competition over the state's economic policy. As early as the 1820s, political factions were developing the means of organizing state-wide coalitions by introducing into politics issues which did not threaten to reproduce regional conflicts. Philadelphia politics were not unaffected by these developments as they promoted factionalism amongst the city's business elites over issues which did not put urban economic interests in the state's policies directly at stake.

How, then, does the history of political consolidation of the city and county of Philadelphia bear on histories of mid-nineteenth-century urban political reform which claim that reform was caused by growing divisions within the business class? Such histories seem to be well equipped to explain the withdrawal of traditional elites from municipal government and the 'corrupt' alliances between professional politicians and local industrialists which characterized late-nineteenth-century urban politics. Nevertheless, they seem to have confused the order of historical causality. In Philadelphia, in the first half of the nineteenth century, divisions in the business class did not so much cause political reform as political activity caused divisions in the business class. This

serves as only one example of the very active role that urban politics played in shaping city-dwellers' experience and perception of urban life.

The active role of the polity in the urban process is also demonstrated by the analysis of consolidation and its part in augmenting the social fragmentation of the urban community. For Feldberg, Katznelson and, to a certain extent, Cutler and Gillette, consolidation was a political reflection of social structural changes which differentiated the urban community and resulted in urban violence. It was, for these authors, a reaction of the urban business elites to the growth of an industrial working class and to the simultaneous decline in the effectiveness of traditional means of social control.

According to their analysis, socio-economic changes, especially the bifurcation of work and residence, laid the structural foundation for violent social conflict between different working-class groups, in particular the Irish, the blacks and the native-American Protestant working class. As social conflict intensified in the 1830s and the 1840s, political elites (who were also the cities leading businessmen), began to seek new ways of extending the influence of public institutions into civil life. This objective was ultimately achieved when the city and the districts of the county were consolidated in 1854.

Consolidation effectively displaced traditional means of social control - the restraints of Gemeinschaft - by laying the foundation for a complex network of public restraints which emanated from a central bureaucracy. It also effectively integrated

politically different social groups who lived in distinct parts of the city. This had two simultaneous effects on the political structure of urban life. First, consolidation centralized the administration of public life and municipal services. It provided the institutional foundation for the development of a large-scale municipal bureaucracy which could administer municipal works and services without interference from particular local working-class, ethnic and racial groups. Second, consolidation decentralized the social relations of urban society into increasingly isolated and differentiated neighborhood communities. As the administration of the municipality was increasingly removed from interference by local communities, city dwellers developed an intense localism which obscured any perception of a broader civic good. In other words, consolidation simply broadened the basis of urban parochialism as it institutionalized in the political structure emerging patterns of spatial and social differentiation.

Much as this analysis accurately describes the consequences of consolidation, there are fundamental problems in its application to Philadelphia. First, industrialization did not suddenly alter the social structure of the walking city. The fragmentation of urban society was indeed a socially disruptive process, but there is little evidence that it was well enough advanced in the first half of the nineteenth century to alone account for the violent social conflict which precipitated the consolidation. Indeed, in Philadelphia the social fragmentation in the city was itself directly related to the development of the second party system,

specifically to the increasing involvement of state-wide political parties in local political campaigns.

In Pennsylvania, the Whig and Democratic parties sought to develop state-wide organizations which could maintain winning coalitions by avoiding issues which might reproduce intense regional divisions over the state's economic policy. Moreover, the parties sought continuously to expand their popular appeal; not because party leaders were concerned to institute egalitarian principals in government, but because reformers who called for the extension of suffrage stood to gain from the votes of the newly enfranchised. In combination, popular politics and political contests over issues which were emotive rather than substantive, sparked off waves of urban violence. Political campaigns which touched on issues of class, race or ethnicity were particularly volatile because such campaigns provided city dwellers with interpretations of real but only just apparent social structural changes that were going on around them. In doing so, they confirmed and accelerated those changes.

The second problem with the analysis considered above is that it suggests that urban elites consciously used their political authority to direct social unrest into acceptable political forms through consolidation. Feldberg, for example, suggests that the institutionalization of ethnic politics legalized a form of social unrest which was at once as violent and disruptive as it was unpredictable. Katznelson, on the other hand, claims that the formalization of ethnic politics channelled potentially dangerous working-class unrest into manageable forms. There is, however, little

evidence to suggest that eminent city businessmen actually sought political alliances with splinter factions of the county Democratic party and consolidation in order to divide the working class and/or to institutionalize ethnic politics.

Consolidation was undoubtedly an elite initiative. It was, however, a response to acute and imminent municipal administrative and financial problems. In order to resolve the crises of municipal government, the city's business elites were forced to undermine the Democratic party's stronghold in the county to create a sufficiently strong city Whig-county Democrat coalition to pass the consolidation legislation through the state legislature. The emergence of the ethnic issue in the 1850s and the divisions that it caused within the county Democratic party provided a good opportunity for city elites to construct that coalition.

It is also unlikely that urban elites could have reformed city government as an exercise of social control even if they had so desired. By the 1850s, the elites' control over the municipal government was precarious at best. Moreover, the elites' political activities were confined by the very structure of the arena in which they operated. The social gap between commercial elites and their constituents had widened considerably and elites could no longer rely on the structural mechanisms which, at the turn of the century, had so effectively ensured their political predominance by limiting non-elites' access to the political arena. The city's political leaders were also constrained by the threat of intensifying city-district competition which could play into the hands of anti-urban factions in the state legislature. Finally, the city's Whig leaders

were seriously constrained in their attempts to direct municipal government by the municipality's increasingly limited financial resources.

Given the context within which the city's political leaders had to grapple with the growing problems of financing and administering municipal government, it is unlikely that they could have institutionalized ethnic conflict and undermined working-class political power even if they had wanted to. This does not mean that the politics of nativism in the 1840s and 1850s did not foster the formalization of ethnic politics and the political division of the working class. It did, and Katznelson and Feldberg are right to assert that the formalization of ethnic politics was a consequence of mid-century urban political reform. Historical consequences, however, should not be confused with historical causes. The fact that business elites were among the primary beneficiaries of consolidation and its formalization of ethnic politics does not prove that they acted intentionally to isolate politically the working-class. It points instead, in the case of Philadelphia, to the very active part that urban politics played in the urban process in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Finally, it is clear that political reform was not, as Cutler and Gillette imply, merely a functional reaction to urban population growth. The problems of administration and finance which preceded the consolidation did not simply develop as the scale of the business of municipal government outgrew its organizational capacities. Rather, such contradictions arose in part from the elites' administration of a municipal government in which authority

was extremely fragmented. Paying greater attention to short-term opportunities for profit than to long-term goals of planned municipal development, elites developed and extended municipal works and services and at the same time created problems of organization and finance. By mid-century, problems of municipal administration and finance made the governance of the city nearly impossible and reform virtually inevitable.

In the next case study - of Philadelphia politics at the turn of the twentieth century - it is clear that the consolidation did not eliminate all of the financial and administrative contradictions in city government. At least many similar contradictions plagued urban political leaders. The case study will point to other similarities between urban politics in the Progressive era and urban politics in the first half of the nineteenth century. Most notably, it shows that the interests of political actors in the Progressive era were no less narrowly selfish than those of their earlier counterparts. Consequently, in the twentieth century, the development of public policies and even political reform proceeded in much the same way as it had in the past, as the unplanned accumulation of self-interested activities, many of whose consequences were of little concern to the city's many political actors even as they were far reaching in shaping the process of further urban growth and change in Philadelphia.

PART II:  
POLITICAL REFORM IN THE INDUSTRIAL ERA,  
1890 TO 1915

In the Progressive years, the urban polity played a less prominent role than in the first half of the nineteenth century in shaping the urban environment and city dwellers' perceptions of it. Chapter three demonstrated, for example, that local politics in the first half of the nineteenth century were influential in the formation of class, racial and ethnic group identities in Philadelphia. By 1890, such identities were firmly established. Moreover, the influence of urban politics on the structure of the urban environment and on urban life had declined in the second half of the nineteenth century in relation to the growing influence of state-wide, national and international social, economic and political forces. Consequently, no one industry or group of industries in any one city, no trade association or trade union, could singly influence the shape and experience of urban life in the Progressive period. The same may be said of a city's government, its municipal works and services, political parties, booster and reform associations, and appointed and elected municipal officials. All were restricted in the influence they could have over the shape, quality and experience of urban life. Nevertheless, the organization and conduct of a city's government still had some part to play in the process of urban growth and change, and this part

has, until recently, been under-analyzed by modern historians of city politics in the Progressive period.<sup>1</sup>

Urban politics in the Progressive era was characterized by reform. In the liberal analysis as exemplified by Richard Hofstadter, George Mowry, and Arthur Mann, Progressive reform represents a middle-class reaction against the political corruption and the social and moral decay of American cities.<sup>2</sup> Urban reform movements are seen by these authors as 'a fundamental first step in the movement for reform, shortly to culminate in Progressivism on a national scale, and later to reach a sort of liberal apotheosis in the New Deal'.<sup>3</sup> This analysis, developed with reference to what reformers said about themselves and their aims, claims that for the urban middle class, working-class and immigrant concentration in the ghettos in and around downtown areas represented a serious threat to the moral and social order of the city. As important, the spatial concentration and numerical strength of the urban working-class and

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1). See, for example, William H. Issel, San Francisco, 1865-1932: Politics, Power and Urban Development (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986).

2). Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform From Bryan to F.D.R. (London, Jonathan Cape, 1962); George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt (New York, Harper and Row, 1958); George Mowry, 'The California Progressive and His Rationale: A Study in Middle Class Politics' Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 36(1949), pp.241-250; Arthur Mann, 'Partial Success in the Progressive Years', in A. Mann, ed., The Progressive Era: Major Issues of Interpretation, (Hinsdale, The Dryden Press, 1975).

3). M.H. Frisch, 'Urban Political Images in Search of Historical Context', in Lloyd Rodwin and R.M. Hollister eds., Cities of the Mind: Images and Themes of the City in the Social Sciences (N.Y., Plenum Press, 1984), p.99.

immigrant populations in comparison with that of the urban middle and upper classes, enabled corrupt political machines to control city governments.

From the 1890s, urban elites rallied middle- and upper-class voters through a variety of reform associations and succeeded in structurally reforming the municipal polity so that merit rather than patronage to the party faithful would govern the selection of the directors of the municipal corporation. As a result, the party machine and consequently the immigrant and working-class groups which it represented, became less influential in the direction of municipal affairs.

According to Frisch, the hold of this liberal historiography has been so powerful:

that revisionist critics tended to leave unchallenged its general reading of the content of urban reform ideology and analysis. Instead, they have sought to look behind or beneath the rhetoric of reform, to reconstruct the social structures generating reform elites, and to interpret their motivations and intentions in terms of the social and class divisions revealed in this analysis.<sup>(1)</sup>

Hays's and Wiebe's analyses of Progressive urban political reform which seek to establish the roots of reform in the changing social structure of the city illustrate the point. They find that although urban political reform attracted a great deal of support from the middle class, it was initiated by economic and social elites who particularly required the rapid extension of municipal works and services that were necessary to support suburbanization and further

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1). Ibid.

industrial developments in the city.<sup>1</sup> Adopting methods similar to those used by Hays and Wiebe, Haber, Schiesl and Holli also find that reform originated with urban elites, but show how it benefited urban middle-class groups, particularly in the professions, who participated actively in it and helped to determine its course.<sup>2</sup>

A similar emphasis on the determining role of the social structure is represented by Kolko and Weinstein.<sup>3</sup> These authors accept that middle-class professionals benefited to some extent from Progressive reform. They insist, however, that Progressive reform was not a middle-class movement. Instead, it was an extremely conservative movement involving urban economic elites in a quest

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1). Samuel P. Hays, 'The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era', in S.P. Hays ed., American Political History, pp.205-32; Also see in the same edition the following articles: 'The Changing Political Structure of the City in Industrial America' pp.326-56 and 'The Social Analysis of American Political History', pp.66-86; S.P. Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920 (Harvard Historical Monographs, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1959); Robert H. Wiebe, The Search For Order, 1877-1920, 1st ed., (New York, 1967); R. Wiebe, The Businessman and Reform (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1962); R.H. Wiebe, 'The Progressive Years, 1900-1917', in William H. Cartwright and Richard L. Watson, Jr., eds., The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture (Wash., D.C., National Council for Social Studies, 1973), pp.425-42.

2). 'Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1964), Martin Schiesl, The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America, 1800-1920 (Berkely, University of California Press, 1977); Melvin G. Holli, Reform in Detroit: Hazen S. Pinagree and Urban Politics (New York, Oxford University Press, 1969); M.G. Holli, 'Urban Reform in the Progressive Era' in Lewis L. Gould, ed., The Progressive Era (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1974), 133-51.

3). Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916 (Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1963); James Weinstein, 'Big Business and the Origins of Workingmen's Compensation', Labor History, 8(Spring, 1967); and J. Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918 (Boston, Beacon Press, 1968).

for a more stable social and political order. As the size and scale of manufacturing firms grew, capitalists increasingly required an industrial work-force which was educated to a minimum standard and capable of adapting to highly routinized and mechanistic jobs. Together these changes required that the municipal government provide the means by which such a work-force could be trained and reproduced and, as important, made quiescent through its political integration into American urban society.

Despite their obvious differences, both liberal and revisionist historiography examine urban political reform as a response to more fundamental changes which affected cities generally. For liberal historians such as Hofstadter, the polity changed as a reflection of the growing prevalence in American urban society of what Banfield and Wilson<sup>1</sup> refer to as a middle-class ethos.<sup>1</sup> For the revisionists, the polity is changed by urban groups whose interests in reform were shaped by changes in the structure of urban society. The problem, of course, is that the social structure of any one city cannot be thought of as entirely 'reform generating'. At least, this was the case in turn-of-the-century Philadelphia where the same structures which generated urban reform elites also acted as obstacles to the success of political reform. As chapter four demonstrates, the spatial concentration of the urban poor in the city's center, for example, provided both the social basis of boss politics and a structural source for political reform. The same may be said of suburbanization and industrial migration

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1). E.C. Banfield's and J.Q. Wilson's, City Politics, chapter 3 and p.149.

from the urban core. Both phenomena made for reform movements consisting of middle- and upper-class city dwellers; they also provided countless opportunities for professional politicians to build their party organizations and to amass enormous personal fortunes with the perquisites and patronage that were so readily available through their administration of municipal works contracts.<sup>1</sup>

Changes in the urban social structure, then, had different and competing influences on local politics. Chapter five suggests that to understand which influences prevailed over others in shaping the course of urban politics, it is necessary to examine how political structures determined the opportunities for political change. The chapter presents a narrative account of the several reform movements that occurred in Philadelphia between 1890 and 1915 and gives particular attention to the fragmented organization of executive and legislative authority in the conduct of competitive party politics and to the relationship between local and state governments. Together these political structures determined the extent to which different urban groups could gain access to the local political arena and influence the governance of Philadelphia. In this respect, the chapter demonstrates two things. First, that political changes in the Progressive era were not simply determined by changes in the urban social structure. Second, that the urban polity in the Progressive era effected the distribution of

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1). The bias of machine politics towards suburban development is a major theme in S. Mandelbaum and E.P. Moehring, Public Works and the Patterns of Real Estate Growth in Manhattan (N.Y., 1981).

political power between different urban groups even though it was no longer influential in the formation of these groups.

In chapter six, both of these themes are developed further through an analysis of the rapid extension of municipal works and services that occurred during the Progressive period in Philadelphia, as elsewhere. Analyses of municipal investments in public works and services are classic examples of how social structures are too often assumed simply to determine political responses. Urbanists assume that city governments' extended their provision of works and services during the Progressive period either as a necessary response to urban growth or as a result of urban economic elites' demands.<sup>1</sup> Chapter six examines the development of municipal works and services in Philadelphia and shows that it was neither a purely functional response to urban growth nor a reflection of economic elites' political power. Instead, it was a very complex process in which the structure of urban government itself played a determinate part.

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1). See the discussion of functional analyses of municipal improvements in pages 31-2. Also see P. Dunleavy, cit., Urban Political Analysis: The Politics of Collective Consumption (London, Macmillan, 1980), esp. chapter 1. For an elitist analysis see G. Kolko, op.cit.

CHAPTER FOUR  
SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

i

The following examination of the socio-economic and spatial structure of Philadelphia in the Progressive period is based on quantitative research which uses the political ward as the primary geographical unit of analysis. The political ward was chosen because it defines the smallest district for the decennial U.S. population and manufacturing censuses, as well as for surveys conducted by the city government's various departments and bureaus. Because ward boundaries remained unchanged for decades, it is possible to obtain for each ward reliable and comparable data about the size, ethnic and racial composition of populations, about the value of assessed real and personal property, about the rate of taxation and about the number, value and type of building operations. With these data the historian can plot changes in the structure of the urban environment by looking at changes in ward characteristics over time.

Ward boundaries were, of course, drawn without reference to the real boundaries which defined class and ethnic communities, and areas of industrial and/or commercial land-use. Because of this, a ward-based quantitative analysis of the urban social structure cannot be used to examine how changes in the urban social structure shaped community and group formations, lifestyles and intimate

attitudes and behaviors.<sup>1</sup> It can nevertheless, help to explain changes in urban groups' interests in municipal government since such interests were often defined at least in part by municipal public policies which were often implemented by wards.

One problem in using the political ward as the primary unit of analysis of the urban ecology is that in Philadelphia, wards were occasionally subdivided. In 1890, there were 33 political wards. By 1900, another eight wards had been subdivided while in 1910 and 1920, there were 47 and 48 wards respectively. This makes it somewhat difficult to make ward-based census data comparable over several decades during which wards were subdivided. To overcome this problem many studies of Philadelphia's changing social structure have simply combined the data for divided wards.<sup>2</sup> For example, in 1890 there were 33 wards. In 1891 ward 24 was subdivided creating a new ward 34 and a smaller ward 24. To compare the population of ward 24 in 1890 and 1900 respectively, the 1900 data for wards 24 and 34 can be combined and compared with the 1890 data for ward 24.

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1). Olivier Zunz, The Changing Faces of Inequality, pp.9-11; Henry Williams, 'Appendix II: Data Description' in T.Hershberg ed., Philadelphia, pp.503-23. Both projects used an area of one-and-one-quarter city blocks as the primary geographic unit of analysis.

2). Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia, 1910-1916' (Rochester, University of Rochester Ph.D. thesis, 1956); Irwin Frank Greenberg, 'The Philadelphia Democratic Party, 1911-1934' (Phila., Temple University Ph.D. thesis, 1972); William L. Quay, 'Philadelphia Democrats, 1880-1910' (Lehigh, Lehigh University Ph.D. thesis, 1969) are examples of works which have chosen to reconstitute ward data in the manner described. The exercise is made possible with John Daly and Allen Weinberg's, Genealogy of Philadelphia County Subdivisions, (Phila., City of Philadelphia Department of Records, 1966).

In this study of changes in the structure of urban society between 1890 and 1920, data for wards are reconstituted. For comparative purposes, wards in each decennial year, 1890 to 1920 have also been ranked according to their per capita concentration of blacks, foreign-born whites and native Americans. Census material was also used to rank wards according to their rate of population growth.<sup>1</sup> Tax assessment schedules, published annually by the city's Board of Revision of Taxes, contained data with which wards could be ranked according to their per capita amount of assessed real and personal property.<sup>2</sup> With data that are available in the reports of city's building commissioners, wards were also ranked by the amount and value of new building operations that went on within them, and according to whether the prevailing type of new building was commercial or residential.<sup>3</sup>

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1). U.S. Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Decennial Census. Vol.III. Population, 1900, p.677; Thirteenth Decennial Census. Vol.III. Population, 1910, pp.605-8; Fourteenth Decennial Census. Vol.III. Population, 1920, pp.86-9. The 1890 census manuscript for Philadelphia was lost in a fire. Hence ward data on foreign- and native-whites population are unavailable. The rank of ethnicity used by W.L. Quay in his analysis of the effect of ethnicity on voting behavior in 1892 therefore was used in order to rank wards according to the concentration of foreign whites in 1890. See W.L. Quay, 'Philadelphia Democrats', p.263. Data on the total populations in each of the city's wards was available in the U.S. Census Office, Eleventh Census, 1890, Vital Statistics of Boston and Philadelphia Covering a Period of Six Years Ending May 31, 1890 by John S. Billing, (Washington D.C., 1895).

2). 'The Report of the Board of Revision of Taxes', PMAM, (1890-1920). Property tax was calculated as the sum of the assessed values of all property whether assessed at farm, suburban or city rates.

3). 'The Report of the Building Commissioners', PMAM, (1890-1925).

Like other older Northeastern cities, a central business district (CBD) had developed in Philadelphia by 1890.<sup>1</sup> This is evident from the fact that wards 5-10 (colored in green on Map 4.1, page 199) in the very heart of the old city, contained the most valuable property over the period 1890 to 1920 as shown on Graph 4.1 (page 200). For most of the second half of the nineteenth century these wards housed commercial, financial and manufacturing firms, and residential enclaves. Developments in the industrial sector, however, began to disturb existing patterns of land-use by the end of the century.

Industrial development in the CBD and elsewhere in the city proceeded unevenly after the consolidation with traditional craft practices existing alongside factories. Factories themselves varied significantly in the organization of production found within them.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, large-scale manufacturing firms did come to dominate the industrial sector as the number of firms employing more than 25 people increased from 463 in 1850 to 1,269 in 1880. As importantly, the proportion of all employees in manufacturing firms which employed more than 25 people increased from 59.2% to 77.8% over the same period.<sup>3</sup> As manufacturing firms increased in size, those firms

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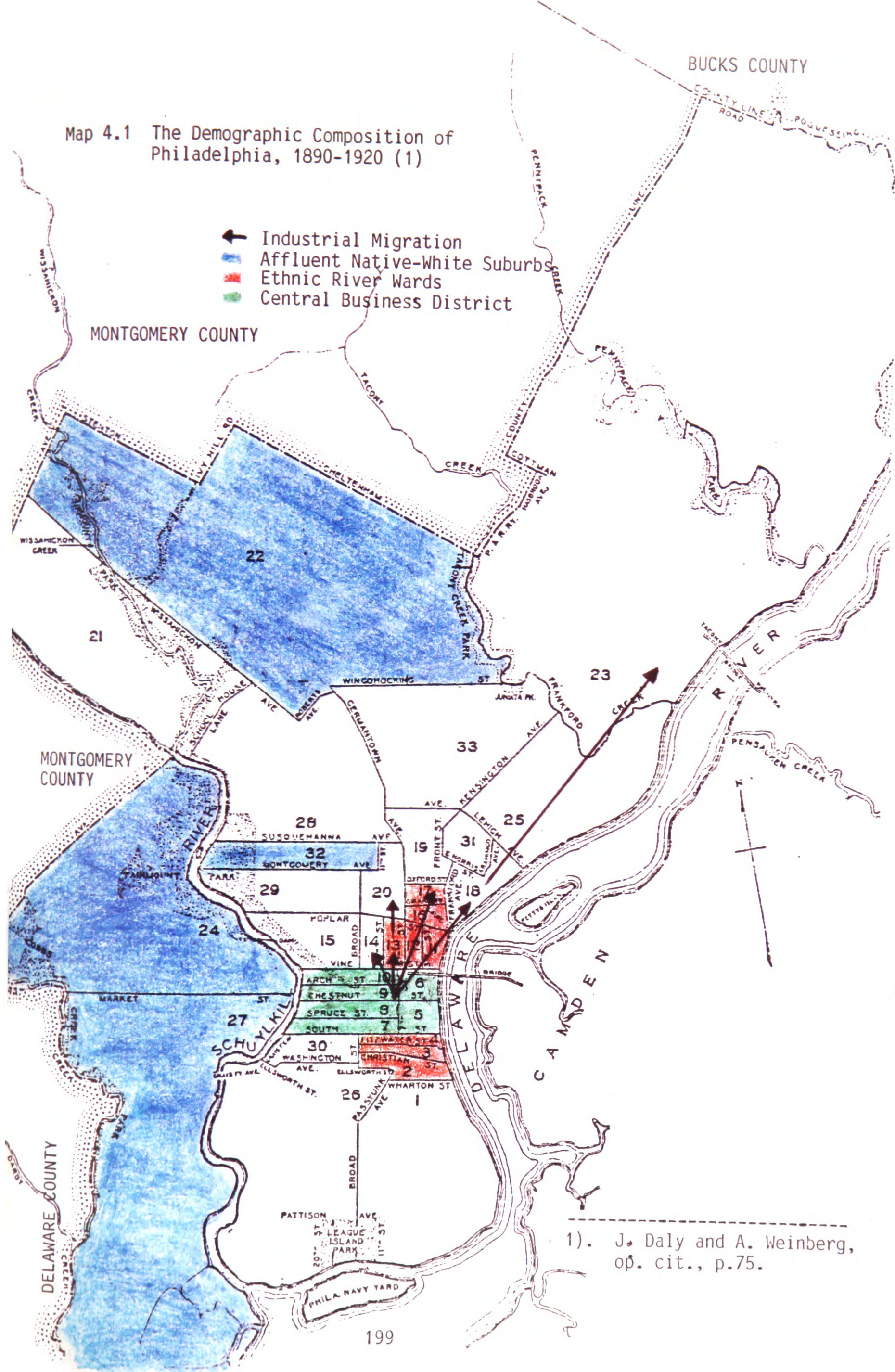
1). David Ward, Cities and Immigrants: A Geography of Change in Nineteenth Century America (N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1971), pp.87-9.

2). Bruce Laurie and Mark Schmitz, 'Manufacture and Productivity: The Making of an Industrial Base, 1850-1880', p.43.

3). Ibid., p.52.

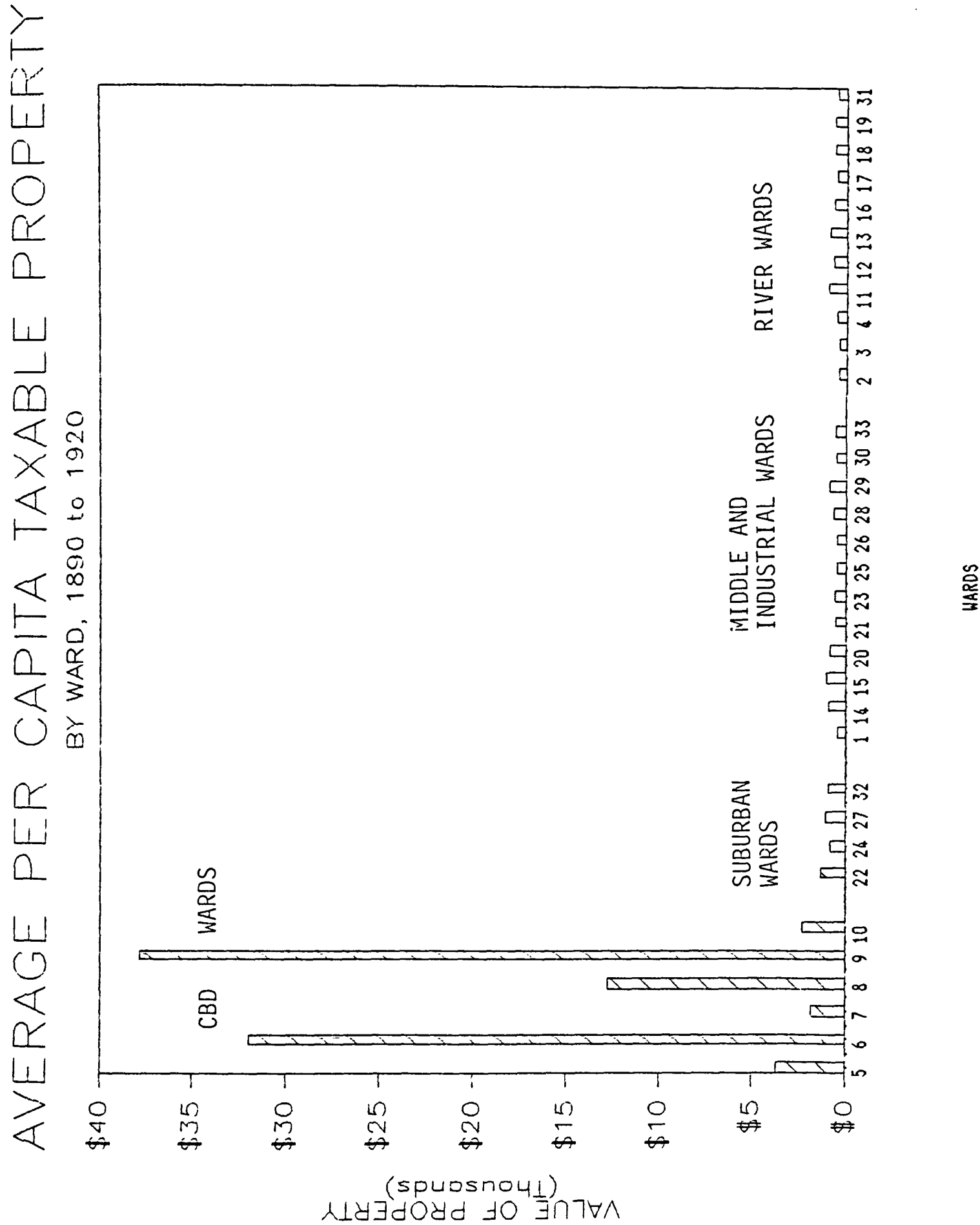
Map 4.1 The Demographic Composition of Philadelphia, 1890-1920 (1)

- ← Industrial Migration
- Affluent Native-White Suburbs
- Ethnic River Wards
- Central Business District



1). J. Daly and A. Weinberg, op. cit., p.75.

Graph 4.1



The Board of Revision of Taxes, 'Statement of Real and Personal Property in the City of Philadelphia', PMAM, 1890-1920.

in the CBD began to compete for limited space with commercial, financial and small-scale retail firms which were also located in the center of town. Moreover, crowded quarters in the city's downtown inhibited manufacturing firms from trading efficiently with their suppliers and distributors. Competition for scarce urban space and the desirability of being next door to their suppliers and distributors, encouraged manufacturers to move their firms from the CBD into the less developed wards on its immediate periphery. As manufacturing firms vacated the CBD, retailing firms and financial and commercial houses took over as the dominant economic establishments.<sup>1</sup>

The movement of industry towards the periphery of the city was evident in an analysis of the data contained in the annual reports of the city's building commissioners. The reports of the building commissioners were searched every three years between 1890 and 1920 to provide information on the number and value of building operations and on the number of permits issued for building in each ward in a given year. These data make it possible to assess the per capita value and number of building operations that occurred in any ward. They also make it possible to determine whether building operations in any ward were primarily residential or commercial. The latter calculation was made by designing indices of the volume of residential and commercial building in each ward.

The index of residential building is based on the assumption that, in general, several residential buildings were built with one

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1). David Ward, op. cit., pp.86-102, describes this as a pattern common to older northeastern cities.

building permit. This is because many building contractors would erect an entire terrace or row of houses at the same time, all covered by the same building permit.<sup>1</sup> Commercial buildings, on the other hand, were usually erected one at a time, with one permit for each development. From this assumption is derived an index of the volume of residential building in each ward in any given year. The index is in the form of the ratio of the number of building operations in a ward divided by the number of building permits issued.

The index of the volume of commercial building in any given ward is based on the assumption that a commercial building was, on average, larger and more expensive to build than a residential building. The commercial building index then is a ratio of the total value of building operations in a given ward to the total number of building operations in that ward in a given year.

A third index, called a 'building ratio', was then derived to relate the other two ratios in a single index of commercial and residential building. The building ratio was calculated by dividing the commercial building index by the residential building index. This ratio is based on the assumption that large commercial building indices (value-per-operation) represent the size of the buildings being developed and that low residential building indices (operations-per-permit) represent a small volume of residential building. It could be assumed, then, that wards with a greater-than-average 'building ratio' of value-per-operation

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1). Helen Parrish, 'The Housing Awakening: One Million People in Small Houses, Philadelphia', The Survey, (May 6, 1911), p.234.

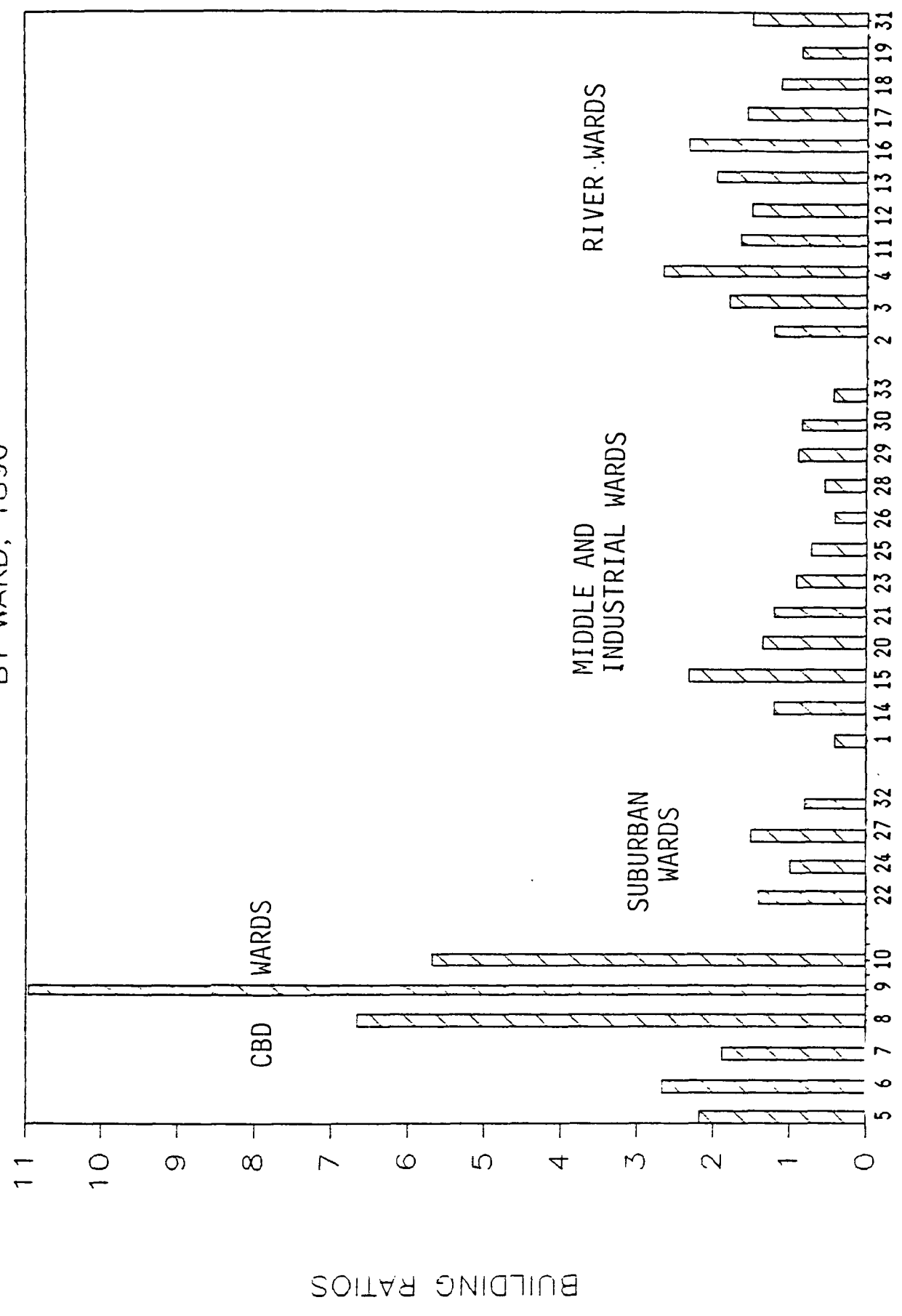
divided by operation-per-permit were experiencing greater commercial development. Conversely, wards with a lower-than-average building ratio were experiencing more residential development.

One problem inherent in the analysis of building data is that the number of building operations in any given year was directly affected by changes in the economy. For this reason, data on building information in any one year were not considered sufficient to make a comparison between wards. Therefore, data on the number, value and type of building operations were gathered for each ward in every year from 1891 to 1925. Five-year moving averages were then taken at each decennial year so that the building data for each ward in 1890, for example, actually represents the averages calculated for the years 1891 to 1895 inclusive. Building data for each ward were then reduced to per capita figures so as to make them genuinely comparable across wards with different populations.

Using the building data, industrial migration from the city to the immediate periphery becomes readily apparent. From 1890, the amount of commercial building in the wards on the periphery of the city increased steadily even though it did not catch up with the amount of commercial building in the CBD. This is evident on Graphs 4.2 and 4.3. Graph 4.2 (page 204) shows that in 1890 commercial building outside the CBD was only apparent in wards 4,13,15, and 16 where building ratios are seen to be relatively high in comparison with other non-CBD wards. Graph 4.3 (page 205) shows that by 1920, the building ratio for ward 4 had decreased, but the building ratios for wards 13,14,17,18,20,23 and 29 had increased, thus indicating an increase over 1890 in the amount of commercial building developments

ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF COMMERCIAL BUILDING

BY WARD, 1890

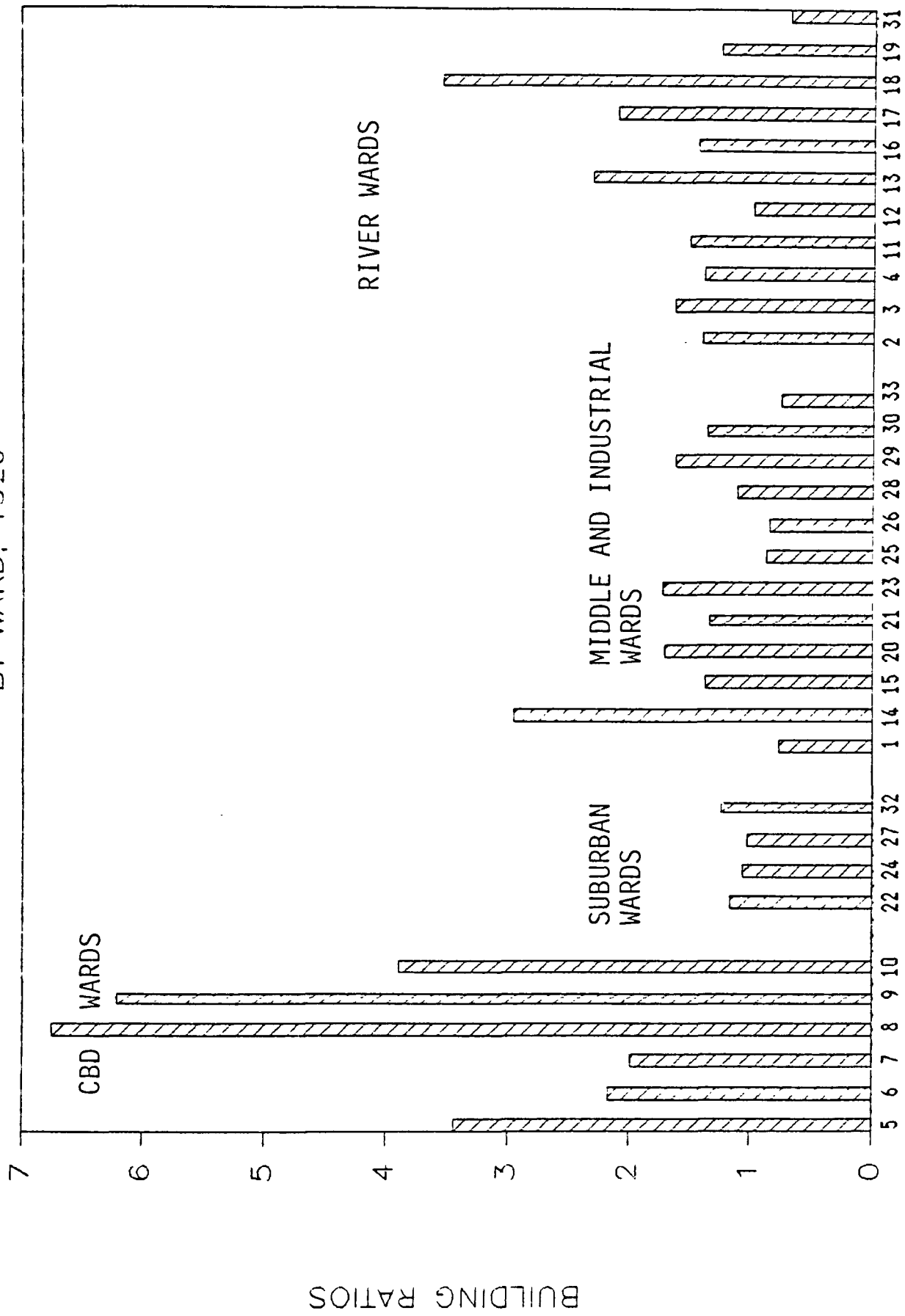


The Building Commissioners, 'Statement of Permits, Operations and Estimated Cost by Wards', PMAM, 1890-95.

Graph 4.3

ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF COMMERCIAL BUILDING

BY WARD, 1920



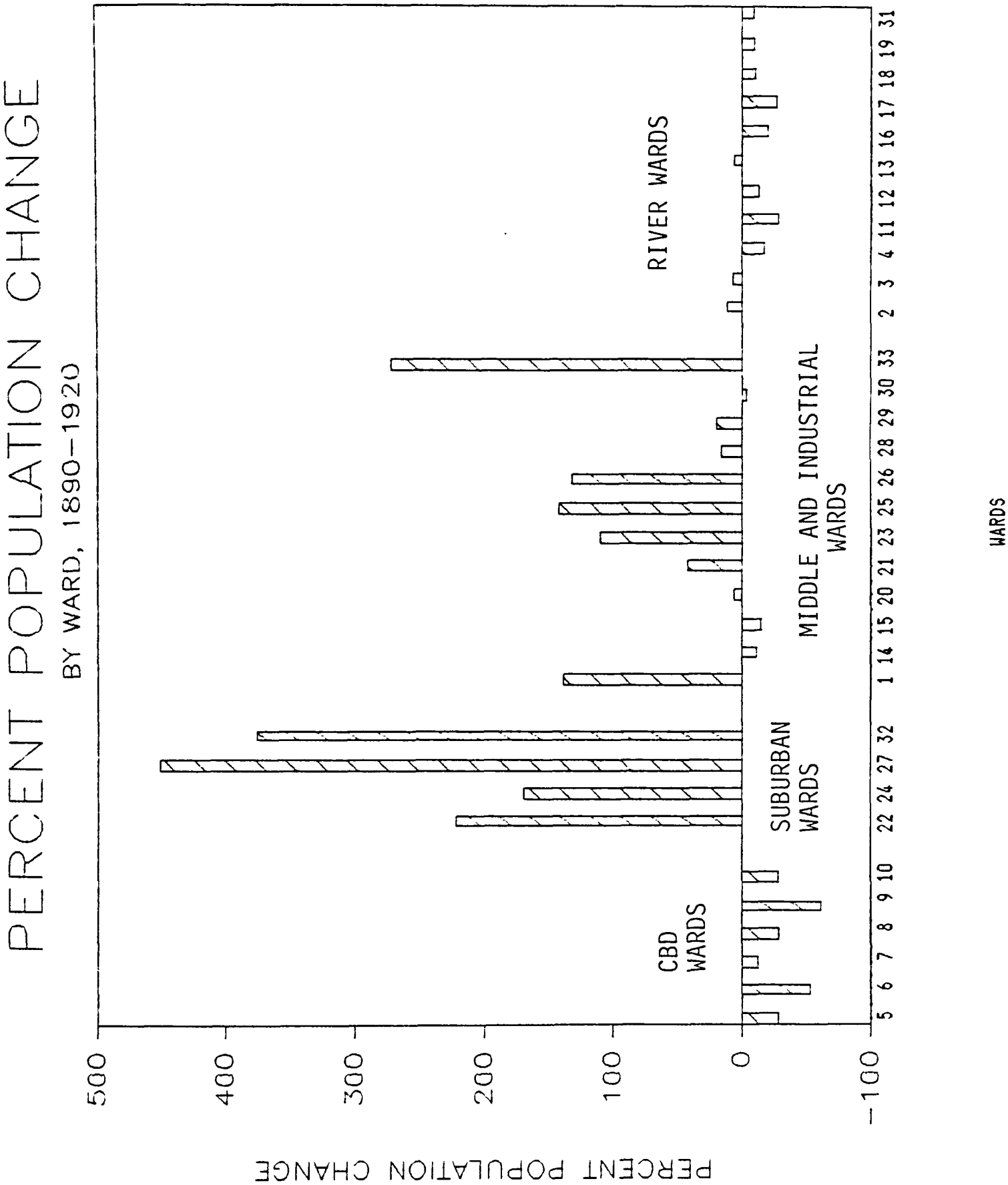
The Building Commissioners, 'Statement of Permits, Operations and Estimated Cost by Wards', PMAM, 1920-1925.

in these wards. The extension of commercial building into a greater number of non-CBD wards between 1890 and 1920 is shown on Map 4.1 (page 199) by the black arrows pushing outwards from the city center.

Changes in patterns of industrial land-use had a decided impact on patterns of residential development and on the way that different social groups were distributed throughout the city. The expansion of economic activity in the CBD resulted in a corresponding decline in residential land-use there. This is evident on Graph 4.4 (page 207) which shows the percentage population change in each ward between 1890 and 1920. The population declined in the CBD wards, in most of the developing industrial wards, and in the poorer 'river wards'. Only in the affluent suburbs, and in the older suburbs closer to the urban core did the population increase during the period.

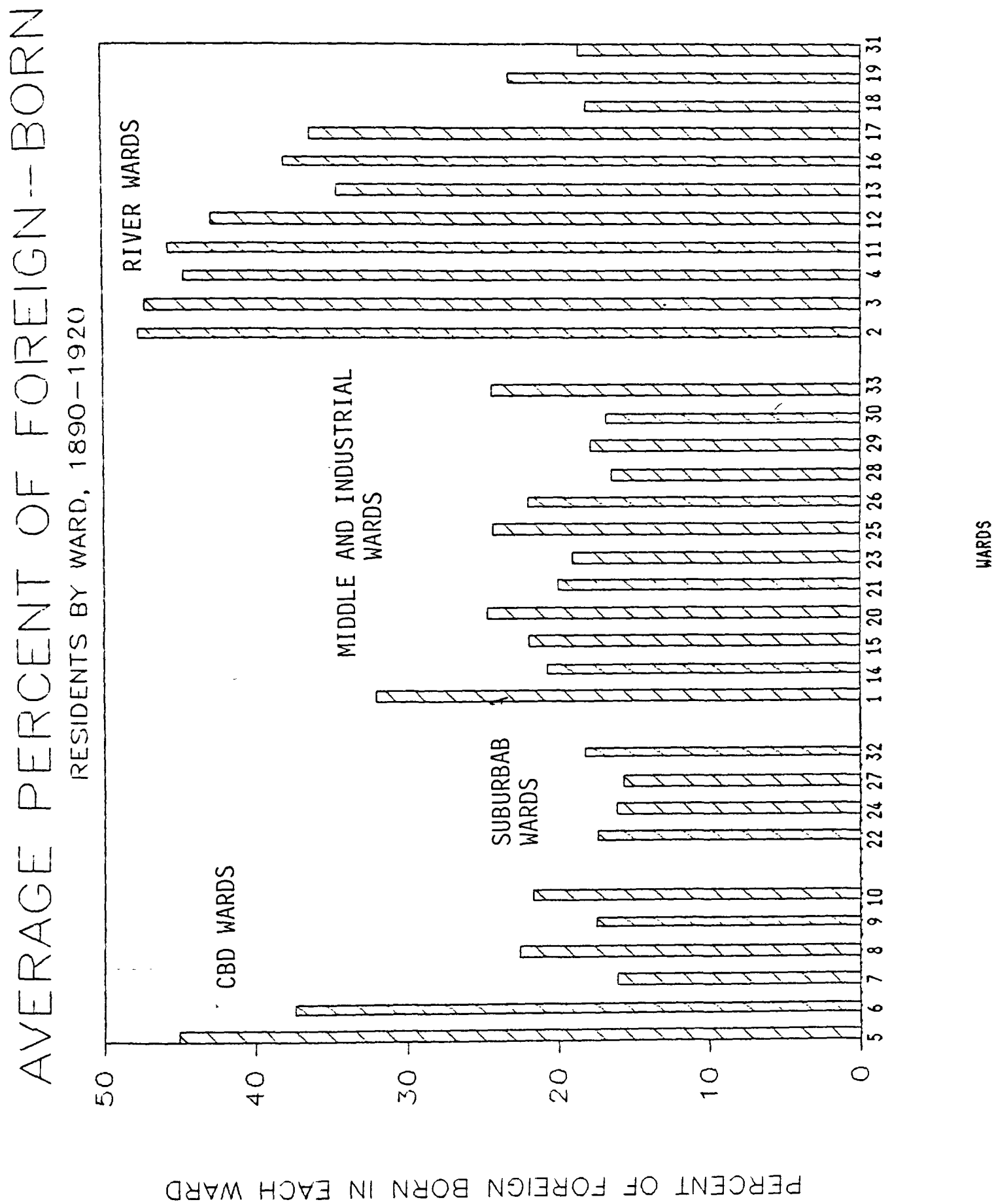
The wards on the suburban fringe of the city were settled, for the most part, by Philadelphia's wealthier native-Americans who could afford to follow the development of streetcar railways and move into the sparsely populated suburbs. The predominantly native-American population of the suburban wards is suggested by Graph 4.5 (page 208) which shows the average per capita concentration of foreign-born residents of each ward for the four decennial years between 1890 and 1920. The wealth of suburban residents, relative to that of other Philadelphians who lived outside the CBD, is evident on Graph 4.6 (page 209) which shows the average amount of taxable property in the non-CBD wards between 1890 and 1920. The relative wealth of the suburban wards is also evident on Graph 4.7 (page 210)

Graph 4.4



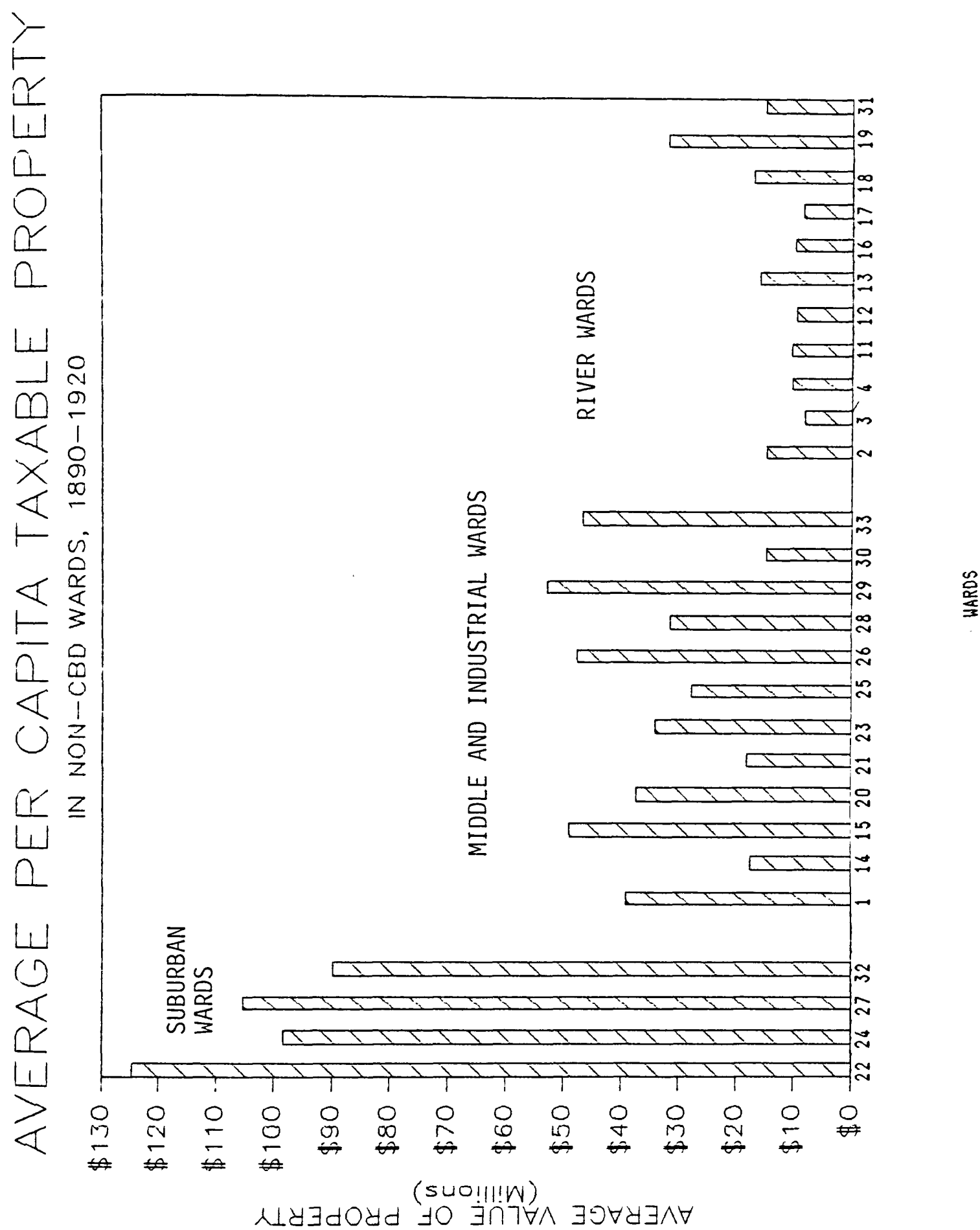
U.S. Decennial Censuses, 1900-1920; J.S. Billings, Vital Statistics.

Graph 4.5



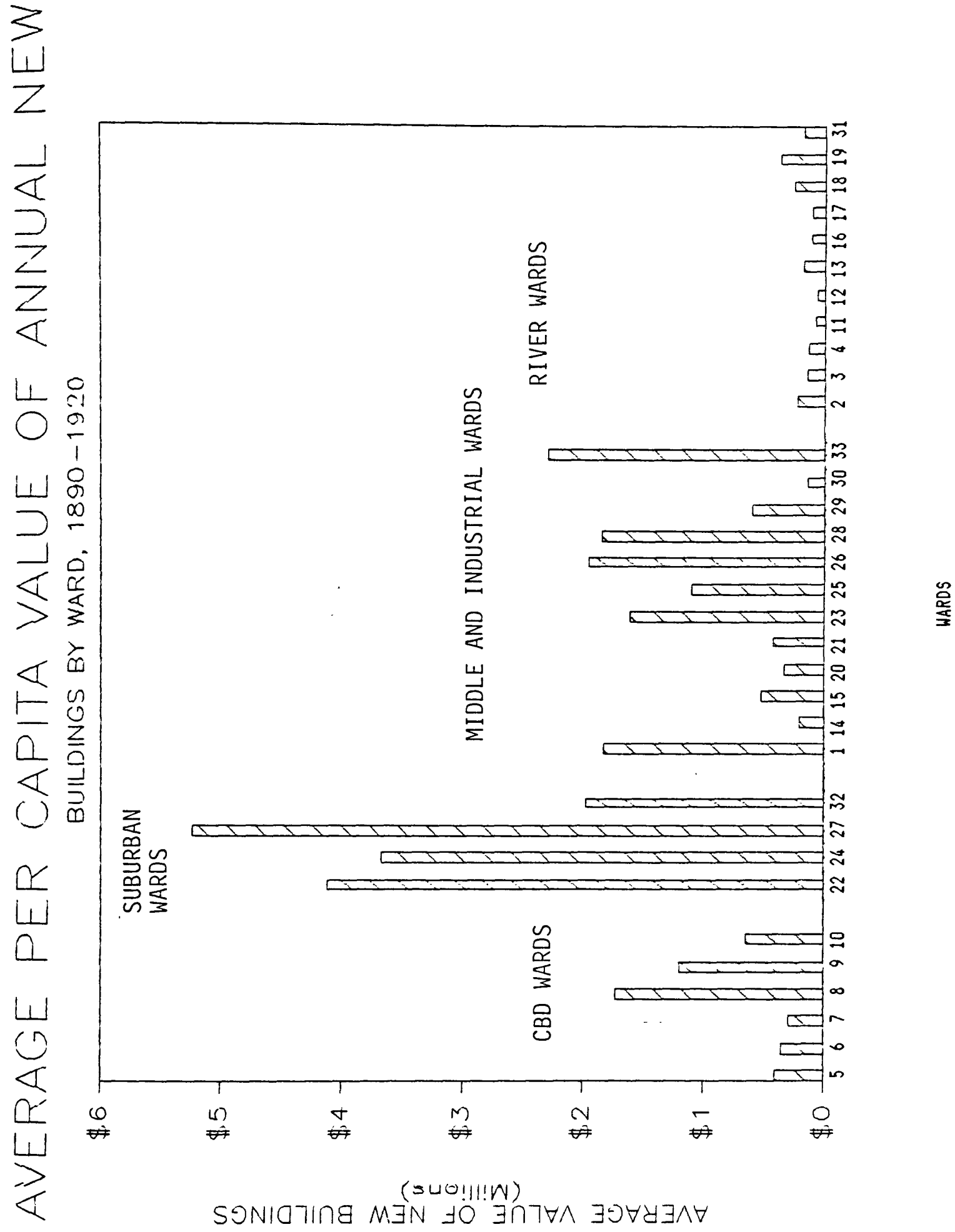
U.S. Decennial Censuses, 1900-1920; W.L. Quay, op. cit., p.263.

Graph 4.6



The Board of Revision of Taxes, 'Statement of Real and Personal Property', 1890-1920.

Graph 4.7



The Building Commissioners, 'Statement of Permits, Operations and Estimated Cost by Wards', PMAM, 1890-1925.

which shows the average per capita value of annual new building in every wards from 1890 to 1920. By referring to Graph 4.8 (page 212), it is clear that the affluent suburban wards were particularly exclusive suburbs. This is because in these wards, the high value of building operations (Graph 4.7, page 210) is, according to Graph 4.8, accounted for largely by residential developments (represented by relatively low building ratio). Relative to other wards in the city, then, the affluent suburban wards had the fastest rate of population growth, the greatest per capita value of building operations and amount of residential building, and, excluding the CBD wards, the most taxable real and personal property between 1890 and 1920. These wards, wards 22,24,27 and 32 are represented in blue on Map 4.1 (page 199).

The suburban migration of the city's wealthier native-American citizens left the downtown increasingly to the urban working-class, especially to its foreign-born members. According to the decennial census of 1900, the foreign-born made up 23% of the city's population. In the 'river wards' that ran north and south along the Delaware River (wards 2,3,4,11,12,13,16,17,18,19 and 31), however, the foreign-born made up as much as 40% of the population.<sup>1</sup> The only exception to the pattern of foreign-born concentration along the river occurred in wards 18,19 and 31 which remained predominantly native white throughout the period. In general, however, the city's immigrants lived in the river wards where they were in closest proximity to the greatest concentration

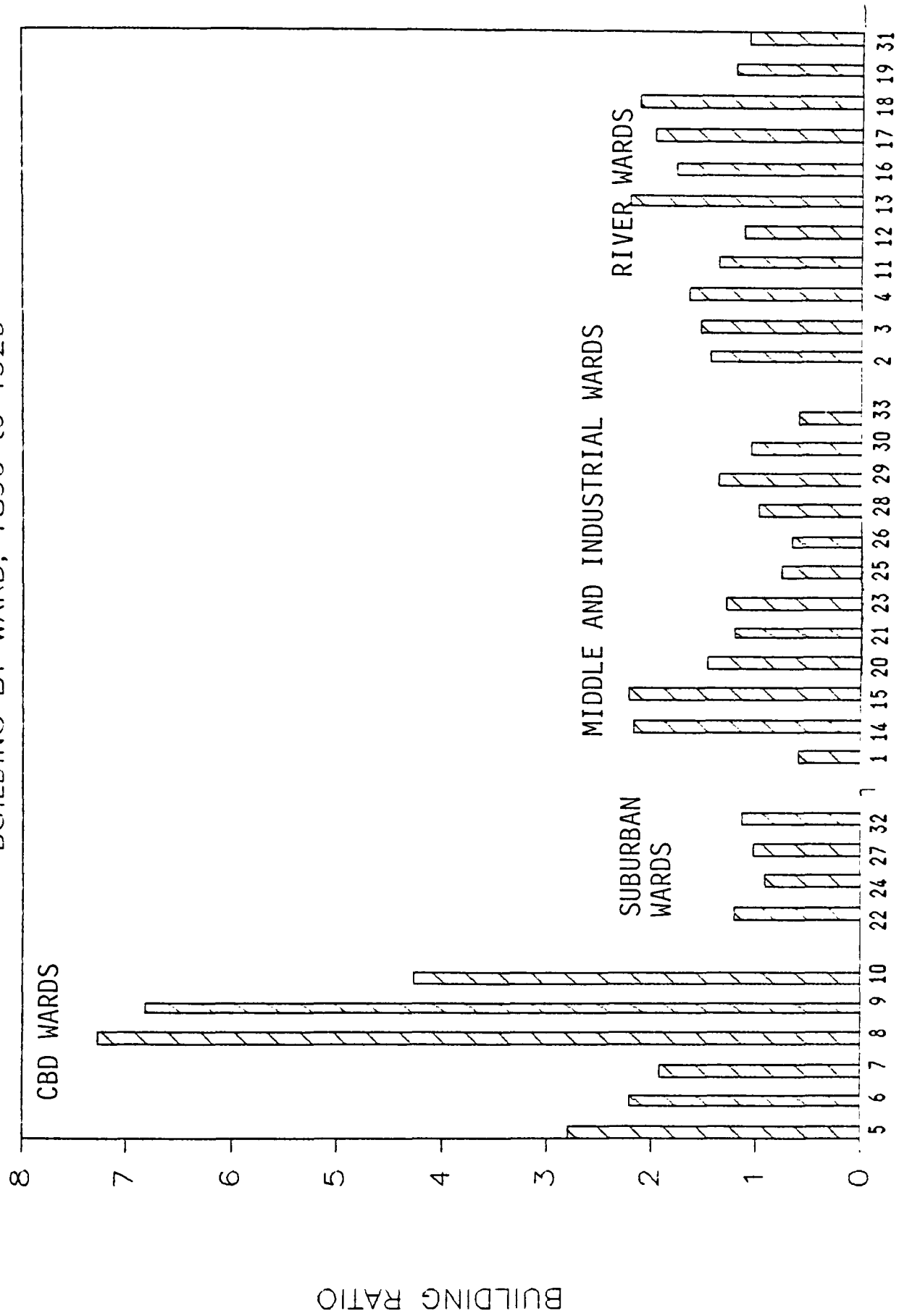
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1). Fourteenth Decennial Census, 1920. Volume III. Population. Composition and Characteristics of the Population by State (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1922), pp.86-9.

Graph 4.8

ESTIMATE OF COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

BUILDING BY WARD, 1890 to 1920



The Building Commissioners, 'Statement of Permits, Operations and Estimated Cost by Wards', PMAM, 1890-1925.

of industry and unskilled jobs, and where there was a large stock of cheap housing available.<sup>1</sup> The river wards with the highest ethnic concentrations are colored in red on Map 4.1 (page 199).

Though immigrants were not in the majority of the population in any of the river wards, they tended to concentrate by ethnic group in certain districts. There, the foreign-born made up over 61% of the population.<sup>2</sup> The city's ethnic ghettos were anomalous; to some Philadelphians they were even rather quaint. 'Philadelphia's "Little Italy" is one of the most picturesque sections of the city', one New York social worker wrote of her visit to one of Philadelphia's many ethnic ghettos:

for about thirty-five blocks the Italians are closely packed together. One can walk the streets for considerable distances without hearing a word of English. The black-eyed children rolling and tumbling together, the gaily colored dresses of the women and the crowds of street vendors all give the neighborhood a wholly foreign appearance.(3)

The ethnic ghettos' old-world charm could not, however, mask their inhabitants' poverty. An objective index of the poverty in these wards is available on Graph 4.6 (page 209) which shows the average value of taxable property in the non-CBD wards taken as an average over the four decennial years between 1890 and 1920. A better index of immigrants' poverty, however, is available in the numerous studies

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- 1). Stephanie W. Greenberg, 'Industrial Location and Ethnic Residential Patterns in an Industrializing City: Philadelphia, 1880', in T. Hershberg ed., Philadelphia, pp.209-11.
  - 2). See Jane Allen Shikoh, 'The "Higher Life" in the American City of the 1890s: A Study of its Leaders and Their Activities in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, and Buffalo' (N.Y., New York University Ph.D. thesis, 1972), p.121.
  - 3). Emily W. Dinwiddie, 'Some Aspects of Italian Housing and Social Conditions in Philadelphia', Charities, 12(1904), p.490.

of poverty, housing and sanitation that were conducted during the period in Philadelphia, as in other big cities, by professional social workers and social scientists.

One housing study in Philadelphia found, for example, that in the river wards, 'open drains still run through the great majority of alleys, where the decaying matter stands in the gutters and when dried is scattered about by the wind'.<sup>1</sup> Another found that 'block after block lacked sewer drainage, leaving the seepage to form brackish rivulets and pools in the penumbra of courts and alleys. Frequently, two or three inches of stagnant water collected in the cellars of alley dwellings, some of which were inhabited by recent immigrants who could not afford better accommodation'.<sup>2</sup>

Overcrowding was as widespread as poor sanitation in the ethnic ghettos. It resulted from the practice of cutting alleyways and courts into the main streets as a means of packing in rows of houses immediately behind the houses on the main street. In one row of 'rear houses which consisted of seven buildings back-to-back with another row, all the light and air was obtained from a space only four feet three inches wide'. In the same block, 41 of the 167 four- and five-room dwellings housed three or more families.<sup>3</sup> As if human crowding was not enough, the ghettos were often teaming with livestock. One study conducted in 1911 found that 'pig men' kept as

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1). 'The Octavia Hill Association: Certain Aspects of the Housing Problem in Philadelphia', Annals, 20(1902), p.120.

2). John F. Bauman, 'Disinfecting the City: The Philadelphia Housing Commission and Scientific Efficiency, 1909-1916', in Michael H. Ebner and Eugene M. Tobin, eds., The Age of Urban Reform: New Perspectives on the Progressive Era (N.Y., Kennikat Press, 1977), p. 126, and E.W. Dinwiddie, op.cit., p.493.

3). E.W. Dinwiddie, op.cit., p.493.

many as 40,000 swine in the city.<sup>1</sup> Another, conducted in 1893, found livestock, and in some cases abattoirs, in the cellars of occupied houses.<sup>2</sup>

The spatial concentration of immigrants and the urban poor caused some anxiety amongst the urban middle and upper classes especially in the 1890s in the wake of violent strikes in other major cities. In 1893, for example, Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf expressed that anxiety at a housing rally. Berating the prominent Philadelphians whom he was addressing for their complacency, Rabbi Krauskopf cried:

You can manage, if you choose, to let your brother rot in the filth of the slums. You can help murder his wife and little ones in the pestiferous atmosphere of your filth-reeking Fourth Ward...You may escape the pangs of conscience...by shutting yourself out from the sight and sound of the miseries of the poor behind the enveloping clouds of your imported Havannah, or behind some spicy Parisian romance. But when the misery of these people, passing the point of endurance, will drive them forth into the highways and byways with club and firebrand in hand, and change your Havannah smoke into blinding smoke of your ruined prosperity; when fatal disease, having taken root in their filth, will...enter your home and lay low your wife and little ones, you may send forth the query of despair: "If God is just why did He bring this suffering upon me", and receive as answer wherewith to heel a lacerated heart, your own words: "We have managed so long without eradicating the slums, we will manage still longer without it."<sup>3</sup>

By the 1900s the middle and upper classes' anxieties about the threat posed to the social order by the working class had lessened significantly. The city's poor, nonetheless, remained at least as concentrated in the urban core, where they continued to be

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1). J.F. Bauman, op.cit., p.126.

2). E.W. Dinwiddie, op.cit., 492.

3). Cited in H.B. Phillips, 'A War on Philadelphia's Slums: Walter Vrooman and the Conference of Moral Workers', PMHB, 76:1(1952), p.151.

excluded from developments in the city's pleasant suburban wards. This is made evident by comparing the picture presented on Graph 4.6 (page 209) which shows the average value of taxable property in each ward for each of the four decennial years between 1890 and 1920, with the picture on Graph 4.5 (page 208) which shows for the same period, the average concentration of foreign-born residents in each ward. Through this comparison it is evident that ethnic concentration and property value were inversely related. Moreover, Graph 4.4 (page 207) which shows changes in the wards' populations between 1890 and 1920, demonstrates that the wards where immigrants were concentrated were the same wards where the population had declined most between 1890 and 1920.

The polarization of rich and poor, ethnic and native born, was a process continually in flux. It is important, therefore, not to be misled by the static picture presented on Map 4.1 (page 199). By 1900 the suburban wards had joined the CBD wards in the top one-third of all the wards in the city with the highest concentration of native-born whites and with the greatest per capita personal and real property. In the city's older suburbs immediately surrounding the CBD (wards 14,15,20,25,26,28,29 and 30), the concentration of native-white residents which had been high before 1890, diminished thereafter as the city's foreign whites began to occupy the homes that the wealthy native population left behind in their migration to the fashionable residential districts further away from the center of the city. This is evident in Table 4.1 (page 217) which shows all wards ranked by per capita concentration of foreign-born residents in 1890 and 1920. It is

interesting to note that the table shows the population of ward 32 rapidly becoming more ethnic, while the population of ward 21, one of the last areas of the city to be developed, becoming increasingly native in comparison with other wards in the city.

Table 4.1 Wards Ranked by Per Capita Concentration of Foreign-Born Residents in 1890 and in 1920

|                                   | WARD | 1890 | 1920 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|
| CBD<br>WARDS                      | 5    | 26   | 30   |
|                                   | 6    | 29   | 23   |
|                                   | 7    | 6    | 2    |
|                                   | 8    | 4    | 17   |
|                                   | 9    | 15   | 3    |
|                                   | 10   | 10   | 21   |
| AFFLUENT<br>SUBURBAN<br>WARDS     | 22   | 8    | 5    |
|                                   | 24   | 14   | 8    |
|                                   | 27   | 2    | 4    |
|                                   | 32   | 1    | 13   |
| MIDDLE AND<br>INDUSTRIAL<br>WARDS | 1    | 11   | 24   |
|                                   | 14   | 3    | 12   |
|                                   | 20   | 20   | 22   |
|                                   | 21   | 19   | 9    |
|                                   | 23   | 5    | 11   |
|                                   | 25   | 21   | 20   |
|                                   | 26   | 18   | 18   |
|                                   | 28   | 13   | 14   |
|                                   | 29   | 7    | 7    |
|                                   | 30   | 24   | 1    |
|                                   | 33   | 12   | 16   |
| RIVER<br>WARDS                    | 2    | 23   | 31   |
|                                   | 3    | 31   | 29   |
|                                   | 4    | 30   | 25   |
|                                   | 11   | 33   | 32   |
|                                   | 12   | 27   | 33   |
|                                   | 13   | 16   | 27   |
|                                   | 16   | 28   | 28   |
|                                   | 17   | 32   | 26   |
|                                   | 18   | 9    | 10   |
|                                   | 19   | 25   | 19   |
|                                   | 31   | 17   | 6    |

Only in South Philadelphia's ward 1, where William S. Vare, one of the city's leading party bosses, had established his power base by 1905, did a concentration of foreign whites and low property values coincide in an area with an expanding population. This may be explained, in part, by the fact that ethnic settlement in South Philadelphia only occurred after native white and wealthier citizens had left the area to settle in the more exclusive wards 22,24,27 and 32.

Much as the spatial polarization of rich and poor is as obvious to the historian as it was to the contemporary city dweller, it was not complete. At the time of the consolidation in 1854, the county of Philadelphia consisted of a conglomeration of several local communities. Each local community had its own central community life. But all were satellites of the old city. In the last half of the nineteenth century, the unoccupied stretches of land between the districts were developed. The central portion of the old city emerged as a central business district for the entire city. Nevertheless, several sub-centers of manufacturing and commercial activities remained. As a result, wards on the periphery of the city still contained numerous working-class districts despite the fact that affluent suburbs were developing around them.<sup>1</sup> As importantly, the city's most established and wealthy families lived in the center of the downtown. Wards 7,8 and 9 which were particularly exclusive, centered around Rittenhouse Square where, according to one observer, 'all the good Philadelphia babies get

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1). Helen Parrish, 'The Awakening', p.232,238.

their first airing, and later take their maiden lessons in provincial French from their white-capped bonnes'.<sup>1</sup>

Many of these structural features Philadelphia shared with other turn-of-the-century U.S. cities and they help to explain political events which were common urban phenomena during this period. The spatial bifurcation of the city into an affluent, native-white suburban periphery and an ethnic and working-class urban core, for example, helps to account for the development in Philadelphia of its powerful and widely renowned Republican political machine.<sup>2</sup> The spatial concentration of poor ethnic ghettos enabled the machine to develop and strengthen its grass-roots support by involving immigrants in the party and by trading favors and patronage to the needy residents of the urban core in return for their votes. By the end of the 1890s, Matt Quay managed to gain control over the river wards and consolidate his hold over municipal government.<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, the leadership of the machine was periodically contested but on only one occasion in 1911, did intra-organizational competition prevent the machine from sweeping the city in local elections.<sup>4</sup>

The machine's reliance on the support of the urban poor is reflected in the social composition of the city councilmen during the period. Increasingly they consisted of leading figures in

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1). Charles Belmont Davis, 'The City of Homes', Harper's New Monthly Magazine, 89(June, 1894), p.5.

2). See, for example, Lincoln Steffans 'Philadelphia: Corrupt and Contented', McClure's Magazine, 31(July, 1903), 249-63.

3). See Chapter 5, pp.290-2 for a discussion of the consolidation of the Quay machine with the election of Mayor Ashbridge in 1899.

4). See Chapter 5, p.318 for a discussion of the election of 1911.

ethnic and working-class communities in the river wards upon which the machine relied so heavily for votes. Perhaps the most celebrated example is Thomas Ryan, a leading Democrat in a city where the Democratic party was simply an extension of the Republican organization.<sup>1</sup> He represented the largely Irish sixth ward for well over 20 years on the councils and in the state assembly, and topped off his long and varied political career when he was elected city district attorney in 1911.<sup>2</sup> The machine's reliance on the participation of leading figures in ethnic communities became even more apparent as the social and spatial differentiation of the urban society became more pronounced. By the 1920s, it was considered uncommon when Italian and black constituencies did not return Italian and black representatives respectively to the councils or at least to the city committee of the Republican party.<sup>3</sup>

The organization of the political machine, then, created opportunities for more prominent members of working-class communities to participate as elected officers in the municipal political arena. This is evident in an analysis of the occupations of city councilmen. The analysis is based on a database containing the names, occupations, occupational addresses and residential addresses of 1,001 politically-active Philadelphians for whom such information was collected at least three times over a 20-year

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- 1). I.F. Greenberg, 'The Philadelphia Democratic Party', pp.19-21.
  - 2). W.L. Quay, Philadelphia Democrats', pp.240-1.
  - 3). For examples of machine-building in the 1920s see John T. Salter, Boss Rule: Portraits in City Politics (N.Y. Arno Press, 1974); John T. Salter, 'Close up of a Ward Politician', Harper's Monthly Magazine, 66(March, 1933), pp.493-503. Also see Jon C. Teafor, The Unheralded Triumph: City Governments in America, 1870-1900 (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press), p.38.

period, the mid-point of which was the year that the individual was known to be a member of a political organization. Of the 1,001 people in the sample, 650 were councilmen (188 select councilmen and 462 common councilmen) and 351 were leading members of reform associations which were active in Philadelphia between 1890 and 1915.

Names of councilmen were taken from the Manual of Councils every third year from 1891 to 1917.<sup>1</sup> Occupational and residential information was obtained for all of the individuals whose names appeared for the first time in any given year, and every six years for men who served for long periods on the city councils. The occupational analysis was then conducted by first assigning individuals in the sample to occupational categories based on the information that was available in the city directories. City directories listed occupation (lawyer, woollen goods, etc.) and business addresses if the individual was either a proprietor, a partner or an executive member of the firm.<sup>2</sup> Proprietary status

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1). Manual of City Councils... (Phila., 1890-1920) supplied the names of the city councilmen. The sample of common councilmen consists of the names of individuals who served on the select and common councils every three years from 1891 to 1917. Owing to the absence or poor quality of a number of city directories from which occupational and residential information about councilmen was gathered, the three year sequence had to be altered. 1896 was substituted for 1897. The sample then was drawn from lists of councilmen every third year from 1897. The years for which samples of councilmen were gathered are as follows: 1891, 1894, 1896, 1899, 1902, 1905, 1908, 1911, 1914, 1917.

2). Gopsills' Philadelphia City Directory, 1881-1927. In conversations with Henry Miller, acting director of the Philadelphia Social History Project, it was established that when a business address was listed in the city directory, it generally indicated that the individual listing that address was well placed either as proprietor, partial proprietor or top-level

was also available insofar as city directories included entries for business establishments and such entries included the names of senior officers and/or proprietors. Therefore, it was frequently possible to determine that William S. Vare, listed in the city directory as a contractor under Vare, W.S., was also the president of the contracting firm, Vare, McNichol and Mack, listed in the directory under the name of the business. If an individual was involved in more than one business, this too was indicated in the city directory.

The absence of other socio-economic indicators, particularly that of income, made it impossible to construct an objectively hierarchical scheme of occupational categories for the individuals in the sample. This determined that the social composition of the groups could be compared only with an analysis of the occupational distribution of their members. To this end, each occupation listed by every individual in the sample was assigned to one of 11 different occupational categories. The occupational distribution of the members of each group was then calculated by taking the number of businesses held by a group's members in each category as a percent of the total number of businesses held by all of that group's members. The occupational distribution was then analyzed to

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manager of the business. Most individuals in the sample had several jobs since their names were checked in at least three city directories which together covered a 20-year period. Given the limited amount of occupational information available, no attempt was made to determine what an individual's primary occupation was. Instead, every job listed in the city directories was categorized and counted in analysis.

find statistically significant instances of occupational clustering within any one group. The occupational categories were defined as follows:

1). White-Collar Professional/Financier

lawyers, doctors, and executives or proprietors of banking, insurance or other financial companies.

2.) Real Estate Conveyancer/Building Contractor/Building Supplier

real estate developers, general contractors in construction and related businesses. To distinguish building contractors from builders/laborers who worked for building contractors, businesses were included in this category only if they maintained a work address which was distinct from a home address. Where a separate work address was not cited, the business was included in category 5.

3). Manufacturer

proprietors of manufacturing firms involved in the production of heavy goods such as iron, textiles, boxes and paper. To ensure that the category included only large manufacturing operations, businesses were assigned to this category only if a business address was listed in addition to a home address and if either the individual's name was part of the business name or if more than one address was given for the business.

4). Proprietor of a Small Business

proprietors of small business living on the premises. The category includes grocers, taverns and corner drugstore owners.

5). Artisan/Laborer

artisans and laborers of various description (e.g. boot blacks, boxmakers, cigar rollers).

6). Political Appointee

assessors, inspectors, assistant water works engineers, etc.

7). Unknown/Undertaker

not otherwise classifiable. The category contains an unusually large proportion of undertakers almost all of whom were (inexplicably) city councilmen.

8). Publisher/Journalist

editors, journalists, reporters and publishers.

9). Clerk/Student/Salesman

individuals listing these occupations in the city directory and no independent work address.

10). Wholesale Merchants

merchants and wholesale suppliers and importers of chemicals, drugs, coal, flour and textiles. To distinguish between wholesalers and proprietors of small retail shops in category 4, businesses were assigned to category 10 only if a business address was listed in addition to a home address and if either the individual's name was part of the business name or if more than one address was given for the business.

11). Social Worker/Professor/Engineer/Teacher/Minister

professions requiring a high degree of training.

Table 4.2 (page 226) shows for each group in the database, the occupational distribution of its members. Clearly, select and common councilmen had less white-collar professional jobs (category 1) and more blue-collar laboring and small proprietary jobs (categories 4 and 5) than the members of the political reform groups that were analyzed. But are these differences statistically significant or do they simply represent what could be expected from a totally random distribution of numbers? To answer this question, two tests were used. First, a chi-square test was used to determine whether the occupational distributions of the different groups are, when taken

together, simply a random distribution of numbers. The test revealed that to a 99% degree of confidence, this distribution of numbers was not random.<sup>1</sup>

A test of mean deviation was then used to highlight instances of occupational clustering.<sup>2</sup> That is, the test was run to point out those groups whose members held a significantly greater or lesser number of jobs in any one occupational category. Where the percentage of the total number of businesses held by the members of any one group in a particular category was found to be significantly large according to this statistical test, that percentage is marked with an asterisk. Where a group's members were significantly under-represented in an occupational category, the percent of the total number of the group's businesses placed in that category is marked with an asterix followed by a minus sign (\*-). The square brackets around figures in Table 4.2 represent that the proportion enclosed within the brackets would be significant if the disproportionately large number of the members of the CSRA in occupational category 1 is controlled for.

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- 1). The chi square, calculated for the matrix containing the number of jobs, was 1,776 with 77 degrees of freedom.
- 2). The test of mean deviation takes the average of all of the numbers in each row of a matrix (representing, in this case, the percent of the all of the jobs held by members in each group in each of the occupational categories). It then calculates how each number in the row deviates from the row average. Finally, it takes the mean deviation for the entire row. Numbers in the row which exceed one mean deviation away from the row average are said to be outliers or, in this case, statistically significant.

Table 4.2 Occupational Analysis of City Councilmen and Political Reformers, 1890-1920

| Occupational Categories          | CSRA | Municipal League | PBMR | Committee of 70 | Committee of 100 | Common Council | Select Council | CMA |
|----------------------------------|------|------------------|------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|
| 1 Law/Finance Executive          | *63% | [50]%            | 42%  | [45]%           | [43]%            | *-22%          | *-17%          | 34% |
| 2 Real Estate/Contractor         | 2    | *-0              | 3    | 5               | 11               | 11             | *24            | 5   |
| 3 Manufacture                    | 16   | 20               | *29  | *24             | 14               | *-9            | *-8            | *22 |
| 4 Small Proprietor               | *-0  | *-0              | *-0  | 3               | 6                | *15            | *15            | 5   |
| 5 Laborer                        | *-2  | 5                | *-1  | 4               | 9                | *16            | *14            | 6   |
| 6 Political Appointee            | 1    | 0                | 2    | 0               | 1                | *6             | *10            | 0   |
| 7 Unknown Undertaker             | 1    | 1                | *5   | 1               | 1                | 2              | *-0            | 3   |
| 8 Publisher/Journalist           | 4    | 4                | 2    | 5               | 4                | *-2            | *-0            | 3   |
| 9 Clerk/Student                  | *-0  | *-0              | *-0  | 2               | 4                | *11            | 6              | 2   |
| 10 Wholesale Merchant            | 5    | 10               | 6    | 10              | *-4              | 7              | 5              | *20 |
| 11 Academic/Social Work/Engineer | * 7  | *11              | *10  | 1               | 2                | 0              | 1              | 0   |
| Total                            | 100  | 100              | 100  | 100             | 100              | 100            | 100            | 100 |
| Laborers + Small Proprietors     | *-2  | *-5              | 1    | 10              | 21               | *41            | *35            | 15  |
| # Individuals                    | 38   | 37               | 39   | 67              | 68               | 462            | 188            | 102 |
| Number of Jobs                   | 169  | 162              | 161  | 217             | 161              | 2,752          | 1,198          | 348 |

The prevalence of small proprietors amongst the city councilmen is particularly interesting. Most of these were proprietors of grocery stores, liquor stores, drug stores and saloons; businesses which formed a critical link between the machine and the working-class and ethnic electorate, through which politicians could pass perquisites and favors in return for votes on election day.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, for the small proprietor, participation in local politics was good business since it could facilitate the acquisition of expensive licenses and the relaxation of other city-imposed restrictions on retail establishments.<sup>2</sup>

These prosopographical data also help to describe how the machine was maintained in the city through its monopoly over valuable public works contracts. During the period under investigation, manufacturers' migration to the outskirts of the CBD required improvements in transportation facilities in order that industries could establish agglomeration economies.<sup>3</sup> Transportation was also necessary to enable manufacturers to draw their labor from a much much wider area.<sup>4</sup> The retailing firms and the financial and commercial houses that took over as the dominant economic activities in the CBD also required the extension of urban transportation which brought suburban shoppers to the new retail department stores and brought suburban businessmen to work in commercial

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1). Jon C. Teafor, The Unheralded Triumph, p.34.

2). Ibid.; Rudolph Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', Arena, 34(1905), pp.130-2.

3). Allan R. Pred, The Spatial Dynamics of U.S. Urban-Industrial Growth, p.27.

4). Ibid., p.55.

and financial firms.<sup>1</sup> The increasing rate of suburban development also required investments in transportation, in the extension of existing gas and water works, in the development of new roads and in the building of new premises for schools and police and fire stations.

As the demand for more municipal investments in the infrastructure of public works and services increased, so too did municipal expenditure on their provision. Between 1890 and 1920, the city spent \$1,166,500,000 on its operating expenses and a further \$220,000,000 in loans, the revenues from which were spent through the various municipal departments.<sup>2</sup> The police force alone increased its staff by 102% from 1,792 men in 1890 to 3,612 men in 1920. 1,028 firemen in 1910, a 99% increase on the force of 521 men in 1890, responded to 4,028 alarms delivered on the city's 2,305 alarm boxes. The city provided for a total of 401.68 miles of main and branch sewers in 1890, by 1910 the number of miles had more than doubled to 1,052 while by 1910 the city was also responsible for the maintenance of 341 bridges.<sup>3</sup>

In 1890, there were 890 miles of streets in the city for which the councils and the Department of Public Works had the ultimate responsibility of paving and maintaining. In 1902, there were 1,010 miles of paved streets and by 1912 1,330.71 miles of improved

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1). D. Ward, op. cit, pp.86-102.

2). These figures represent total municipal expenditures as reported in the Department of the City Controller, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1890-1920. The figures for total loans were taken from the 'Annual Reports of the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund', in PMAM, 1890-1920.

3). Unless otherwise noted, all of the general statistics come from a compendium of departmental reports in the PMAM, 1890-1920.

streets and 179.6 miles of dirt road were within the city limits. By 1916, paving and maintenance of city streets and highways cost the city \$6,000,000 per year.<sup>1</sup> Street cleaning was also a major undertaking which in 1908 yielded 1,477,100 cartloads of matter and 12,027 dead animals from the 373,625.05 miles of streets, 310,692 privy alleys and 854,518 inlets which the city had contracted to private companies for cleaning at a cost of \$1,571,732.<sup>2</sup>

To light the city, the municipal government was responsible for 78,690 wooden and iron poles in 1910 carrying miles of above-ground wire. The number of poles had declined by almost half of the 1890 figure as the city invested more money to sink more conduits for electrical telephone and telegraph wires into the city streets. In 1890, 619,863 feet of underground conduit had been laid of which the city-owned 47,057 feet and had allowed by ordinance the placement of the rest. By 1910, the total number of feet of city-owned conduit increased tenfold. The infrastructure of electrical supply above and below the city streets lit the city's 13,285 arc lights in 1910. Municipal lighting was supplemented by Philadelphia's 40,760 gas lamps which had to be lit and snuffed out every night and day respectively. Over half of these gas lamps were provided with free gas by the United Gas Improvement Company under

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1). Joseph Allder Dunaway, 'Some Efficiency Methods of City Administration', Annals, 64(1916), p.101. Also see PMAM, Rudolph Blankenburg, 1912, p.27. The 1900 figures for paving are calculated by adding the 1893-1900 figures mentioned in PMAM, Samuel Ashbridge, 1900, p.xv, to an approximation of the cost of 50 miles of paving from the period 1890 to 1892 when paving figures were unobtainable.  
2). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1908, p.xxv.

the terms of its 1897 lease of the gas works from the city.<sup>1</sup> The city's annual bill for electric lighting alone was approaching \$1,000,000 as early as the mid-1890s,<sup>2</sup> and, at the end of 1920, a total of \$3,000,000 had been appropriated to the city's Electric Bureau and its Bureau of Lighting for the following year's expenditures.<sup>3</sup>

With the growth in the number and value of municipal works contracts, political participation became increasingly profitable for men in building and related industries. Unsurprisingly, Table 4.2 (page 226) shows that a relatively high percentage of city councilmen held jobs as real estate developers, conveyancers and building contractors. For these men, political participation and party loyalty were a matter of business; they could yield lucrative municipal contracts.

As municipal contracts became more valuable, contractor-politicians found new ways of monopolizing the civic booty. Throughout the period, the vast majority of municipal works were contracted to private firms by the city's various departments. These municipal contracts were valuable to the dominant local political faction which used them to distribute patronage and perquisites in return for party service. Street railway and electric company franchises also enabled city councilmen and their

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1). Statement of the United Gas Improvements Company in Reply to a Communication from the Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Gas of Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia (Phila., n.p., 1907), p.40.

2). Nicholas Biddle Wainwright, History of the Philadelphia Electric Company, 1881-1961 (Phila., PECO, 1961), p.28.

3). Department of the City Controller, 'The Limit of Expenses for 1921', Annual Report, 1920, p.52.

supporters to amass great fortunes, at least until 1907 when both the railway and electric companies were entirely monopolized by one company in each industry. As late as 1901, for example, the state legislature granted valuable Philadelphia railway franchises to contractors and to machine leaders. When the franchises were finally turned over to the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company, the company which eventually came to monopolize traction in the city, they were worth somewhere between \$1,500,000 and \$2,500,000.<sup>1</sup>

Even the more mundane municipal services provided opportunities for professional politicians to acquire private fortunes. By dominating any one municipal department a party organization could develop its support through its distribution of municipal contracts. It could, for example, effectively restrict the number of bidders for the contracts issued by that department to firms which demonstrated their loyalty to the party. By advertising for bids only a few weeks before the actual work was to begin, political leaders ensured that only those firms which had been doing the work already would apply as they were the only firms sufficiently equipped to do the work. This was particularly true with work requiring expensive plants such as garbage collection and large paving works.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, contracts for day-to-day municipal operations like street cleaning and garbage collection were only granted for a short term, one or two years at most. Only those

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1). 1854-1904. Fifty Years With Passenger Railways of Philadelphia: The Street Railways of Philadelphia...Compiled by the New York News Bureau, Philadelphia Local Service, Warner H. Jenkins, Manager (N.Y., np., 1904), p.14.

2). R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', pp.19-20.

firms with sufficiently stable political connections were secure enough to make the initial investment necessary for sizeable municipal jobs.<sup>1</sup> Finally, contract bidding was further restricted by making the job specifications so meticulous that only those politically favored contractors who knew that they would not be required to comply with every detail of the contract dared to bid.<sup>2</sup> One consequence of this situation was that municipal contracts often cost more than they would have had the competition amongst bidders been unrestricted.<sup>3</sup> Another consequence was that private contractors profited handsomely from municipal largesse.<sup>4</sup>

Public works which damaged private property were also used to turn municipal revenues into private profit and organization-building patronage as the city was liable to pay for damages to private property in what were known as mandamus executions. Legislation passed in 1848 specified that the city was liable for damages done to private property in the execution of public works.<sup>5</sup> Claims against the city were processed through a special court known as a road jury, which had the authority to fix damages at its discretion. Staffed by political appointees, the road jury directed mandamus executions to land developers providing party politicians who had interests in real estate with handsome profits.

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1). C.R. Woodruff, 'Progress in Philadelphia', American Journal of Sociology, 26(1920-21), p.323.

2). Charles Richardson, 'The Philadelphia Situation', Proceedings of the Boston Conference For Good City Government and Eighth Annual Meeting of the National Municipal League (Phila., NML, 1902), p.166.

3). C.R. Woodruff, 'Progress in Philadelphia', p.323.

4). R. Blankenburg, op. cit., p.581. Also see p.233 in this chapter and Chapter 6, pp.381-4 for other examples of similar scandals.

5). 'An Act of Assembly...passed 8th March 1848', OAA, p.318.

Most mandamus executions involved works in which the city opened, widened or changed the grades of streets. In such cases public funds benefited both the contractor or contractors of the work and the land owners involved.<sup>1</sup> Often the land owners, councilmen and contractors were the same persons as was the case in the Torresdale Boulevard development. The Boulevard was to be developed on land previously purchased by the Philadelphia Land Company whose incorporators included John M. Mack. Mack had previously been involved in 1901 in a politically-orchestrated traction franchise steal, and was also a one-time partner in the big contracting firm of Republican political boss Jim McNichol. When the city planned to build the Boulevard during the Ashbridge administration, 1899 to 1902, with an ordinance introduced by Mack's business associate and chairman of the select council's finance committee, Peter Costello, land prices skyrocketed from \$200 to \$1,200 per acre. Costello was eventually appointed Director of Public Works with the responsibility of overseeing the project while the contract for the project was given to McNichol's construction company in which another of Philadelphia's Republican bosses, Israel Durham, was a partner.<sup>2</sup>

Another related mechanism of mandamus abuse which profited professional politicians with business interests in building and real estate development was the practice by which the city did not settle upon lines and levels of streets until an area had already

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1). Ninth Annual Report of the CMA...1895 (Phila., 1895), pp.20-4.  
2). I.F. Marcossan, 'The Awakening of Philadelphia', World's Work, 10(1905), p.6647.

been developed. Only then would the city surveyors go into the area to assign the street gradients. When roads were then built according to the surveyor's specifications, land holders were able to claim against the city for damages to their developed property.<sup>1</sup>

An analysis of where the members of different groups lived in and around the city shows that machine politics and the graft that it fostered was indeed a profitable business. By calculating for each group the percentage of all members' residences in each of the city's wards, it was possible to determine the extent to which members of each group clustered in the more or less affluent wards. A test of mean deviation was then used to point to those groups whose members clustered their homes in any given ward to a statistically significant degree relative to other groups. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.3 (page 235) which shows that councilmen's residences were spread out over all of the wards, as one would expect of ward representatives. Statistically significant incidents of clustering (marked as in Table 4.2, page 226) show, however, that councilmen did tend to cluster in the older and less fashionable suburban ward 26 and in the more affluent suburbs in ward 32, even if they were considerably less well represented in the wealthier wards in the CBD and in the wealthier suburbs in wards 22, 24 and 27.<sup>2</sup>

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1). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1912, pp.77-8.

2). A chi square of 680 with 44 degrees of freedom, calculated for the matrix containing the number of residences reveals to a 99% confidence level that the distributions of numbers in the matrix is not random.

Table 4.3 Residential Clustering of City Councilmen and Political Reformers, 1890-1920

| Ward<br>Number                     | Comm.<br>of<br>70 | Comm.<br>of<br>100 | CMA  | Common<br>Council | Select<br>Council | CSRA | Municipal<br>League | PBMR |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------|-------------------|-------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| 1                                  | 0%                | 1%                 | 0%   | *3%               | *5%               | 0%   | 0%                  | 0%   |
| 2                                  | 1                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | *2                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 3                                  | 1                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | 0                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 4                                  | 1                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | 2                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 5                                  | 0                 | 1                  | 1    | 2                 | 0                 | 0    | 0                   | 3    |
| 6                                  | 0                 | *2                 | 1    | 1                 | 1                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 7                                  | *11               | 6                  | 8    | *-3               | *-2               | *19  | *9                  | 6    |
| 8                                  | 9                 | 5                  | [13] | 2                 | 3                 | [14] | *25                 | [16] |
| 9                                  | 4                 | 1                  | 3    | *-0               | *-0               | 7    | *9                  | *13  |
| 10                                 | 1                 | 2                  | 2    | 2                 | 6                 | *7   | 3                   | 3    |
| 11                                 | 0                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | 2                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 12                                 | 1                 | 1                  | 0    | 0                 | *4                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 13                                 | 0                 | 2                  | 1    | 2                 | *3                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 14                                 | 0                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | *2                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 15                                 | 4                 | 5                  | *9   | 3                 | 3                 | 0    | 3                   | 0    |
| 16                                 | 0                 | 0                  | 3    | 1                 | 1                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 17                                 | 0                 | *4                 | 0    | 1                 | 1                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 18                                 | 0                 | 0                  | 0    | 2                 | *4                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 19                                 | 1                 | 3                  | 2    | *4                | 3                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 20                                 | 1                 | *5                 | 4    | 4                 | 3                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 21                                 | 2                 | 2                  | 0    | *3                | *4                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 22                                 | *30               | 13                 | 13   | *-9               | *-7               | 14   | 14                  | 3    |
| 23                                 | 4                 | 2                  | 0    | 4                 | 4                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 24                                 | 14                | 6                  | 6    | *-8               | *-5               | 17   | *22                 | *19  |
| 25                                 | 0                 | 1                  | 0    | *4                | *3                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 26                                 | 2                 | 4                  | 0    | *7                | *7                | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 27                                 | 2                 | *11                | *14  | 5                 | 4                 | 7    | 7                   | 9    |
| 28                                 | 2                 | 9                  | 1    | 9                 | 6                 | 0    | 0                   | 6    |
| 29                                 | 1                 | 1                  | 4    | 5                 | 4                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 30                                 | 0                 | 0                  | 0    | 1                 | 0                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 31                                 | 0                 | 3                  | 0    | 2                 | 1                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| 32                                 | 2                 | 4                  | 2    | *4                | *5                | 0    | 3                   | 0    |
| 33                                 | 2                 | 1                  | 0    | 4                 | 1                 | 0    | 0                   | 0    |
| Total                              | 100               | 100                | 100  | 100               | 100               | 100  | 100                 | 100  |
| Suburbs<br>Outside City            | 5                 | 6                  | 9    | *-1               | *-1               | 14   | 3                   | *22  |
| CBD Wards<br>(5-10)                | 25                | 17                 | [28] | *-10              | *-12              | *47  | *46                 | *41  |
| Suburban<br>Wards<br>(22,24,27,32) | *48               | 34                 | [35] | *-26              | *-22              | *38  | *46                 | 31   |
| Suburban<br>Wards + Suburbs        | *53               | 40                 | 44   | *-27              | *-23              | *52  | *49                 | *53  |

The social structure of Philadelphia formed the basis of boss politics as local real-estate developers and building contractors teamed up with leading figures in working-class and ethnic communities to build a political machine on the votes of Philadelphia's immigrants and its poor. Somewhat ironically, the same social structure which fostered machine politics also fostered the emergence of middle- and upper-class political reform movements which aimed to remove the partisan grafters from city hall and to undermine working-class and ethnic group influence had on local government. In order to analyze the relationship between social structural change and political reform movements, information was included in the database on the occupations and residences of the Citizens' Municipal Association (1886-1899), the Committee of 70 (1905-06), the Committee of 100 (1911), and the Municipal League (1891-1904). Information was also gathered on two reform organizations which survived until the end of the period: the Civil Service Reform Association of Philadelphia, founded in 1881, and the Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research, founded in 1908.<sup>1</sup>

The members of each of these groups were clearly drawn from a higher social strata than the city's councilmen. With few

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1). Names of reformers were collected from the following sources: Thirteenth Annual Report of the Citizens' Municipal Association (Phila., n.p., 1899); The Report of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1899-1901 (Phila., np., n.d., 1901-2?), p. i; The Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the CSRA of Pennsylvania, 1900 and The Proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the CSRA of Pennsylvania, 1910. Names of the members of the PBMR were taken from published reports drawn up by the association. Names of the Committee of 70 were published in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, 10 January 1905, and names of the Committee of 100 were published in the same paper on 7 September 1911. Data on occupations and on occupational and residential addresses were taken from Gopsill's City Directory (1881-1927).

exceptions, reformers tended to have more white-collar jobs (category 1) than members of the city councils, and they tended to have fewer jobs as laborers and small proprietors. Moreover, as Table 4.4 shows, more members of the reform groups analyzed were affiliated with Philadelphia's most elite social clubs, or listed in its Social Register than members of the city councils. When residential information was analyzed to provide an index of social mobility, there were clear indications that the reformers were, by and large, more upwardly mobile than city councilmen.

Table 4.4 Membership of City Councilmen and Political Reformers in Elite Social Clubs or Listings in Elite Biographies, 1890-1920.(1)

|                  |     |                  |     |
|------------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| CMA              | 42% | CSRA             | 53% |
| Common Council   | 5   | Municipal League | 38  |
| Committee of 70  | 46  | PBMR             | 41  |
| Committee of 100 | 39  | Select Council   | 7   |

1). The Social Register of Philadelphia...1907 (Phila., 1907); Who's Who in Philadelphia (Phila., 1917). Philadelphia and Popular Philadelphians, Illustrated with Views and Portraits (Phila., The North American, 1891); Philadelphia, Pictorial and Biographical, (Phila., S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1914); Charles Morris ed., Makers of Philadelphia: An Historical Work... (Phila., Leo Hammersley Co., 1894); Philadelphia Union League, Annual Report of the Directors of the Philadelphia Union League of Philadelphia, 1892-1924 (Philadelphia, The Union League, 1924), names of directors of the league were taken every three years; Philadelphia Rittenhouse Club (Phila., the Rittenhouse Club, 1905); R.B. Sheridan, Club Men of Philadelphia (Phila., Avil Printing Co., 1895), this volume listed members of the Philadelphia Club, the Philadelphia Country Club, and the Rittenhouse Club; The Philadelphia Country Club (Phila., The Philadelphia Country Club, 1902); The Philadelphia Club (Phila., priv. printing., 1934), contained lists of the officers and members of the club from which were taken the names of club officers in 1903 and 1909; The Philadelphia Contemporary Club (Phila., n.p., 1895-6, 1912); The Philadelphia Raquette Club...Officers and Members...1912 (Phila., 1912).

By ranking the wards in each of the decennial years between 1890 and 1920 according to per capita amount of taxable property, to per capita concentration of foreign whites and to the change in the size of their population since the previous decennial year, it was possible to derive a rough measure of the social mobility of the members of the different politically-active groups. This is because it was possible to compare any given ward's rank in one year with its rank in a previous year to determine whether it was moving up or down the ward-ranking scale. For example, if in 1890, a member of the Committee of 70 lived in the ward ranked 28 on the ward-ranking scale of per capita taxable property, and in a ward ranked 13 on the 1905 per capita taxable property scale, then it was said that that individual was moving into an area with a greater amount of per capita taxable property and so upwardly mobile. This would be true whether the individual actually moved to another ward or whether the ward in which he lived simply changed around him over time.

Employing this kind of analysis it was possible to compare the degree to which members of different groups tended to move to wards with greater or lesser concentrations of immigrants, taxable property and with greater or lesser rates of population growth. Population growth was included since a high rate of population growth was a phenomenon characteristic of suburban development.<sup>1</sup>

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1). The analysis required ward-ranking scales for mid-decennial years, 1895, 1905 and 1915. To construct these scales it was necessary to average population data since no population census actually existed for mid-decennial years. Hence, the population data used to rank wards in 1905 was taken as the average of wards' populations in 1900 and 1910. Data on wards' real and personal property assessment, however, were used in the construction of mid-decennial ward-ranking scales as they were available in the Board of Assessors' annual reports.

The analysis of residential mobility was conducted by dividing the members of each group into three subgroups: those who had residences in the city at times  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , those with residences at times  $t_2$  and  $t_3$ , and those with residences at times  $t_1$  and  $t_3$ , where  $t_2$  is the time at which it was known that the individual was a member of the group concerned. For example, the group of individuals who belonged to the Committee of 70 in 1905 (time  $t_2$ ) was divided into three subgroups. Subgroup 1 consisted of the members of the committee for whom residential information was available in 1895 and in 1905. Subgroup 2 consisted of the members of the committee who resided in Philadelphia in 1905 and in 1915. Finally, subgroup 3 included the members of the committee who resided in the city in 1895 and in 1915.

Since information on councilmen was taken approximately every three years for a period of almost 30 years, 1891-1917, analysis of their residential mobility was systematized by dividing the two groups of councilmen (select and common councilmen respectively) into three sub-groups, each with a different mid-point time  $t_2$ . The three mid-points were 1900, 1905 and 1910, but owing to councilmen's low rate of persistence in the sample, these mid-points had to be expanded to obtain sizeable subgroups. Therefore, the mid-points were chosen as 1898-1902, 1903-1907 and 1908-1912. The samples were assessed separately and then averaged for the common and select councils respectively.

Calculations were then made to assess the number of individuals in each subgroup that moved up or down each of the three ward-ranking scales. Table 4.5 (page 240) shows how the calculations

were made for the Committee of 70. The table is divided into three rows, one each for the different scales by which wards were ranked. The table is also divided into six columns, two for each of the subgroups. The same calculations were made for each subgroup. In subgroup 1 for example (the members of the Committee of 70 who lived in Philadelphia in 1895 and in 1905), each individual's ward of residence in 1895 was compared with his ward of residence in 1905 on each of the three ward-ranking scales. If the ward in which an individual lived in 1895 was ranked 28 on the 1895 per capita taxable property scale, and the ward in which he lived in 1905 was ranked 32 on the 1905 per capita taxable property scale, then that individual was considered to have moved up the scale of wards, ranked according to per capita taxable property. This calculation was made for each individual in each of the three ward-ranking scales.

Table 4.5 Example 1 of the Residential Mobility Calculations

|                      | Subgroup 1<br>residents in<br>1895 and 1905   |                                                 |  | Subgroup 2<br>residents in<br>1905 and 1915   |                                                 |  | Subgroup 3<br>residents in<br>1895 and 1915   |                                                 |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
|                      | Moved<br>up<br>between<br>1895<br>and<br>1905 | Moved<br>down<br>between<br>1895<br>and<br>1905 |  | Moved<br>up<br>between<br>1905<br>and<br>1915 | Moved<br>down<br>between<br>1905<br>and<br>1915 |  | Moved<br>up<br>between<br>1895<br>and<br>1915 | Moved<br>down<br>between<br>1895<br>and<br>1915 |
| Taxable<br>Property  | 31                                            | 11 (+20)                                        |  | 23                                            | 13(+10)                                         |  | 22                                            | 12 (+10)                                        |
| Foreign<br>Whites    |                                               |                                                 |  |                                               |                                                 |  |                                               |                                                 |
| Population<br>Growth |                                               |                                                 |  |                                               |                                                 |  |                                               |                                                 |

The first two figures in the first row of Table 4.5 indicate that 31 percent of the people in subgroup 1 lived in wards which ranked higher in 1905 than their wards of residence ranked in 1895 on the 1895 and 1905 per capita taxable property scales respectively. The second figure indicates that 11 percent of the individuals in subgroup 1 lived in wards which were ranked lower on the 1905 per capita taxable property scale than their wards of residence in 1895 ranked on the 1895 per capita taxable property scale. A figure for total mobility was then calculated by subtracting the figure for downward mobility from the figure for upward mobility. The resultant figure (which could be either positive or negative representing a greater degree of upward and downward mobility respectively) is represented in the table in brackets. The same calculation regarding mobility into wards with a higher per capita taxable property rank was made for each subgroup and then an average was taken for all subgroups. This exercise was repeated for each of the two remaining ward-ranking scales. Finally, the results were then placed in a table as shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table4.6 Example 2 of the Residential Mobility Calculations

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Property          | +13 |
| Ethnic            | -15 |
| Population Growth | +18 |

A high positive integer indicates a tendency for individuals in the group to move to wards with a higher ranking. A small negative number indicates a tendency for individuals in a group to move into wards with a low ranking. Members of the committee of 70 had a strong tendency to move into wards with greater per capita real and personal property. They also tended to move away from wards with high concentrations of foreign whites. These figures are useful indicators of the social mobility of the members of one group when compared with figures similarly derived for the members of other groups.

Since this general analysis of residential mobility included individuals who actually changed wards as well as individuals whose wards simply changed around them, the same analysis was applied to those individuals known to have changed wards. The results of both the general and the individual analyses are presented together in Table 4.7 (page 243).

The analysis of residential mobility shows that reformers were consistently more likely than city councilmen to move into residential areas where property values were higher, and where the foreign-born population was less concentrated. This was particularly true of the Committee of 70. Unfortunately, analysis of residential mobility as an index of social mobility could be calculated only for those groups that were large enough to be broken into the three subgroups; the select and common councilmen, the committees of 70 and 100, and the CMA. The residential clustering analysis shown in Table 4.3, however, could be used with every group about whose members residential and occupational data were added to

the database. It confirms the view that reformers were drawn from a higher social strata than city councilmen as they tended to cluster disproportionately in the fashionable CBD wards and in the affluent suburban wards.

Table 4.7 Residential Mobility Analysis of City Councilmen and Political Reformers, 1890-1920

|                           | Committee<br>of<br>70 | Committee<br>of<br>100 | CMA | Average<br>Reformer | Common<br>Council | Select<br>Council | Both<br>Councils |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Percent at<br>t1 and t2   | 88                    | 84                     | 91  | 88                  | 50                | 47                | 49               |
| Percent at<br>t2 and t3   | 70                    | 60                     | 47  | 59                  | 40                | 46                | 43               |
| Perent at<br>t1 and t3    | 63                    | 62                     | 49  | 58                  | 14                | 18                | 16               |
| GENERAL ANALYSIS          |                       |                        |     |                     |                   |                   |                  |
| Taxable<br>Property       | 13                    | 11                     | 7   | 11                  | 6                 | 7                 | 7                |
| Foreign<br>Whites         | -15                   | -12                    | -9  | -12                 | 3                 | 4                 | 3                |
| Population                | 18                    | 13                     | 10  | 14                  | -3                | -2                | -3               |
| INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS       |                       |                        |     |                     |                   |                   |                  |
| Percent of<br>group moved | 28                    | 30                     | 11  | 23                  | 8                 | 7                 | 8                |
| Taxable<br>Property       | 12                    | 10                     | 7   | 10                  | 0                 | 1                 | 1                |
| Foreign<br>Whites         | -8                    | -5                     | -1  | -5                  | -2                | -1                | -1               |
| Population                | 12                    | 8                      | 6   | 9                   | 1                 | 1                 | 1                |

The socio-economic and spatial structure of Philadelphia also generated reform movements amongst the middle and upper classes because the members of those classes were the primary participants in suburbanization. Hence, middle- and upper-class groups had the greatest interest in municipal government's provision of an infrastructure of suburban roads, water, gas and public transportation. Indeed, members of the reform associations may have been less concerned with corrupt government and the political influence of the urban working-class than they were with the provision of public works to the particular area of the city in which they lived. Interestingly, this situation limited the extent to which members of the same social class could collaborate in political reform movements throughout the period. Quite simply, municipal government affected suburban and city dwellers differently. Each group, therefore, had different interests in municipal policies especially in the case of municipal taxation.

At the consolidation, suburban tax rates were set lower than city tax rates because the suburbs were largely arable land. By 1868, the amount of open farmland in the suburbs was diminishing but land was still nowhere near as developed as property in the old city. To reflect this difference, the state legislature established a suburban tax rate which was significantly lower than the tax rate which applied to city property. In 1902, suburban wards retained their privileged tax rates even as they were largely developed. In that year, the city rate was \$1.85 per \$100. The suburban tax

rate was \$1.50 per \$100, and it applied to more than one-third of the total assessed real property in wards 21,22,23,24,25,27 and 33.<sup>1</sup>

While property-owning suburbanites benefited from differential tax rates, the wealthy inhabitants of the downtown bore an increasingly heavy share of the burden of municipal taxation. This is evident in the fact that the proportion of Philadelphia's population located in the CBD wards fell from 9.9% in 1890 to 3.3% in 1920. Over the same period, the proportion of the city's taxable real and personal property in those wards increased from 29% to 31%. Differential tax rates continued to be a source of conflict between center-city and suburban property holders, acting on more than one occasion as a stumbling block to reformers' success in the city. As we shall see, reformers' different and competing interests in the provisions of basic municipal services such as water, gas and transportation also impeded attempts to reform municipal government.

This general theme of urban-suburban conflict amongst reformers was evident in a number of reform associations. The Citizens' Municipal Association, for example, established in Philadelphia in 1886, had a distinctive upper- and middle-class social profile. Table 4.4 (page 237) shows that 42% of the group's members were listed in collective biographies of the city's social elites and/or belonged to exclusive social clubs and organizations.

The association's first annual report suggest that the membership aimed to protect the municipal corporation from fraud. Their three main

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1). Board of Assessors, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1905.

objectives were to 'sustain the constituted authorities in the faithful administration of the public service' , to 'secure a strict fulfilment by public officers, employees and contractors, of all obligations to the City and the Citizens', and finally, to 'promote such legislation as shall be most conducive to the public welfare'.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the association acted as a vehicle through which its members could guarantee the provision of adequate municipal services to the wards in which they lived. Indeed, the CMA's principal achievements included its numerous victories over the city in legal actions to force the street railway companies to obey civic ordinances and pave the streets which their railways occupied.<sup>2</sup> It is none too surprising then to discover in Table 4.2 (page 226) that the CMA's membership consisted largely of manufacturers and wholesalers. Neither should it be surprising to discover that 80% of the jobs held by CMA members were located in railway-dependent wards in the CBD and its immediate periphery. The spatial distribution of the members of the CMA, however, limited their participation in municipal politics. Vigorous political activity, such as involvement in independent reform political parties, caused divisions between members of the CMA, half of whom lived in the fashionable sections of the CBD while the other half lived in the more affluent of the suburban wards.

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1). The First Annual Report of the CMA...1886, p.1.

2). The Annual Reports consist almost entirely of detailed accounts of such proceedings. Indeed, the CMA appears to have measured its success in terms of the numbers of cases decided against the city.

Similar problems arose for the Municipal League which was founded in 1891 in order to work for the separation of local and state politics as a means of eliminating the influence of party competition in local government. It advocated the honest and efficient conduct of city government run upon business principles by men who were appointed to their posts by virtue of merit rather than party loyalty.<sup>1</sup>

The social profile of the leaders of the Municipal League resembled that of the members of the CMA. Residentially, the League's leadership tended to cluster disproportionately in the center-city wards in which the wealthy townhouse neighborhoods were to be found, wards 7, 8, and 9, and in the suburban wards taken together, wards 22, 24, 27 and 32, especially in ward 24.<sup>2</sup> An occupational and residential profile of the groups leadership demonstrates that its members included a disproportionate number of lawyers, doctors and financiers, as well as academics and social workers when compared to the members of other reform associations and to city councilmen.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, an analysis of the wards in which the Municipal League had its greatest electoral success suggests that the League's greatest political appeal was to the residents of the affluent suburban wards in the city.<sup>4</sup>

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1). Stewart, Frank Mann, A Half Century of Municipal Reform: The History of the National Municipal League (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1950), p.13; Theodore M. Etting, The Proper Standard of Municipal Affairs... (Phila., Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1894[?]), pp.9-11.

2). Table 4.3, p.235.

3). Table 4.2, p.226.

4). In the local elections of February 1902, the Municipal League nominated the majority of its candidates from the suburban wards around the CBD including wards 15, 20, 22, 24, 29 and 32-38

As a reform organization the League was far more aggressive than the CMA in its attempts to circumscribe the political power of the Republican machine, publishing and distributing propaganda and soliciting electoral support through its ward and district associations.<sup>1</sup> By 1897, the League had developed a bureaucratic structure that is evident in its card catalogue of members arranged alphabetically by surname and also by ward and electoral division. The League also kept a cumulative record of election returns so as to be able to concentrate and develop its electoral support where it was found to be weakest.<sup>2</sup>

Despite its developed organization, however, the League proved incapable of mobilizing political support amongst the middle and upper classes to which it appealed. In 1897, for example, the League stood by its demands for sound and efficient management in government and came out against the proposal to lease the city's gas works to a private company. Its leaders argued that if the works were leased, Philadelphians would take less of an interest in city government thereby allowing machine politicians to get away with even more graft and corruption. The League's stand alienated many

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and in fashionable downtown wards 8 and 5. The 17 river wards, 2-19 (exclusive of wards 8, 9 and 5) together nominated 162 candidates while the 13 suburban wards and the 3 fashionable CBD wards nominated a total of 1,245 candidates on the Municipal League ticket, see Clinton Rogers Woodruff, 'The Municipal League of Philadelphia', American Journal of Sociology, (1905), p.338.

1). William Nichols, Duties of Citizens in Reference to Municipal Government... (Phila., Municipal League, 1892). This theme is also recurrent in the various Annual Reports of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League between 1894 and 1903.

2). The Report of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1899-1901 (Phila., n.p., n.d.[1901-2?]), p.20.

potential supporters in the suburban wards where residents suffered most from the city's poor management of the gas works.<sup>1</sup>

Eminent businessmen, bankers, lawyers and doctors did participate in reform groups which were more successful in attaining access to local government than the CMA and the Municipal League. The Civil Service Reform Association, for example, managed to survive the Progressive years as a reform association. Compared with the occupational and residential profiles of city councilmen and members of other reform associations, the members of the CSRA had a statistically significant concentration of lawyers, doctors and financiers as well as academics and social workers.<sup>2</sup> Residentially, the members of the CSRA clustered disproportionately in the CBD and in the affluent suburban wards, wards 22, 24, 27 and 32 taken together.<sup>3</sup>

The CSRA lobbied aggressively in the state for improved civil service legislation to prevent the city's Republican machine from distributing municipal appointments as favors for party service.<sup>4</sup>

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1). See Report of the Sub-Committee to Joint Committee on Finance and Gas of Select and Common Councils Relative to the Leasing of the Philadelphia Gas Works (Phila., 1897), pp.22 for the Municipal League's statement of its position on the lease of the gas works and Annual Report to the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1898-1899, pp.8-19 for the League's own assessment of its campaign against the lease.

2). Table 4.2, p.226.

3). Table 4.3, p.235.

4). For a brief description of the city's civil service code see 'The Mayor of Philadelphia', The Citizen (Dec., 1895), p.234. The lobbying activities of the CSRA itself are well documented in Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Association.

It also employed the services of its eminent lawyers in legal actions against successive machine administrations to make them adhere to the city's civil service code. The CSRA, however, did not become embroiled in electoral politics though on more than one occasion it voiced its approval of the reform associations which mounted election campaigns in the city. It seems likely that the CSRA's avoidance of electoral politics was partly responsible for its longevity and the lack of internal dissent among its members. The group's history, then, may serve as counterfactual evidence to support the claim that reformers' political consensus was often disrupted by conflict over policies which distributed their benefits differently to different areas of the city. More direct evidence is provided by the members and activities of the two reform associations in the city which were by far the most politically successful: the Committee of 70 and the Committee of 100.

In 1905-6, the reform Committee of 70 was founded; the direct descendant of the recently dissolved Municipal League of Philadelphia. The Committee, like the Municipal League before it, aimed to protect Philadelphia from corrupt politicians and from private companies (most notably the United Gas Improvements Company) which, reformers alleged, defrauded the city in municipal works contracts.<sup>1</sup> The members of the Committee of 70 for whom residential and occupational information could be found over at least a ten year period, had a high rate of mobility from the center-city wards to the fashionable and wealthy suburban areas,

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1). Lloyd M. Abernathy, 'Insurgency in Philadelphia', PMHB, 87:1(Jan., 1963), p.9; also see the discussion of the gas lease Chapter 5, pp. 288-90 and Chapter 6, pp.363-7.

particularly to Chestnut Hill and Germantown in ward 22.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, not all of the members of the Committee of 70 migrated to the suburbs. In fact, when the group is compared with city councilmen and other reform groups that were politically active during the period, it is found to have consisted of a disproportionate number of members who lived in the fashionable townhouse neighborhoods in ward 7 in the CBD.<sup>2</sup> Table 4.8 (page 252) which compares the occupations of the members of the Committee of 70 with the occupations of city councilmen, the CMA and the reform Committee of 100, reveals that a disproportionate number of the members of the Committee of 70 were lawyers, financiers, doctors and manufacturers. Moreover, the names of nearly half of the members of the Committee of 70 (31 of 67) for whom occupational and residential information could be found, appeared on the membership lists of a variety of elite social groups and clubs and amongst the names in the indices of elite biographies.<sup>3</sup>

In 1905 the Committee, in alliance with the independent City party and other reform groups which included the CMA<sup>4</sup> took a direct part in municipal politics and mounted a campaign to elect to

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1). Table 4.7, p.243.

2). Table 4.3, p.235.

3). Table 4.4, p.237.

4). Thomas Raeburn White, 'The Revolution in Philadelphia', Proceedings of the Atlantic Conference for Good City Government, Twelfth Annual Meeting of the National Municipal League, 1906 (Phila., NML, 1906), pp.136-7; Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA, 24(1905), p.8 and 25(1906), p.7; J.F. Sutherland, 'The Origins of Philadelphia's Octavia Hill Association: Social Reform in the "Contented" City', PMHB, 99:1(Jan., 1975), p.40; C.R. Woodruff, 'Permanent Results of Philadelphia's Upheaval of 1905-6', American Journal of Sociology, 13(1907), pp.258-9.

Table 4.8 Occupational Analysis of City Councilmen and Selected Groups of Political Reformers, 1890-1920

| Occupational Categories             | Committee of 70 | Committee of 100 | Common Council | Select Council | CMA |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|
| 1. Law/Finance Executive            | *45%            | *43%             | *-22%          | *-17%          | 34% |
| 2. Real Estate Contractor           | *-5             | 11               | 11             | *24            | 5   |
| 3. Manufacturer                     | *24             | 14               | 9              | *-8            | *22 |
| 4. Small Proprietor                 | *-3             | 6                | *15            | *15            | 5   |
| 5. Laborer                          | *-4             | 9                | *16            | *14            | 6   |
| 6. Political Appointee              | 0               | 1                | 6              | *10            | 0   |
| 7. Unknown/ Undertaker              | 1               | 1                | 2              | 0              | 3   |
| 8. Publisher/ Journalist            | 5               | 4                | 2              | 0              | 3   |
| 9. Clerk/ Student                   | 2               | 4                | *11            | 6              | 2   |
| 10. Wholesale Merchant              | 10              | 4                | 7              | 5              | *20 |
| 11. Academic/ Social Work/ Engineer | 1               | 2                | 0              | 1              | 0   |
| Total                               | 100             | 100              | 100            | 100            | 100 |
| Laborers + Small Proprietors        | *-10            | 21               | *41            | *35            | 15  |
| No. Individuals                     | 67              | 68               | 462            | 188            | 102 |
| No. Jobs                            | 217             | 161              | 2,752          | 11198          | 348 |

municipal office men who were independent of the Republican machine. The reform coalition was successful in electing several of its candidates in 1906. Electoral success, however, generated conflict between suburban- and urban-dwelling reformers whose interests in municipal works were shaped differently according to their location in the city.<sup>1</sup>

In 1911 eminent Philadelphians figured prominently in the Keystone Party, another political reform coalition sponsored by a citizens' Committee of 100.<sup>2</sup> The Committee of 100 was also made up of Philadelphians who were relatively well-off. They avoided ethnic residential areas and tended to migrate into areas with greater property values in greater numbers than the average of all reformers and city councilmen in the sample taken together.<sup>3</sup> In terms of the wards in which they chose to live, members of the Committee of 100 clustered disproportionately in suburban ward 27 and in the CBD in ward 6.<sup>4</sup> Occupationally, the Committee of 100, when compared with the Committee of 70, the CMA and with the city councils, had a disproportionate number of members who were lawyers and financiers.<sup>5</sup>

Politically, the Committee of 100 was more successful than the Committee of 70. In alliance with the Keystone party it helped

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1). See Chapter 5, pp.305-309 for a discussion of the collapse of the reform movement of 1905-6.

2). See Chapter 5, pp. 316-8 for a discussion of the reform campaign of 1911.

3). Table 4.7, p.243.

4). Table 4.3, p.235.

5). Table 4.8, p.252.

to elect one of its members, textile merchant Rudolph Blankenburg, as mayor of the city in 1911. The reform coalition of 1911, however, was no more able to consolidate its political gains than its predecessors had been only five years earlier as divisions occurred over expenditures on public works projects which promised to benefit the suburbs almost exclusively.<sup>1</sup>

It is important, however, that the elite standing of the members of the two committees should not be overstated as it has been in the past.<sup>2</sup> The city's most affluent and prominent citizens did indeed belong to the two committees. They even adopted a rather high profile within them. But the committees were not by any means exclusively dominated by urban elites. Both the Committee of 70 and the Committee of 100 were, in fact, coalitions of various groups that were interested in political reform.<sup>3</sup> This is evident in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 (pages 226 and 235) where the occupational and residential profiles of the members of the two committees are compared with a greater number of reform associations including the CMA, the Civil Service Reform Association and the Municipal League. The analysis reveals that the two committees compared less favorably

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- 1). Charles F. Jenkins, 'The Blankenburg Administration: A Symposium', National Municipal Review, 5(April, 1916), passim.
  - 2). Both Donald Disbrow, 'Reform in Philadelphia Under Mayor Blankenburg, 1912-1916', Pennsylvania History, 27:4(Oct., 1960) and Bonnie R. Fox, 'The Philadelphia Progressives: A Test of the Hofstadter-Hays Thesis', Pennsylvania History, 34:4(Oct., 1967), claim that the committees were strictly associations of the city's economic and social elites.
  - 3). The Committee of 70's political alliance is noted on page 251, footnote 4. The Committee of 100 entered into an alliance with the Keystone party and with the local Democratic party as well as with the Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research, the Philadelphia Housing Commission and the CSRA.

with the other groups in the occupational and residential distribution of their members in jobs and in wards of residence respectively which might indicate the presence of a concentration of individuals of a high socio-economic standing. This suggests that prominent citizens did not dominate the membership of either group. It also goes further in explaining the difficulties experienced by the two reform coalitions in maintaining their electoral success; attainment of public office generated infighting amongst the members of the coalitions who had different interests in municipal reform.

What emerges from the analysis of the members and activities of some of the associations which acted in alliance with the committees of 70 and 100? It is clear that Philadelphia's affluent were joined in reform associations by social workers and academics who sought to use municipal resources to promote their professions. Here too the structure of urban society can be seen as being reform generating.

The increasing concentration of the urban poor in the downtown gave rise to a concern about the moral and social order of the city, especially amongst wealthy downtown residents who lived in close proximity to areas of urban blight.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the urban upper classes actively promoted social work with the aim of limiting the damage done by urban poverty and overcrowding, both of which, they claimed, helped to recruit the Republican organization and to perpetuate corrupt political practices in municipal government.<sup>2</sup> As the city's upper classes became increasingly

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1). Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Camb., Harvard University Press, 1978).

2). See Jane Allen Shikoh, 'The "Higher Life"', for her account of elites' reform activities in Philadelphia, pp. 128-38, 365-6, 383-4.

concerned with vice, crime, poverty and overcrowding, members of the social work professions began to advocate a number of programs of reform designed to restore moral and social order to the city. Better provision for housing is an example of such a program. 'Once decently housed', one Philadelphia social worker claimed, 'the dangerous classes would be regenerated and the chasm between the rich and the poor bridged'.<sup>1</sup> To promote housing reform, university-educated social workers applied their professional skills to studies of housing conditions in the city of Philadelphia. Between 1895 and 1905 several such studies were conducted with the support of two social work agencies whose founding members were drawn from the Civic Club and the city's Social Register: the Octavia Hill Association and the city's College Settlement which was affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup>

The housing reformers did not content themselves solely with publishing independently-sponsored housing studies. Their aim was to shape municipal public policy in such a way as to win for the profession some control over municipally-funded programs for social reform such as housing and poor relief. So, members of the OHA approached the city's Board of Health in the late 1890s seeking two things: restrictive legislation on multiple-occupancy dwellings and

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- 1). John F. Bauman, 'Disinfecting the City', p.118.  
2). J.F. Sutherland, op. cit., pp. 36-8. Also see Emily Dinwiddie, Housing Conditions in Philadelphia (Phila., n.p., 1904) and E. Dinwiddie, 'Housing and Social Conditions in Philadelphia', Charities, 12(1904), p.490 and 14(1905), pp.631-8. The OHA was, in fact, founded and supported by the Civic Club of Philadelphia, over 75% of whose members' names appeared in the Social Register between 1891 and 1904. W.H. Issel, 'Modernization in Philadelphia School Reform', PMHB, 94:3(July, 1970), p.359-60.

funding to support an adequate number of professionally trained inspectors to ensure that the legislation was enforced. Failing to find favor with the appointed directors of the Board of Health, the OHA approached the mayor's office in 1905, where they were rebuffed for being in sympathy with the Committee of 70 and the reform City party. In 1906-7, the OHA joined the reform coalition in order to pursue their interests in housing legislation and were successful as a housing bill was one of a number of pieces of reform legislation that passed the state legislature in 1906-7.<sup>1</sup>

In 1909, only two years before the reform campaign of 1911 elected Rudolph Blankenburg as the city's mayor, housing once again became a reform with which several professional groups in the social services attempted to gain access to local government. In that year the Philadelphia Housing Committee was formed by social workers in the fields of housing reform and public health. The committee conducted a study which reflected social workers' increasingly scientific approach to their work. Social workers had begun to advance their claims to professionalism through academic training in the social sciences and in the health related fields.<sup>2</sup> Through a variety of similarly scientific studies, poor and inadequate housing was seen as being related to the perpetuation of a number of urban ills. Indeed, it was seen as a panacea and consequently became an issue behind which reform groups with a variety of different interests were politically mobilized.

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1). J.F. Sutherland, op. cit., p.41; also see Chapter 5, p.309 for a discussion of the reform legislation of 1906-7.

2). J.F Bauman, op. cit., pp.126-7.

Professional social workers also took advantage of elites' expressed concern with social reform by entering political reform movements in order to consolidate their hold over charity work in the city. In the field of poor relief, social workers claimed that the problem of urban poverty could be solved only by entrusting trained professionals with the care of the needy poor; their task was to rehabilitate the poor and to help to find them employment so that they could become productive members of urban society. To undertake this work in Philadelphia, Mary Richmond, whose series of lectures on social work at the University of Pennsylvania led to the establishment of its school of social work, established the Society for Organized Charities.<sup>1</sup> The Society aimed to systematize poor relief in the city. It crusaded to eradicate the spontaneous and erratic dispensation of poor relief by independent charitable establishments which proliferated during periods of seasonal unemployment and then disappeared when economic conditions improved. According to the professionals, bringing private charity under a professional and efficient organization would eliminate waste and more importantly, eliminate the breadlines and soup kitchens thought to be demoralizing to the poor and unemployed. The Society also opposed the distribution of public welfare unless responsibility for it was placed in the hands of the people who were trained and who understood the real needs of the poor.<sup>2</sup>

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1). J.F. Sutherland, p.32.

2). Leah H. Feder, Unemployment Relief in Periods of Depression, A Study of Measures Adopted in Certain American Cities, 1857-1922 (N.Y., Russell Sage Foundation, 1936), pp.209-261.

The Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research was perhaps the most conspicuous and politically successful organization of social workers in Philadelphia during the period. Occupational and residential information about its members was therefore included in the database. Formed initially in 1908 by Henri Bruere, the director of the New York Bureau of Municipal Research, the PBMR was by 1909 independent of the New York organization and under the directorship of Jesse D. Burke.<sup>1</sup> Burke's strategy for attaining access to the resources available in municipal government was designed to take advantage of the perpetual factionalism in local politics. It 'assumed', according to Burke, 'that the public officials should be permitted to take credit for measures intended to raise the efficiency of the public service rather than be subjected to public criticism for waste, inefficiency and infidelity due to unbusinesslike organization and methods'.<sup>2</sup>

Starting from outside the machine administration of Mayor John Reyburn in 1909, the PBMR investigated the extent of waste and corruption in the Bureau of Health. It then threatened to publicize the report at a time when a breach in the Republican leadership was damaging Reyburn's position in the machine organization. Unwilling to expose himself to public criticism at a time particularly fraught

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1). Citizens' Business to Promote Efficient and Scientific Management of Municipal Business, 236(30 Nov., 1916), passim.

2). D. Burke, 'The Outlook for Municipal Efficiency in Philadelphia', pp.254-5. A similar strategy was used by the PBMR to gain access to the Department of Public Health and Charities and to the Board of Education. See Frederick P. Gruenberg, 'The Bureau in Philadelphia: The First Municipal Research Venture Outside New York', Municipal Research, 77(Sept., 1916), pp.10-12.

with intra-party strife, Reyburn chose to allow the PBMR to implement its recommendations for the rationalization of administrative procedures in the Board of Health.<sup>1</sup> The Bureau of Municipal Research managed to survive the machine-reform contest of 1911 by astutely choosing to remain uncommitted to either party. It chose instead to circulate one political document entitled 'What Philadelphia's Next Mayor Must Do'. The document, which stuck to the principle that 'publicity is...the greatest agent of good government', enabled the Bureau to secure the allegiance of both the reform and the machine candidates to promote municipal efficiency and support the work of the PBMR.<sup>2</sup>

The Bureau's political strategy enabled it to survive reform and machine administrations alike into the 1930s.<sup>3</sup> During that time the Bureau consolidated and expanded the role of the social work professions and social scientists in municipal government. In seven years alone, between 1908 and 1915, the Bureau inaugurated a rationalized system of municipal accounting. It standardized medical inspections in the schools thus enabling the Board of Education to count more accurately the number of students in the public school system. As a result, it was found that the Board of Education was under-estimating the student population in the city and consequently claiming too little money from the state government which based its returns to city schools on the size of the student

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1). F.P. Gruenberg, op.cit., p.10.

2). J. Burks, op. cit., p.260.

3). The bulk of the PBMR's published work was produced during the great depression and addressed the problem of unemployment.

population.<sup>1</sup> The PBMR's threat to publicize the findings of its studies of procedures in the supplies departments of the city led to the establishment of a Bureau of Weights and Measures, which helped to standardize specification procedures in the city's Department of Supplies. The PBMR also investigated business methods in the Bureau of Charities under Blankenburg's reform administration. The reform administration subsequently was able to use the Bureau's findings to expose the Republican organization for defrauding the inmates of city institutions by providing them with inferior food and other supplies.<sup>2</sup> As importantly, the Bureau made itself into a training ground for recruits to the municipal civil service; it took pride in publicizing the career-records of the individuals who had at one time conducted municipal research under the auspices of the organization.<sup>3</sup>

Prosopographical information on 39 members of the PBMR suggests two reasons for social workers' political success relative to that of the Municipal League, the CMA and the Committees of 70 and 100. First, Table 4.2 (page 226) shows that the members of the PBMR had a disproportionately large number of jobs which required an advanced degree of professional training in social work, academic subjects or in engineering (category 11). This preliminary investigation suggests that for the PBMR and indeed similar groups, members' political consensus was maintained

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1). The PBMR's involvement enabled the city to claim from the state government an extra \$75,000 per year. J. Burks, op. cit., pp.252-5.

2). Ibid.

3). George Burnham, Jr., 'The Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research', National Municipal Review, 5(July, 1916), pp.468-9; F.P. Gruenberg, op. cit., p.12.

since political activity was based upon common professional aims. As a result, the PBMR, and other politically active groups consisting largely of social work professionals, were less susceptible to internal divisions caused by debate over the spatial consequences of public policies. A second explanation is to be found in the analysis of residential clustering (Table 4.3, page 235). Members of the PBMR tended to cluster disproportionately in the suburbs which were beyond the boundaries of the city. This, too, may have acted to minimize the possibility of internal divisions.

This chapter, then, has examined the changing structure of urban society around the turn of the twentieth century as context for the period of reform politics in the city. It has shown how the spatial bifurcation of rich and poor helps to explain the development of a political machine in Philadelphia which was based on grass-roots support in the working-class and ethnic wards in the urban core. Industrial development and re-location, and the related rapid population growth and real estate development in the suburbs defined the market for municipal works and services during the period. This enhanced the opportunities available to professional politicians - many of whom had interests in general contracting, construction and real estate development - to build their organizations and profit personally from their political service to the machine. Similarly, the structure of urban society helps to explain the emergence of reform movements in the city. Groups of middle- and upper-class Philadelphians, responding to their growing political isolation in relation to the working-class-based political machine, set out to reform municipal government fundamentally. Such

groups were also concerned to ensure that the city government provide (at no extra cost to the middle- and upper-class taxpayer) the infrastructure of works and services which was necessary for industrial relocation and suburban expansion. Ironically, reformers' self-interested approach to city government's distribution of the tax burden and to its administration of public works and services, hindered successful political reform. Finally, the chapter has shown how reform movements were often coalitions of several different urban groups, interested in reform for different reasons. Some of these groups consisted largely of social workers interested in politics to advance their professions. Social workers' appearance in municipal politics can also be explained in relation to changes in the structure of urban society. The spatial concentration of the urban poor and the resultant anxiety that this caused amongst the city's middle and upper classes provided social workers with an opportunity to seek municipal funding for their work amongst the needy.

The identification of reform-generating social structural changes cannot, however, explain the successes and failures of political reform movements in the city. Indeed, this chapter has shown that the same social structures which helped to generate middle-and upper-class reform movements also provided opportunities for the political machine to develop and extend its hold over city government. Similarly, social forces which explain the emergence of middle- and upper-class reform groups also explain the difficulties experienced by such reform groups in maintaining political consensus among their members. In the next chapter, the

organization and conduct of municipal politics in Philadelphia is examined. There it will be suggested that, in fact, the structure of the urban polity shaped opportunities for political reform in the city and hence, the way in which changes in the urban social structure were interpreted by urban groups and given political expression.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### "CORRUPT AND CONTENTED": OBSTACLES TO POLITICAL REFORM

#### i

Urban politics, it has been argued earlier, do not simply respond passively to more fundamental changes in the urban social structure. Jon Teaforde is unusual among urban historians in acknowledging this.<sup>1</sup> He claims that the structure of the urban polity enabled middle- and upper-class reformers to influence city governments in at least two ways. First, since city governments were creatures of the state legislature, reformers managed to obtain specially tailored legislation in state governments over the heads of the local political bosses. Second, reformers exploited to their own political advantage the fragmented structure of executive and legislative authority in city governments together with the factionalism which it perpetuated within cities' machines. Teaforde concludes, contrary to conventional wisdom, that governments of the U.S., Philadelphia's included, were not dominated by corrupt party machines. Nor were they prevented from responding adequately to rapid urban growth and industrialization by extending necessary public works and services. The often-touted failure of American

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1). Jon C. Teaforde, The Unheralded Triumph.

cities, Teaforde writes, was more 'a matter of subjective perception and not objective fact'.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter adopts Teaforde's emphasis on the importance of political structures in determining the opportunities for and the eventual course of political reform. It nevertheless challenges his claims about municipal reformers' political triumphs with evidence from Philadelphia, where reform elites did not become a political force in the city. This was because of Philadelphia's structure of government. Particularly significant here was the division of political authority between the executive and legislative branches of local government and the relationship between the state and local political arenas; these prevented reform elites from becoming a political force in the city, and fostered the longevity of Philadelphia's political machine. This may partly explain why, in 1903, Philadelphia appeared to muckraker journalist and Progressive reformer Lincoln Steffens, as corrupt and contented.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps a more fundamental criticism of Teaforde's work is that it rests upon the assumption that political activities of the reformers were governed by their perception of a civic good while the actions of professional politicians were governed by partisan bias and by purely material self-interest. Chapter four supports Teaforde's assessment of professional politicians' interests but challenges his claims that reform elites acted for a common or civic good: it shows that reformers' political interests were

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1). Ibid., p.218.

2). Lincoln Steffens, 'Philadelphia: Corrupt and Contented', pp.249-63.

shaped by where they lived in the city and hence by their relationship with municipal works and services which were distributed unevenly across urban space. This chapter will provide more evidence in support of this claim by showing how reformers' self-interested participation in municipal politics in part prevented them from mobilizing an effective opposition to the city's political machine throughout the period.

The last chapter demonstrated how the development and consolidation of Philadelphia's political machine was partly a product of the spatial concentration of the urban poor and of the growth in the scale and value of municipal works and services. That the city's machine was Republican owes much to historical circumstance. The Republican party grew to dominate Pennsylvania politics as demands for high tariffs became more than just rhetorical devices of party competition. By the 1850s and 1860s, protection was as important to the city's economy as the legal and fiscal environment of relatively unfettered extension of railroads and manufacture.<sup>1</sup> As national political parties began to define themselves in relation to their position on the issues of slavery and the tariff, the Democrats, who tended to side with southern interests, were unable to carry the state of Pennsylvania.

In Philadelphia, the Republican party was built upon the tariff issues and on Whig and Native-American support. With the economic panic of 1857, the tariff replaced ethnicity in its

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1). Howard F. Gillette, Jr., "'Corrupt and Contented': Philadelphia's Political Machine, 1865-1887" (New Haven, Yale University Ph.D. thesis, 1970), p.17.

importance as an issue in Philadelphia politics and the city's businessmen joined the party of protection in increasing numbers.<sup>1</sup> During the Civil War, the city went solidly Republican. 'To many who felt strongly about loyalty to the Union, party fealty became as sacred as religion. They considered the country endangered if a Democrat was elected to councils'.<sup>2</sup>

After the Civil War, the Republicans continued to exploit the tariff issues to dominate both Philadelphia and Pennsylvania politics. They also managed to manipulate numerous electoral procedures to absorb the opposition Democrats. For example, parties and factions were incorporated into the Republican machine through the manipulation of bipartisan arrangements which were written into the Consolidation Act. In Philadelphia, one of the three county commissioners, one-third of 30 elected magistrates, two of the five appointed members of the Philadelphia Registration Committee and one-half of the appointed real estate assessors had to consist of members of the opposition party. All of these posts involved the distribution of patronage through appointments and, by the 1900s, the Republicans were so effective in manipulating patronage that they could afford to allocate posts even to the opposition Democratic party. In this way the Republican organization by 1890 had managed to subjugate the city Democrats. This prevented the Democrats from forming political alliances with reform groups or with dissenting

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1). James A. Barnes, 'Protection, Politics and Pennsylvania', Pennsylvania History, 31:1(January, 1964), pp.1-22.

2). E.P. Allinson and B. Penrose, City Government of Philadelphia, p.61.

factions of the Republican party; at least it ensured that such fusions would be short-lived since the Democrats were afraid of losing their guaranteed share of municipal offices to independent parties.<sup>1</sup>

Another feature of the electoral process which promoted machine rule was the ballot. The printed ballot was a vestige of an era when there were few candidates to choose between in any given election. By the 1890s, it encouraged strict party voting. The voter could either choose his candidate for each of the many offices being elected by placing a tick next to each of their names or he could place one tick at the head of the column which contained all the nominees of one party under the name of the man running for the highest office in that election whether it be mayor, governor or president.<sup>2</sup> These and other features of Pennsylvania's ballot law inhibited the growth of an opposition party and compounded Philadelphians' unwillingness to reconsider their historical allegiance to the party of Lincoln.

Control over the primary system of selecting delegates to nominating conventions was another mechanism employed by the machine to inhibit opposition from within the Republican party and so maintain its hold over the municipal government. Machine appointees on the board of election judges could fix closely-contested primaries by notifying both delegates that they had won a seat at the convention. Such a ruling required the leaders of the

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1). Irwin Frank Greenberg, 'The Philadelphia Democratic Party', p.16.

2). Charles C. Binney, 'The Merits and Defects of the Pennsylvania Ballot Law of 1891', Annals, 2(1891-2), pp.761-2.

Republican machine on the party's city committee to decide who would be seated.<sup>1</sup> Other means of prohibiting opposition included the easy pre-emption of party names in a given district. When the Republican organization was divided over the presidential nomination in 1912, the controlling faction in the city's Republican organization declared for Taft and ran its state and local candidates under different party names which included the Progressive party, the National Progressive party, the Roosevelt Progressive party, the Roosevelt Progressive League and the Roosevelt League, in order to confuse the voters and prevent opposition candidates from getting elected on the coat-tails of Theodore Roosevelt's presidential campaign.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, the machine had access to more money with which to finance its campaigns, because it could obtain 'contributions' from appointed office-holders in the municipal corporation. One study of this practice found that in 1903, 94% of the city's employees paid \$349,053.38 into the Republican organization's campaign chest. During the one reform administration of the period, that of Rudolph Blankenburg, 1912 to 1915, M.L. Cooke, the Director of the Department of Public Works, calculated that between 1902 and 1912 approximately \$3,000,000 had been collected by the organization in this fashion with as much as \$500,000 being collected in a given year.<sup>3</sup>

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1). Walter J. Branson, 'The Philadelphia Nominating System', Annals, 14(1899), pp.23-6.

2). Richard James Donagher, 'The Urban Bull Moose: A Case Study of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh' (Fordham University Ph.D. thesis, 1979), p.38.

3). Philadelphia, the Department of Public Works, The Political Assessment of Office Holders (Phila., np., 1912?), pp.7,11,12; Lloyd M. Abernathy, 'Insurgency in Philadelphia', p.4.

The manipulation of electoral and nomination procedure pales in comparison to the distribution of political appointments in its importance to the development of the machine. Appointments were the essence of machine politics in the Progressive era because they held the key to secure electoral majorities. They were, therefore, the ultimate political prizes that were contested at each and every election in the city of Philadelphia throughout the period. David Lane, long-time Republican machine leader of the 20th ward underlined the importance of offices in a speech which he delivered to office holders in 1900. The cohesive power of the [Republican] organization', Lane claimed, 'is offices'.

We have 10,000 officeholders and they are all ours. Under the present administration no man can get an office unless he is loyal to the organization. If you want office or preferment in political life, you will have to get it through the organization. Foreigners, when they come here, vote the Republican ticket. Why? Because we have the offices and they expect favors from office holders... The ownership of the offices means the power for withholding patronage and for conferring favors upon citizens generally who, in turn, will support the organization. It is through this far-reaching power that the great Republican party is given its majority in the city and State. Without the offices this great edifice would crumble and fall. To the man with his feet on the ground and little food in the house it is a godsend to get the two dollars or two-and-a-half. If a man cared to use his own money for hospitable purposes he should do it with discretion. Leaders of a division commit crime if they become inebriated while on duty. Your work before and on election day will be known to the leaders; and the man who achieves results is the man who secures preferment if any chance for political advancement occurs.(1)

Throughout the Progressive years, leaders of Philadelphia's Republican machine continued to build an empire of office-holders which

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1). C.R. Woodruff, 'Philadelphia's Revolution', Yale Review, 15(1906), p.10.

was the major political force in the city. There were, however, a number of limits to the machine's ability politically to dominate Philadelphia. First, the direction of city government relied upon the co-ordination of authority in a government which was divided between elected persons in the legislative body, the councils and the officials in the city's executive departments. In 1890, there were 23 executive departments and three ad hoc commissions.<sup>1</sup> 12 of these departments were 'city departments' which were directly responsible to the mayor who appointed their chief executives. They included the departments of the Mayor, Prisons, Law, Charities and Corrections, Clerks of Councils, Port Wardens, Public Buildings, Education, Receiver of Taxes, Revision of Taxes and the Nautical School Ship. The mayor also appointed the chief executives of the two city departments which together were responsible for approximately 60% of the city's total annual expenditure and the majority of municipal appointments: the Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Health and Safety. According to the city's charter, the councils had no formal executive control over city departments. They were, nevertheless, vested with legislative authority which allowed for

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1). A list of the executive departments was published every year in the section of the Mayor's Annual Message which dealt with financial appropriations. The ad hoc commissions not listed include the Park Commission, the Sinking Fund Commission and the Board of Directors of City Trusts. The Park Commission consisted of ten citizens appointed by the county judges and six city officials who served as ex officio members. The Sinking Fund Commission consisted of the mayor, the city controller and one person appointed by the mayor. The Board of Directors of City Trusts included the mayor, the president of each of the city councils and 12 individuals appointed by the judges of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

their de facto control. Though the councils could neither appoint nor remove the heads of departments they could determine the salaries of departmental employees and, more importantly, set the departments' operating budgets.<sup>1</sup> They could also create as many bureaus and committees as they saw fit.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the councils could influence appointments in the city departments as they exercised effective control over the city's civil service board which was responsible for compiling lists of people who were considered to be eligible for appointment to jobs in the city departments.<sup>3</sup>

Ten other executive departments within the municipal administration were known as 'county departments'. They included the Departments of the City Controller, Treasurer, Clerk of the Quarter Sessions, Coronor, Prothonotary, County Commissioners, District Attorney, Register of Wills and Register of Deeds.<sup>4</sup> Headed by elected officials, the county departments were not responsible to the mayor of the city. They were also less susceptible than the city departments to the influence of the councils. The councils allocated funding to the county departments as it did to the city departments. The county departments, however, were 'constitutional'

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1). The Department of Education was exceptional insofar as it was funded from property taxes which were collected by the city, turned over to the state and then remitted to the city councils to be spent specifically for education.

2). Albert A. Bird, 'The City Councils of Philadelphia', pp.186-8.

3). The Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Civil Service Reform Association...1899 (Phila., n.p., 1899), pp.8-10.

4). The City and County of Philadelphia: A Discussion of their Legal Relations (Phila., Bureau of Municipal Research, 1923), p.22.

departments whose existence was guaranteed in the state's constitution and their organization was determined by state legislation.<sup>1</sup> The city councils, therefore, could not alter their structure by adding or subtracting bureaus and/or by creating or removing offices. Nor did the councils have any say over the appointment of county officials which fell outside the jurisdiction of the city's civil service code, or over the salaries of county officers which were set by the state legislature.<sup>2</sup> The councils did, however, control the county departments' annual appropriations.

Owing to their indirect influence over the city departments, control in the city councils was a key to effective political control of the city government. With a majority on the city councils a party could, for example, restrict or expand the municipal role of city and county departments and punish or reward the executives in the city departments. The directors of the city and county departments could not, therefore, administer their executive functions without the involvement and aid of the councils. These mechanisms helped the Republican machine to maintain its political hold over the city for as long as it maintained a majority on the councils; and this it did by manipulating electoral procedures and by trading favors for votes in the largely ethnic and working-class wards in and around the city center. Even when executive offices fell to reformers, as in 1905-6 and again in 1911-15, the machine managed to mobilize its support on the city councils to restrict departmental expenditure. By manipulating departmental

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1). Ibid., pp.22-3.

2). Ibid., p.50.

finances, the organization succeeded in undermining the reformers' electoral support most of which came from residents of the suburbs where expenditures on municipal works and services were most in demand.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, when opposition factions did manage to obtain executive control of municipal departments, they could not readily penetrate the informal relations between politicians and departmental employees that had developed.<sup>2</sup>

The balance of power, however, was not completely tipped in favor of the councils, despite their ability to circumscribe the operations of the municipal departments. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, the administration of municipal employment and municipal contracts had been used by party leaders to win and hold political support.<sup>3</sup> As municipal services and contracts increased in value and as municipal jobs grew in number, this way of building up party organization became more important. By 1900, municipal works had become so important to the Republican organization that the councils were prevented from alienating the executive in municipal departments for too long a period; favors and services could not be delivered to constituents unless harmonious relations were preserved between the councils and the departments. Furthermore, the organization relied upon the departments' expenditure of the money the councils had allotted them.<sup>4</sup>

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1). See the discussion of the decline of the reform movements of 1905-6 and 1911-15, pp.305-10 and 322-6.

2). Jesse Burke, 'The Outlook For Municipal Efficiency', p.248.

3). See Chapter 2, pp.129-31 where the patronage to the fire companies is discussed.

4). The relationship between the executive and the councils, and its affects on municipal finances is discussed in this chapter on pp. 280-8, 292-3, 313-4 and 321-3.

The perpetual interference in municipal government of state-wide political parties also limited the extent to which the Republican machine could control Philadelphia's city government. For state-wide factions generally, support in Philadelphia was crucially important. The city was the largest in the state, and influence in its administration provided state-wide factions with numerous political appointments, lucrative perquisites from the distribution of municipal services and electoral majorities in contests for important state offices. Competition between state-wide factions, therefore, was reflected in internecine struggles within the Republican organization in the city. Equally important, opposition factions in local contests aligned themselves with whichever state faction was currently in opposition to the one represented by the incumbent municipal administration. Such alliances could then attempt to use the state legislature's authority to alter the city's charter as a means of undermining the incumbents' control over the municipal administration.

There were also other limitations on machine-building in city government. The Republican organization's vote-getting expenditures on the urban poor, for example, were not as profitable to politicians as expenditures on large-scale public works in the under-developed suburban wards. Moreover, neglecting investments in suburban development projects threatened the machine with political dissent from suburban residents. Conversely, municipal investments in suburban wards where tax rates were substantially lower than those applying to center-city wards, often caused the affluent residents in the downtown to become active in reform politics. As

important, municipal largesse provoked factionalism within the organization as the distribution of control over perquisites and patronage was hotly contested by leading figures within the machine. A political machine therefore never totally dominated Philadelphia's government since the very process of machine-building actually evoked potent forces of opposition and reform. During periods of intra-organizational strife, factions were compelled to extend their electoral support and often entered into alliance with existing reform associations in the city. Such periods offered reformers ample opportunities to advance themselves in local politics but, as the remainder of this chapter demonstrates, reformers were prevented by political structures from breaking the machine's hold over city government. Indeed, the reformers' political ascendancy precipitated the resurgence of the political machine.

The rhythm of this 'machine-reform dialectic' had two principal effects on city government. First, it was perhaps as influential as the urban ecological changes that were discussed in chapter four, in determining reformers' influence on local politics during the Progressive era. Second, it had a dramatic affect on the city government's financial stability and ultimately, as will be seen in chapter six, on the extent to which city government could meet the increased demand for necessary municipal works and services that was occasioned by industrial development and rapid population growth in the city.

ii

In 1890, the only Democrat to serve as governor of Pennsylvania during the Progressive era was elected as a result of a major rift

between two leaders of the state's Republican party: John Wanamaker, a wealthy Philadelphia dry-goods merchant and department store owner, and U.S. Senator Matt Quay, the undisputed representative of Pennsylvania's manufacturers in Washington.<sup>1</sup> The feud between these men began in 1888 when they both managed Harrison's victorious presidential campaign in Pennsylvania. After the campaign, disputes arose over their share in the president's patronage. Quay was appointed chairman of the national Republican Committee while Wanamaker became the Postmaster General.<sup>2</sup> Both men attempted to consolidate their hold on Pennsylvania's Republican politics from their respective offices. By 1890, their competition with one another had sufficiently divided the party to allow a Democrat, Robert Pattison, to win the gubernatorial election.<sup>3</sup>

The Democrats could not retain state office, however, as their party divided over the silver issue and the recession of 1893.<sup>4</sup> The Republicans, on the other hand, healed the rift in their party in 1894 by combining bimetallism with protection in order to win support from Pennsylvania's manufacturers whose interests lay with an inflationary monetary policy as well as with a high tariff.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, state and city Republican factions which had separated over the gubernatorial nomination in 1890, were reconciled when Hastings was nominated for governor in 1894.<sup>6</sup>

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1). John W. Oliver, 'Matthew Stanley Quay', Western Pennsylvania History Magazine, 17(1934), pp.6-7.

2). D.W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia', pp.10-11.

3). James Dale Yoder, 'Rural Pennsylvania Politics in a Decade of Discontent, 1890-1900' (Lehigh, Lehigh University Ph.D. thesis, 1969), p.42.

4). William L. Quay, 'Philadelphia Democrats', pp.74-6.

5). Jeanette P. Nichols, 'Pennsylvania and the Agitation For Cheap Money', PMHB, 59(July, 1935), pp.345-6.

6). James Dale Yoder, op. cit., pp.53-4.

By the time of the presidential campaign of 1896, the state Democratic party was hopelessly divided by Bryan's unyielding insistence on the silver standard. It was defeated in the state elections of that year and the Democrats did not return a candidate to the governor's office for the remainder of the period under consideration.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the Republicans dominated state politics does not mean that elections in Pennsylvania were uncontested. It means, instead, that major contests occurred within the Republican party, so that the most important campaigns were those which led up to the Republican primaries.

In 1895, the Quay/Wanamaker contest for control of the state Republican party was evident in Philadelphia's mayoral election. Wanamaker and a number of leading local Republican politicians opposed to 'Quayism', chief among them utilities magnate Dave Martin and State Senator Charles Porter, successfully ran their own nominee, city solicitor Charles Warwick, against Quay's candidate, Philadelphia State Senator, Boies Penrose.<sup>2</sup> Later that year when Quay beat Hastings to the chair of the Republican state committee, it became clear that he lacked support from the city delegations from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup>

In order to break the strength of the urban factions, Matt Quay and Boies Penrose assumed the mantle of reformers. Penrose

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1). Irwin Frank Greenberg, op.cit., p.5; William L. Quay, op. cit., pp.116,196-8. Also see Carl N. Degler, 'American Political Parties and the Rise of the City: An Interpretation', Journal of American History, 51(June, 1964), p.48.

2). William H. Issel, 'Modernization in Philadelphia School Reform', pp.366-7.

3). Richard James Donagher, op.cit., pp.11-16.

formed a senate commission to investigate corrupt practices in Philadelphia's government in order to expose the Martin/Wanamaker combine, withdrawing from the investigation during the presidential elections of 1896 for the sake of party unity. Although the Penrose's commission stopped short of indicting members of the Wanamaker administration, its allegations did encourage recently-established reform associations in the city to mobilize themselves in attacks on the Wanamaker administration. The CMA, for example, raised \$20,000 and gained the support of the CSRA and the Municipal League in an unsuccessful attempt to revitalize the defunct Penrose commission and bring offending members of the Wanamaker administration to trial.<sup>1</sup>

The Wanamaker/Martin combine's appointments to municipal offices made under Mayor Warwick mollified reformers to some extent. Indeed, they were commended by the CSRA in 1896.<sup>2</sup> The combine's administration of the municipal government, however, was severely impeded by the growing influence that the Quay/Penrose faction had in the city councils. Comparison of the total expenditure under the combine's uninhibited direction of the Stuart administration between 1891 and 1894 with that of the Warwick administration reveals the how success of the Penrose/Quay faction in consolidating its hold over the councils; it also shows the impact of factional politics on municipal finance. First, Warwick was clearly unable to use public funds to build up his

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1). City and State, (May 7, 1896), p.1. Also see Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA, 1896, p.8.  
2). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA, 1896, pp.7-8.

organizataion, as is evident in the declining municipal expenditure during his administration represented on Graph 5.1 (page 282). Second, he was inhibited even from issuing the loans authorized by the councils during his term, as is indicated by Graph 5.2 (page 283). Third, whereas Stuart's administration was capable of meeting the annual obligations on the city's debt, Warwick's fell seriously short in 1895 and 1896, and only barely met the city's obligations in 1897 so placing the city's credit in jeopardy.<sup>1</sup> Finally, Stuart's administration showed a much better cash balance than that of Warick as is indicated on Graph 5.3 (page 284).

The Quay/Penrose faction also used its influence with rural factions in the state legislature to withhold state revenues owed to the city in an attempt to undermine the combine in its bid to consolidate its control of the municipal administration. As a result the Warwick administration operated with an annual deficit which the mayor explained as being fictitious because the city had not yet received the annual rebate from the state on property tax which amounted to almost \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000 in 1895 and 1897 respectively.<sup>2</sup> In Warwick's last year as mayor, 1898, the state's refusal to remit property taxes to the city on time so hampered municipal finances that the city

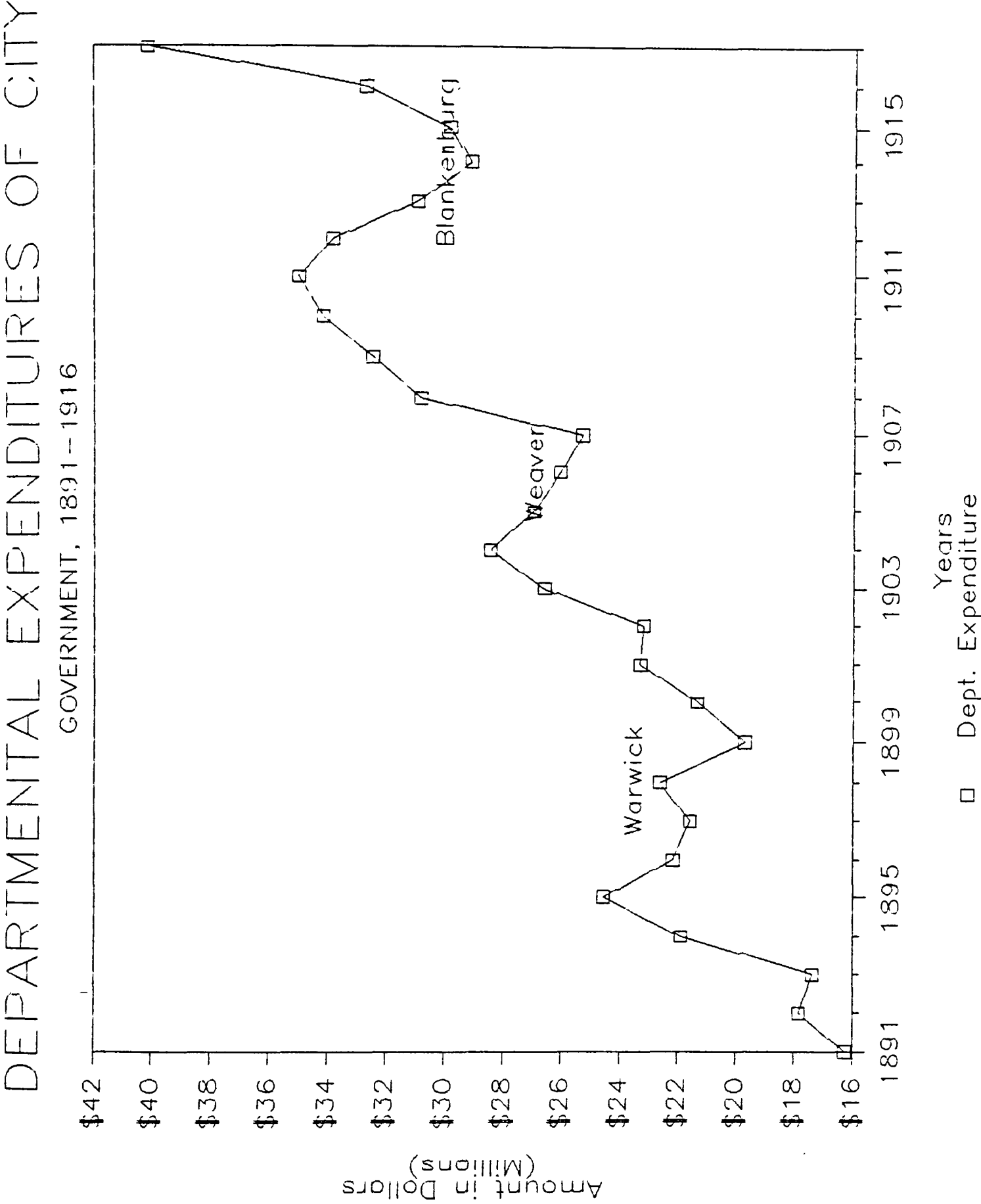
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|     |             |                  |                     |
|-----|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1). | <u>Year</u> | <u>Loans Due</u> | <u>Loans Repaid</u> |
|     | 1895        | \$7,100,800      | \$4,015,000         |
|     | 1896        | 3,405,100        | 556,996             |
|     | 1897        | 2,200,300        | 2,204,600           |

The figures for loans repaid come from The Department of the City Controller, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1890-1920. The figures for loans due come from estimates of loans due included in Table J, The Department of City Controller, Annual Report, 1890-1920.

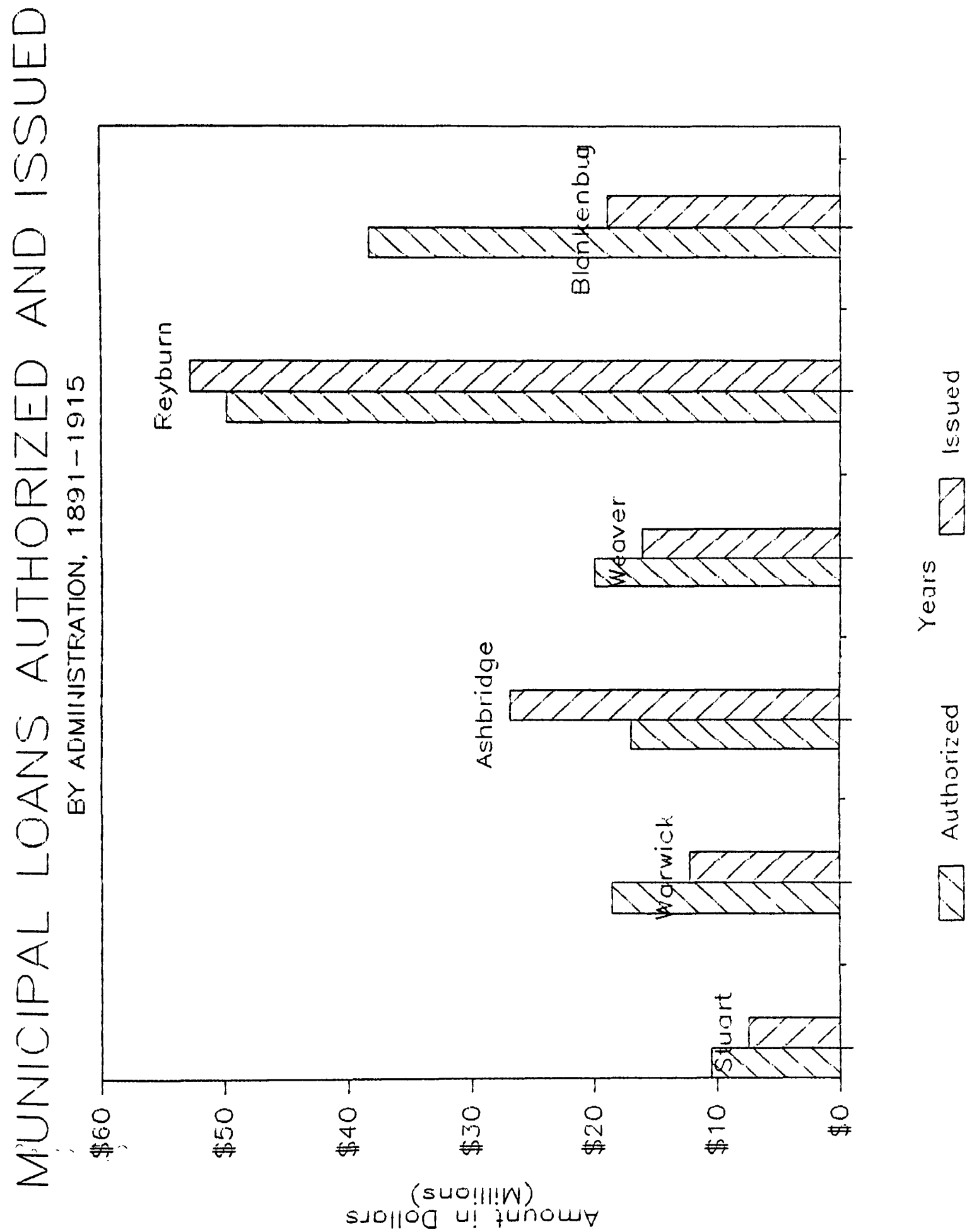
2). PMAM, Charles Warwick, 1895, p.vi-vii and PMAM, Warwick, 1897, pp.ix-x.

Graph 5.1



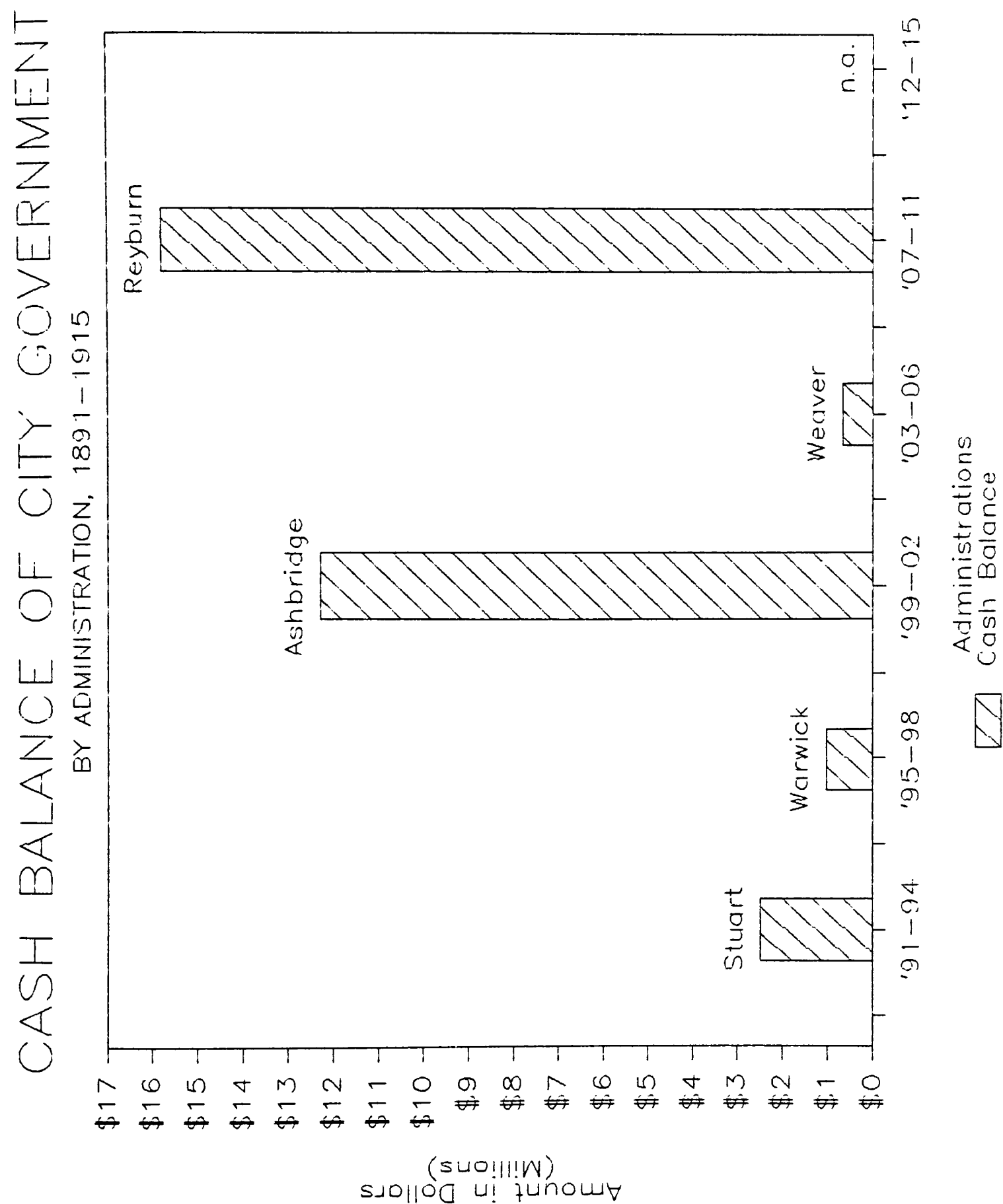
The Department of the City Controller, 'The Limit of Expenses', PMAM, 1891-1916.

Graph 5.2



The Commissioners of the Sinking Funds, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1890-1920.

Graph 5.3



The Department of the City Controller, 'The Limit of Expenses', PMAM, 1891-1915.

controller refused to carry over as an asset for the forthcoming year the amount owed the city by the state. Consequently, the councils were forced drastically to reduce appropriations to municipal departments. This prevented the Warwick administration from delivering public works, thereby undermining the combine's electoral support in the city.<sup>1</sup>

The Warwick administration attempted to supplement municipal revenues by promoting legislation which would commit the city to a multi-million dollar water-works improvements project. Water-works improvements had been advocated by the city's Bureau of Water since at least as early as 1875. In that year, the superintendent of the water works claimed that industrial developments - along the Schuylkill River in the city and also nearer the source of the river in the coal mining district of Northeastern Pennsylvania - were making the river an unsuitable source of the city's water.<sup>2</sup> In earlier years various alternative water supplies had been studied and recommendations for new water works proposed. These, however, had been beyond the means of the city corporation, beleaguered as it was by intense party factionalism, by fiscal constraints and by opposition from the city's industrialists dependent upon Schuylkill river water.<sup>3</sup> Hence, the city, since the presentation of the 1875

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1). The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1898, p.viii.

2). James W. Follin and E.L. Burnham, The Water Supply Problem of Philadelphia: An Analysis of the Needs of the Water Service with Reference to the Proposed Substitute Source of Water Supply and with a History Review of the Water Works Development (Phila., PBMR, 1922), p.47.

3). Ibid., pp.47-9.

report, had adopted the cheapest means of purifying the city's water supply, and placed an intercepting sewer in the Schuylkill near Manyunk to divert industrial wastes.<sup>1</sup>

In 1898, under Warwick's direction, the city councils appropriated \$11,200,000 for a water-works improvement project which proposed to construct slow sand-filters to purify the Schuylkill river water. Warwick, however, met with stiff resistance in the councils.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Warwick's opponents joined forces to win an injunction against the works from the state supreme court which ruled that the water-works loan would extend the city's debt beyond its debt ceiling (shown in Graph 5.4, page 287).<sup>3</sup> The court's ruling crippled the administration by denying it essential revenues without which the city's credit limit, already jeopardized by the amount due on repayment of the funded debt, was severely threatened.

Restricted by the organization in its control over municipal finances, and unable to raise resources through a water-works loan, the Warwick administration promoted a proposal to lease the city's gas works to a private company. The lease, proposed by the administration and promoted by John Wanamaker, was, according to Wanamaker, essential because the municipal government could not afford to keep up with the growing demand for

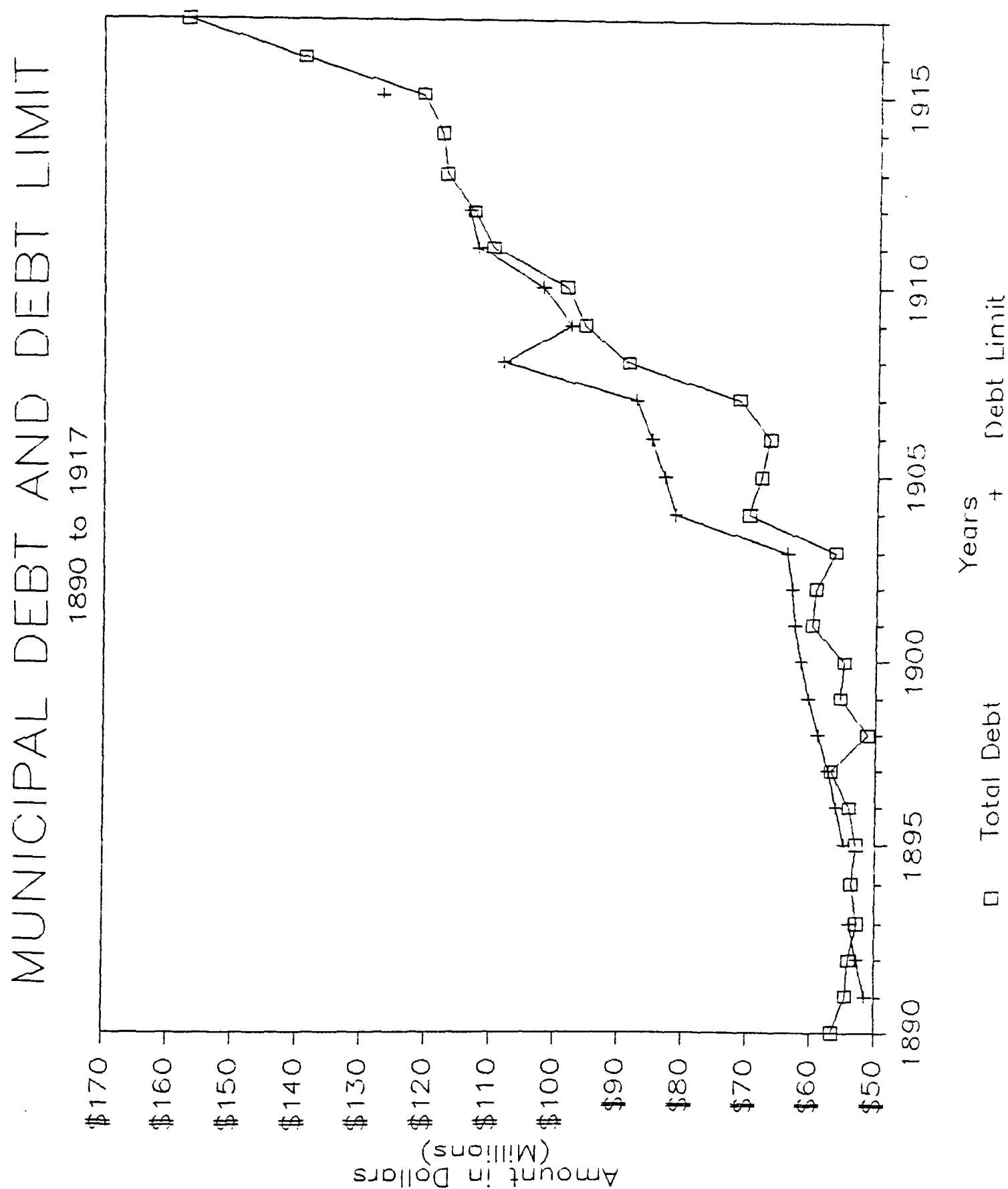
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1). Rudolph Hering and Joseph M. Wilson, Report to the Honorable, Samuel H. Ashbridge...on the Extension and Improvement of the Water Supply of the City of Philadelphia... (Phila., n.p., 1899), p.12.

2). The Manufacturers' Club of Philadelphia, Better Water: Report of the Special Committee... (Phila, n.p., 1899), pp.12-13.

3). Graph 5.4 shows how close the city was to its debt limit in 1898. Also see 'Notes on Municipal Government: Philadelphia', Annals, 10(1897), p.292.

Graph 5.4



Debt calculated from The Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1890-1917. Debt limit calculated from The Board of Revision of Taxes, 'Statement of Real and Personal Property in the City', PMAM, 1890-1917.

gas in the city.<sup>1</sup> Since 1887, when the city had recovered control over the gas works from their trustees, the gas works had been a profitable municipal asset. Under Warwick, however, gas revenues were used to meet operating deficits in other city departments.<sup>2</sup> This is clearly visible in Graph 5.5 (page 289) which shows total departmental incomes falling sharply after the lease of the works in 1897 to the United Gas Improvement Company. Extrapolating the graph line prior to 1897, shows that the rate of increase was in excess of the actual rate of increase of departmental income plus money paid to the city annually by the UGI. Using the profits from the gas works in other municipal departments prevented the Warwick administration from reinvesting in the maintenance and extension of the plant. As a result the condition of the plant deteriorated and its productivity declined. In the meantime, the demand for gas continued to increase with the growth of the city's population.<sup>3</sup> Warwick's administration, therefore, was forced to incur the added expense of purchasing gas from the privately held Pennsylvania Globe Light Company and by 1897, the city was purchasing fully 40% of the gas that it supplied to its customers.<sup>4</sup>

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1). Report of the Sub-Committee...Relative to the Leasing of the Philadelphia Gas Works, pp.25-7.

2). The gas works had been held in trusteeship for the city from their construction in the 1830s to 1887 when the city's gas debt was finally paid off. See Chapter 2, pp.95-8 for a discussion of the establishment of the gas trustees and Chapter 6, pp.358-61 for a discussion of the return of the gas works to municipal control in 1887. See Judson C. Dickerman, Chief, Bureau of Gas, Philadelphia Utility Problems (Phila., n.p., 1915), p.7 for an account of the administration of the gas works under Warwick.

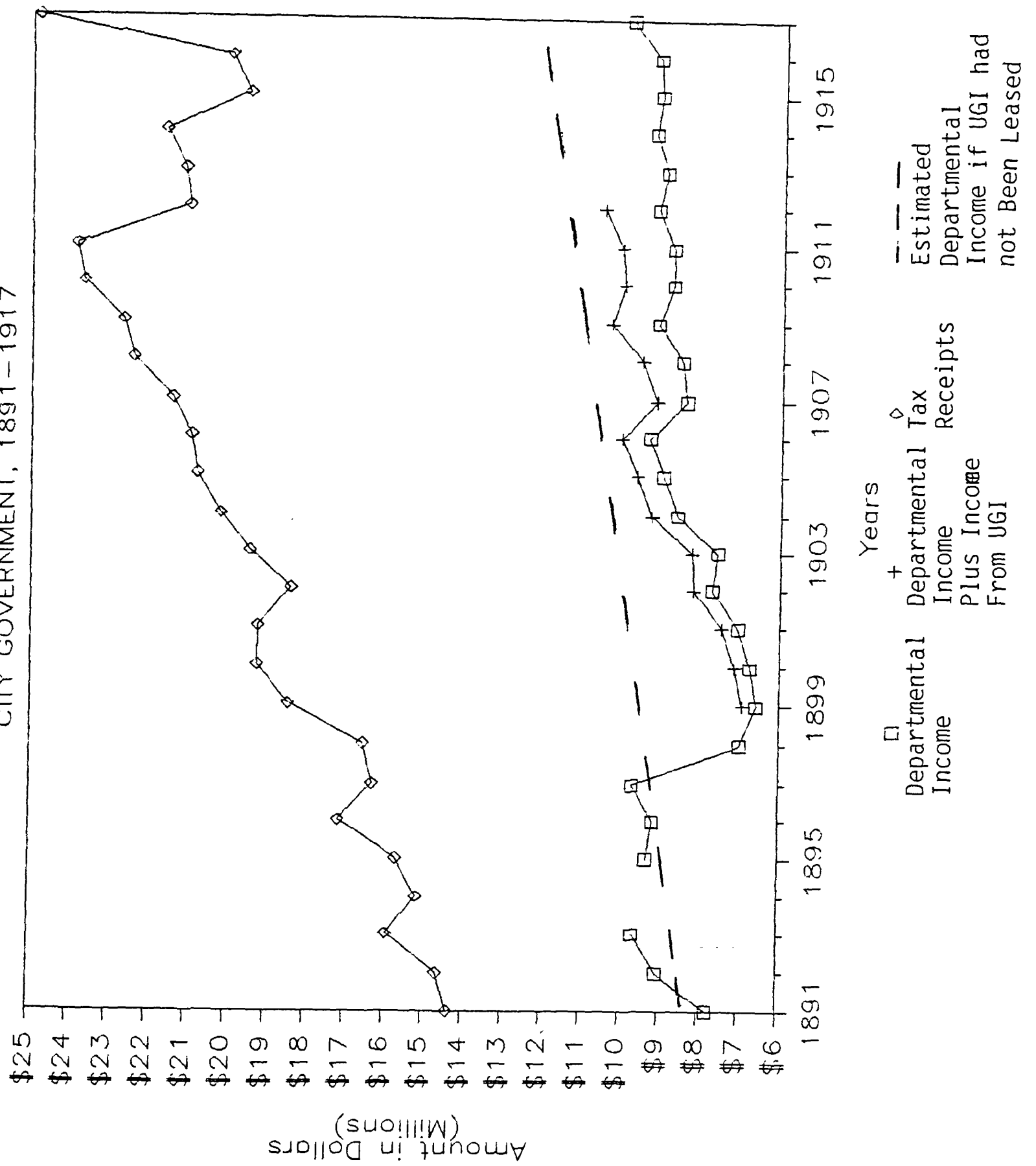
3). Ibid., p.6.

4). Milo R. Maltbie, et. al., Report of the Gas Commission to the Mayor and Council of the City of Philadelphia (Phila., n.p., 1921), p.47.

Graph 5.5

# DEPARTMENTAL INCOME AND TAX RECEIPTS OF

CITY GOVERNMENT, 1891-1917



The Department of the City Controller, 'The Limits of City Expenses', PMAM, 1890-1920.

Under the terms of the lease, the UGI would operate the gas plant for 30 years and make improvements to the plant at a fixed rate.<sup>1</sup> After 30 years, the improved plant would be returned to the city at no cost. After ten years, however, a review of the UGI's operation of the plant was to be brought before the city councils at which time the councils could reclaim the works for the city by reimbursing the UGI for the sum of its investments in the plant plus 6% interest. The lease also relieved the city of the gas plant's substantial operating costs as well as the cost of necessary improvements which was estimated at approximately \$5,000,000. Finally, it provided that the UGI freely service and supply gas to all public lamps. The beneficial affect that the gas lease had on municipal finance is evident on Graph 5.1 (page 282) where, after 1897, the city is shown to be relieved of a significant departmental expenditure. In 1897, the administration was just able to meet its payments to bond holders and in 1898 it was able to make up some of the amount owed but not paid in the past.<sup>2</sup>

Quay's manipulation of Philadelphia's finances and Wanamaker's attempts to recover from it had a number of consequences for the balance of party politics in the city. Together these eventually undermined the combine's hold over municipal government,

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1). The provisions of the lease are enumerated in Statement of the United Gas Improvements Company in Reply to a Communication from the Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee of Gas, pp.39-41. Also see Col. John I. Rogers, 'Municipal Gas in Philadelphia', Municipal Affairs, 1(1897), p.12.

2). According to the The Department of the City Controller, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1898, the city repaid \$7,843,000 on its loans. This was over \$5,600,000 more than was due, exclusive of the amount that the city was behind on payments for the previous two years.

divided the various reform associations and enabled the Quay/Penrose faction to come to power in the city. In 1897, the gas lease divided reformers. The Municipal League, for example, opposed the lease even as this position cost the League the support of suburban voters who approved of the lease because it promised a better supply of gas to the developing areas of the city.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, Warwick's water-works proposals alienated industrialists whose plants were positioned along the river on the periphery of the developed areas in the city, adding to the political opposition to the combine's administration of the municipal government.<sup>2</sup>

In 1898, the Quay/Penrose faction gained some support from political reform associations in the city including the Municipal League, the CSRA and the CMA, when it used its majority in the state senate to pass a civil service reform bill.<sup>3</sup> The following year, however, the bill was smothered in committee in the House of Representatives.<sup>4</sup> Blaming the combine for standing in the way of municipal reform, the Municipal League, the CSRA and the CMA joined together with the city's Democrats and with industrialists who were opposed to the Schuylkill water works, to help block Wanamaker's gubernatorial bid in 1899.<sup>5</sup> Not all anti-combine interests came

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1). Report of the Sub-Committee...Relative to the Leasing of the Philadelphia Gas Works op. cit., pp.25-7, 35.

2). Better Water, op. cit. pp.12-13.

3). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1896, pp.7-8.

4). Ibid, 1897, p.9.

5). Donald W. Disbrow, 'Herbert Welsh, Editor of City and State, 1895-1904', PMHB, 94(1970), pp.68-9.

out in support of the Quay/Penrose faction, however, as the Municipal League and the Democratic party established a coalition to offer an independent gubernatorial candidate. In fact, the independents and the Wanamaker faction blocked each other's gubernatorial campaigns allowing Quay's candidate, William Stone, to move into the governor's mansion in the following January.<sup>1</sup>

Factional disputes between Democrats, the Municipal League and other reform associations on the one hand, and the Wanamaker/Martin combine on the other hand, also enabled the Quay faction to elect its candidate for Sheriff, Samuel Ashbridge.<sup>2</sup>

In 1899, Ashbridge won the mayoral election. With state and local factions both under Quay's leadership, the Ashbridge administration was relieved of the political siege which had so affected the Warwick administration. The restored harmony between the legislature and the executive in the city, and between the leading factions in city and state governments is evident in Graph 5.2 (page 283) which shows that Ashbridge was able to spend the loans authorized by the councils during his administration as well as the authorized but unissued loans of the previous administration. One result of course was that Ashbridge was able to implement large-scale municipal works projects which allowed Quay to consolidate and extend his political organization in the city. This is evident on Graph 5.1 (page 282) which demonstrates that the rate of expenditure for

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1). Richard James Donagher, *op.cit.*, pp.11-16; R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', 33(1905), p.353.

2). William L. Quay, *op.cit.*, pp.129-30.

municipal departments during Ashbridge's administration increased dramatically when compared with Warwick's administration.

Ashbridge began to build up Quay's political machine in the city immediately after assuming the mayor's office by replacing pro-Wanamaker appointees in a number of executive offices which were responsible for the distribution of patronage. For example, Ashbridge removed Secretary of the Civil Service Board, Harry C. Neall who, under Warwick administrations, had been responsible for drawing up lists of eligible candidates for appointments to the civil service. The mayor also removed combine appointees who made up the board of examiners that was responsible for administering and grading the civil service examinations from which eligible civil servants were chosen. The Chief of the Bureau of City Property, Alexander Eisenhower was also replaced by a pro-Quay man as was the Superintendent of Police, Captain Linden.<sup>1</sup>

Having placed men loyal to Quay in municipal positions which were influential in the distribution of patronage, the mayor then embarked on the water-works improvement project which the combine could not introduce because of Warwick's politically embattled leadership of the city. Ashbridge's water-works project, however, did not meet with opposition from industrialists since it proposed to develop the Delaware River as the major source of the city's water.

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1). Control over the Civil Service Board was a key to the distribution of patronage since the Board was in charge of drawing up a list of eligible candidates for appointment to the municipal civil service. The police superintendent and the chief of the Bureau of City Property were also important in supplying patronage owing to the number of appointments over which they had control. See Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA, 1899, pp.8-10.

The scheme also provided enormous opportunities for machine-building because of its scale which was estimated at nearly \$12,000,000 worth of contracts and land purchases.<sup>1</sup>

Machine building under the Quay/Penrose faction did not occur without political repercussions. After losing the mayoralty race in February 1899, Wanamaker, with his newly acquired reform journal, The North American, took on Matt Quay directly in the contest for U.S senator.<sup>2</sup> Wanamaker was able to gain some ground in the city when Quay was exposed for his alleged complicity in a scandal involving the misuse of state money deposited in the People's Bank.<sup>3</sup> In 1900, the Philadelphia Union party, a coalition of Democrats, independent Republicans sympathetic to Wanamaker, the Municipal League, the CSRA and machine Republicans whose support for Quay had been shaken by his role in the People's Bank scandal, was organized to contest Quay's bid for the U.S. Senate.<sup>4</sup> The prospects for the reform coalition, however, looked bleak from the

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1). R. Blankenburg, 'op.cit., 33(1905), pp.577-80. The largest contracts went to organization leader Israel Durham who was partner of the state senator, Philadelphia contractor and organization leader J.P. McNichols. McNichols sub-contracted some of the work to smaller firms earning himself up to \$75,000 for turning over a single contract (see I.F. Marcossou, 'The Awakening of Philadelphia', pp.6646-7).

2). Robert L. Bloom, 'Edward Van Valkenburg and the Philadelphia "North American", 1899-1924', Pennsylvania History, 21(1954), pp.111-113.

3). R. Blankenburg, op.cit., 34(1905), pp. 235-7.

4). Richard James Donager, op. cit., pp.17-20 and R. Blankenburg, op.cit., 34(1905), p126; Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1901, p.8 and Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1902, pp.6-7; Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1899-1901 (Phila., 1901), p.11-12. The report also mentions that John Wanamaker donated \$50,000 to the Municipal League so that it could investigate alleged election frauds in the city and to prosecute offending individuals.

start as the Union party failed dismally to elect any of its candidates for municipal office in the local elections of November, 1900 and February 1901.<sup>1</sup>

The organization of the Union party, however, did provide Quay with sufficient justification to undermine his opposition which, Quay claimed, was largely supported by Philadelphia's traction magnates.<sup>2</sup> When in 1900, the Lehigh Valley Traction Company advertised for 180 miles of railway franchises in Philadelphia, a consortium of Quay supporters, allegedly attempting to interfere with the encroachment of a non-Philadelphia company in Philadelphia traction, pushed a bill through the state legislature and the city councils which granted them valuable street railway franchises including the right to build an east-west elevated rapid-transit line above Market Street. The consortium consisted of Matt Quay, his son, Pittsburgh traction millionaire R.R. Quay, Boies Penrose, Philadelphia Congressman Robert H. Foerder, Mayor Ashbridge's banker Clarence Wolf and Select Councilmen and partners in contracting, J.P. McNichol and John M. Mack. Wanamaker responded to the 'franchise steal' by personally offering the city councils \$2,500,000 for the franchise, a bid which, Wanamaker claimed, the mayor refused to entertain.<sup>3</sup> Having acquired the franchise, the Quay consortium was then able to profit enormously by leasing it to the PRT.<sup>4</sup>

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1). William L. Quay, op.cit., p.136.

2). Quay may have been correct insofar as traction magnate David Martin was an important combine supporter, see p.279, this chapter.

3). C.R. Woodruff, 'Street Railway Legislation in Pennsylvania and Philadelphia', Municipal Affairs, 5(1901), p.420-5

4). See Chapter 8, pp.340-1 for an account of PRT's acquisition of the franchise.

The franchise steal only exacerbated political competition in the city as the Union party renewed its efforts to defeat Quay's candidates for district attorney and city recorder, John Weaver and J.P. McNichol's business partner, William S. Vare respectively. In nominating Weaver for D.A., the organization passed over P. Fred Rothermel, the man who prosecuted Quay in the People's Bank affair. Upon losing the Republican nomination, Rothermel defected to the Union party which chose him as its candidate to compete against Weaver in the November election. The reform movement, however, was unsuccessful. Reformers from the CSRA and the Municipal League and organization men now in opposition to Quay could not agree on how to build their coalition. On the one hand, the Municipal League and the CSRA insisted that the coalition, if elected, should make appointments to municipal offices with strict adherence to the civil service code. Defectors from the Republican machine, on the other hand, insisted that municipal offices had to be distributed to those people who helped the coalition in its election campaigns. With the Union party divided, the machine swept the local elections. Thereafter, the Union party dissolved amidst acrimonious disputes over which part of the coalition had allowed the party to fall from 'its high state and opportunity... into the hands of those who used it to advance their personal ends'.<sup>1</sup>

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1). Cited in the Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1899-1901, p.9. Also see William S. Vare My Forty Years in Politics (Phila., Roland Swain Co., 1933), pp.80-2; The Report of the Chairman of the Campaign Committee of the Municipal League of Philadelphia Presented to the Board of Managers, December 11, 1901, by Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Chairman (Phila., New Era Press, 1901?), passim.

The rise and fall of the Union party illustrates how political reform was partially determined by the structure and conduct of local government. Reform associations were able to advance their interests in politics because dissension within the organization caused the opposition faction to reach out for electoral support from Philadelphians who lived outside the machine's sphere of influence in the river wards. To do this, opposition factions from within the Republican organization aligned themselves with established reform groups which, in this case, included the CMA, the CSRA and the Municipal League. Reform alliances, however, were short-lived, because political failure brought out the divergent interests of the groups participating in the coalitions.

Reform coalitions also experienced external constraints upon their political success because their very formation often encouraged the opposition from the Republican organization. The fact that the Union party had itself been created to contest municipal elections prompted Quay to quell political dissent in Philadelphia by moving against one of its alleged sources, the leaders of the city's traction industry. He also managed to mollify upper- and middle-class Philadelphia reformers by passing a number of pieces of state legislation which had very little real effect on the machine's control in the city. In 1901, for example, Quay supported the successful referendum for personal registration in cities. The constitutional amendment which was supposed to eradicate the practice of padding voter registration lists with fraudulent names succeeded only in vesting responsibility for voter registration in municipal bureaus which were themselves under the control of the

local Quay organization.<sup>1</sup> In 1902, Quay also managed to assuage reform sentiment in Philadelphia by nominating for governor Judge Samuel Pennypacker, a leading member of the Philadelphia bar with an impeccable political reputation.<sup>2</sup> Quay was so successful in putting down his opposition in Philadelphia that in 1903, the Municipal League came out for his mayoral candidate, John Weaver.<sup>3</sup>

The administration which Weaver took over in the winter of 1903 was overburdened by the public works projects which had provided so great an opportunity for Quay to consolidate his hold over the city's political organization. Municipal spending on works under Ashbridge had left the city near its borrowing limit and behind on its repayments of the funded debt, a situation which threatened the city's credit and forced Weaver to seek alternatives to public borrowing as sources of increased municipal income. Weaver attempted to alleviate his administration's financial stress by cutting appropriations to a number of departments in which he felt that there was room to cut back on wasteful expenditure.<sup>4</sup> He also increased tax revenues by lowering the tax rate from \$1.85 to \$1.50 per \$100. This had the effect of raising property assessments to their full market value thereby increasing municipal revenues by \$500,000 over the previous year.<sup>5</sup> Increased property assessments also raised the city's borrowing limit as shown on Graph 5.4 (page 287).

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1). 'Politics and Municipal Legislation in 1901', Annals, 20(1902), pp.378,384; C.R. Woodruff, 'Permanent Results of the Philadelphia Political Upheaval of 1905-1906', pp.258-9.

2). William L. Quay, op. cit., p.151.

3). Donald W. Disbrow, 'Herbert Welsh', pp.71-2.

4). PMAM, John Weaver, 1904, pp.vi-vii.

5). Ibid., p.xx. The effect of tax reform on municipal revenues is seen on Graph 5.5, page.289.

Although Weaver's financial policies were financially necessary, they had severe political repercussions. The wards that had previously received the greatest benefit from under-valuation were the most exclusive residential wards in the city. These included the suburbs of Germantown and Chestnut Hill in ward 22, West Philadelphia wards 24 and 27, as well as the fashionable town-house areas in the Central Business District. By increasing taxation on the residents of these areas, Weaver enhanced the political opportunities available to reform organizations electorally based there. It was not long after Weaver's tax reforms, then, that the Committee of 70 was established as an offspring of the defunct Municipal League, to monitor both elections and the activities of municipal officials which, reformers alleged, were responsible for the city's poor financial condition.<sup>1</sup>

As reformers began to scrutinize Weaver's administration, they began to uncover a variety of corrupt practices which only fuelled reform sentiment in the city. Weaver, it should be remembered, was, at least initially, a machine mayor who promoted organization-building wherever possible. He was, therefore, prone to the usual criticisms that were directed at machine executives by reform associations in the city. For example, the mayor was subjected to criticism from the Octavia Hill Association with which he refused to participate in instituting better housing inspection procedures. He was also attacked by the Municipal League for his non-compliance in

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1). Thomas Raeburn White, 'The Revolution in Philadelphia', pp.135-6; Report of the Executive Committee of 70 (Phila., Committee of 70, 1905), passim but especially p.34.

enforcing the Personal Registration act of 1901.<sup>1</sup> Weaver's stiffest opposition, however, came from the CSRA. During his mayoral campaign, Weaver pledged to abide by the city's civil service code. Upon taking office, however, the mayor appointed councilman Rolla Dance as the Secretary of the Civil Service Board. The CSRA made a great deal of the inappropriateness of Dance's appointment. According to the CSRA's executive committee, Dance was a man whose disregard for civil service was equalled only by the extent of his loyalty to the machine and by the length of his criminal record; this they documented in great detail.<sup>2</sup> Dance apparently had been arrested in May, 1892, for the theft of a lead pipe and held on \$800 bail. 1893 seems to have been a particularly bad year for Dance as he was arrested no less than seven times, each time for drunkenness and on one occasion for assault and battery with intent to kill. On June 14, 1901, he was arrested again for assault and battery. In December 1901, Dance was arrested for a third time and convicted for habitual drunkenness, an offence for which he was sent to the Philadelphia House of Correction for six months.

Reform sentiment in the city which was growing in response to the conduct of Weaver's administration was also encouraged by the activities of Quay's faction in state government. There Governor Pennypacker who had been elected with the support of the Quay organization, signed a press muzzle bill designed to restrict the

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- 1). J.F. Sutherland, 'The Origins of Philadelphia's Octavia Hill Association', p. 40, and C.R. Woodruff, 'Permanent Results', pp.258-9.
  - 2). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1905, p.8.

publication of vicious caricatures of political persons which had been used so effectively by the anti-machine press, Wanamaker's North American in particular.<sup>1</sup> The press muzzler bill antagonized independent Republicans and reform associations alike.

Local opposition to Quay's organization also received encouragement from events then current in national politics. The president's battle with the trusts, notably Standard Oil, tuned in especially with local politics, particularly after 1904 when the state legislature passed a bill authorizing street railways, electric light and power companies, hotels, and parks and bridge concerns to merge. The Committee of 70 voiced its opposition to the bill claiming, that the machine was allowing municipal utilities to become monopolized by giant trusts. It cited as examples the consolidation of the traction industry in 1901 under the dubious political circumstances outlined above, the consolidation of the city's electric companies under the Pennsylvania Electric Company of New Jersey in 1899, and the consolidation of the city's gas works under the UGI in 1897.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Roosevelt's stand on reform gave confidence to the independent-minded Republicans that they could fight against the city's political machine and still remain loyal to

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1). The bill, if passed, would have made the press subject to pay damages for negligence in misrepresenting or maliciously maligning a person. The bill was aimed at John Wanamaker's North American which had for years ridiculed Quay and had recently attacked Governor Pennypacker. Hampton L. Carson, 'The Life and Services of Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker', PMHB, 41(1917), pp.71-9; Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement', p.250.

2). Nicholas Biddle Wainwright, The History of the Philadelphia Electric Company, pp.61-4, 81.

the Republican party.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the threat of Bryanism had passed and that Republicans were firmly established in the White House and in the governor's mansion only reinforced local independents' willingness to support strictly local reform campaigns against the Quay organization.<sup>2</sup>

In an attempt to stem the monopolistic tendencies of machine government, the Committee of 70 allied itself with and financed the opposition City party which had been organized in December 1904.<sup>3</sup> The committee, however, made it clear that it would support only local reform campaigns. In fact, the reformers called their party the 'City party' in order to emphasize to voters that it was strictly a local party, support for which need not detract from allegiances to state and national Republican administrations.<sup>4</sup> The City party, at first remained faithful to its financiers' Republican loyalties by offering a slate of candidates for municipal offices in the February election of 1905. Although the party was unsuccessful it did achieve a high degree of public exposure and organization.<sup>5</sup> It therefore was in a position

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1). C.R. Woodruff, 'Municipal Progress, 1904-5', Annals, 27(1906), pp.6-7.

2). Franklin S. Edmonds, 'The Significance of the Recent Reform Movement in Philadelphia', Annals, 27(1906), p.183.

3). Although the Committee acted closely with the City party and even financed its political campaign in the local elections in February 1905, the two groups were entirely independent. Indeed, the database which included the names of the City party leaders, shows that no member of the Committee of 70 ever acted as leader of the City party. Also see 'Report of the Executive Committee of 70', pp.35-6.

4). Thomas Raeburn White, 'The Revolution in Philadelphia', pp.136-7.

5). Franklin S. Edmonds, (~~loc~~ cit., p.585.

to take advantage of the popular upheaval which accompanied the UGI's attempt to renew its lease of the city's gas works on terms which, according to reformers, would be ruinous to the city.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that the UGI offered to renew its lease two years before the lease was due for review may be explained in part by the fact that Weaver's tax reforms and his administrative economies had not increased municipal revenues sufficiently to enable the city to meet its costs. This is evident in a resolution passed by the select council in April 1905, which stated that the city urgently needed money in order to continue the water works project.<sup>2</sup> The city's need of ready cash and its inability to authorize new loans prompted the UGI to try to renegotiate its lease of the city's gas works.<sup>3</sup> Responding to the councils' ordinance, the UGI submitted a plan for a lease which would have given the city \$25,000,000 and diminished the rate at which the UGI was required to invest in the gas plant under the provisions of the then current lease. To the great relief and exhilaration of the reformers, mayor Weaver vetoed the councils' resolution to accept the UGI plan.<sup>4</sup>

That Weaver rejected the UGI lease solely because of reformers' political pressure is doubtful. The 30-year lease which was signed in 1897 was not subject for review until 1907. It is likely, therefore, that Weaver chose to delay the review of the

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1). George Woodward, 'A Triumph of the People: The Story of the Downfall of the Political Oligarchy in Philadelphia', Outlook, 81(Dec. 2, 1981), p.812.

2). Lloyd M. Abernathy, 'Insurgency in Philadelphia', p.10.

3). See Graph 5.4, p.287 which compares the city's debt with its debt limit.

4). L.M. Abernathy, <sup>loc</sup>cit., p.9.

lease owing to the hostile political climate of 1905. Nevertheless, the veto had two immediate effects on his administration and on Philadelphia politics generally. First, it alienated the executive from the councils, thereby disrupting the machine's control over municipal government. Second, the mayor's veto of the lease provided the reform City party with the opportunity to advance its influence in city and state government.

After vetoing the lease, Weaver immediately struck at the machine to preempt its counter-attack against his administration. He removed the directors of the Departments of Public Safety, and Public Works and replaced them with Lincoln Acker (brother of the head of the Committee of 70) and Colonel Sheldon Potter (a member of the Committee of 70) respectively. He also replaced Rolla Dance with Committee of 70 member Frank Riter as head of the Civil Service Board.<sup>1</sup> The reformers in executive office investigated the administration's practices and exposed Republican boss Israel Durham as being a partner in the contracting firm which was owned by J.P. McNichols. Together, Durham and McNichols had received the major portion of the water filtration contracts as well as the contract for the construction of the Torresdale Boulevard. When the results of the investigation were made public, Weaver immediately ordered a halt to work on the filtration plant.<sup>2</sup> The reformers'

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- 1). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA, 1905, p.7.  
2). Richard James Donagher, 'The Urban Bull Moose', pp.27-9;  
Rudolph Blankenburg, 'The Overthrow of the Spoils System in Philadelphia', Proceedings of the National Civil Service Reform League, 22(Dec., 1905), p.219.

gathering momentum, together with the mayor's discontinuation of public works, disrupted the organization's political control to such an extent that it was unable to rally the councils to overturn the mayoral veto of the UGI lease.<sup>1</sup>

The machine responded as best it could to isolate Weaver and to limit the effects of his reforms. Unable to veto the mayor's decision to oppose the UGI plan, the councils instead directed the finance committee to advertise for bids for the lease of the gas works to be submitted by May 15th. This essentially played into the hands of the UGI as it gave prospective bidders less than two weeks to form a company and raise sufficient capital.<sup>2</sup> The councils also petitioned the state legislature for an amendment to the city charter which would prohibit the mayor from removing directors of city departments. The state legislature passed the necessary measures and Governor Pennypacker signed bills which prevented the mayor from removing and replacing the directors of the Department of Public Health and Safety and the Department of Public Works. The legislation, however, would take affect only after Weaver's term of office expired in 1907.<sup>3</sup>

The exposés of corrupt practices in the Department of Public Works, the machine's retaliation against Weaver in the councils and the Governor's 'ripper bill' only increased the reformers' support in the city. In the local elections in November 1906, the

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1). I.F. Marcossan, 'The Awakening of Philadelphia', p.6650.

2). Lloyd M. Abernathy, <sup>loc</sup>op.cit., p.11. Interestingly, the perennial foe of the Quay/Penrose machine, John Wanamaker, actually submitted a bid for the works in the two weeks provided by the councils, see I.F. Marcossan, <sup>loc</sup>op.cit., pp.6649.

3). Hampton L. Carson, <sup>loc</sup>op.cit., pp.79-80.

City party carried 28 wards for its slate of candidates for local offices.<sup>1</sup> In state elections, too, Philadelphia's reformers made some gains by taking advantage of western and rural opposition to what was now the Penrose organization, Boies Penrose having succeeded Matt Quay in the U.S. Senate and in the leadership of the Pennsylvania Republican organization upon Quay's death in 1904. They supported the Lincoln Republicans who, in their attempt to oust the Penrose faction from state government claimed that support for Roosevelt was support for political reform.<sup>2</sup> The Lincoln Republicans in turn endorsed the successful Democratic candidate for state treasurer, William H. Berry.

The reformers' electoral success in 1906 had consequences similar to the those of the Union party's political failures in 1900-1. That is, it was not long after the reform coalition began to compete in party politics that divisions began to emerge within it. In Philadelphia the City party could not maintain its coalition of upper- and middle-class reformers and professional politicians. The former eschewed the spoils system for appointment by merit and refused to distribute patronage to City party supporters. There

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1). Lloyd M. Abernathy, <sup>loc.</sup> cit., p.16.  
 2). According to Wanamaker's old anti-Quay organ, the North American, the Lincoln Republicans were 'without a single exception, TR Republicans, Elihu Root Republicans, John Weaver Republicans...and they regard with shame and indignation the miscellaneous knavery with which the gang had brought reproach upon the Republican party'. See North American, September 13, 1905, cited in Lloyd M. Abernathy, op. cit., p.18. Also see William S. Vare, op.cit., pp.76,98 where it is noted that the group which wrote the Lincoln party's reform legislation included members of the Committee of 70. Indeed, the Committee of 70 was largely responsible for financing the state-wide reform coalition.

were 2,000 applicants for the party's 85 appointments after the 1905 election and the following letter from the CSRA adequately summarizes the reformers' quandary:

I have yours of December 1st and of course, remember very well your good work in the past, and I have no doubt that you were equally interested in the City party. I could not, however, consistently advocate your appointment to office on these grounds, as I have always maintained that political service should not count in such matters, but that all appointments to office should be made solely because of fitness for the position to be filled...(1)

Without patronage, the City party could not extend its political organization and the professional politicians began to return their allegiances to the Republican machine. In an open letter to the citizens of Philadelphia written in February 1907, Charles E. Carpenter, Republican politician and Chairman of the City party campaign committee in November 1905, blamed the party's affluent membership for the party's downfall claiming that they were responsible for the reform movement having degenerated into a 'scrambling for office'.<sup>2</sup> The reformers' fusion with the Democratic party similarly came to an end when the Democrats refused to withdraw their gubernatorial candidate, Lewis Emery, who was too closely allied with Western oil interests for many eastern independent Republicans.<sup>3</sup>

The reform movement's demise was also aided by external pressure that was applied by the federal and state Republican

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1). R. Blankenburg, 'The Overthrow of the Spoils System', p.20.

2). Charles E. Carpenter, Chairman of [the] City Party Campaign Committee, in November, 1905, Leaves the City Party, (Phila., np., February, 1907), pp.1-3.

3). Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia', p.20; Irwin Frank Greenberg, 'The Philadelphia Democratic Party', pp.9-14.

organizations as they began to resolve their internal divisions which had given the enemy its triumph. Support from federal officials for state and local reform movements in 1905, was withdrawn in 1906 as the national Republican party recoiled from reform politics which had allowed Democratic victory in the previous state elections.<sup>1</sup> The Roosevelt administration was not, in fact, as committed to reform as C.R. Woodruff, one-time leader of the Municipal League of Philadelphia and the Secretary of the National Municipal League, had hoped early in 1905 when he wrote:

the attitude of Secretary Root in the Philadelphia campaign, of Secretary Taft in the Ohio campaign and of Secretary Bonaparte in the Maryland campaign afford additional evidence of the growth of independent thought in the consideration of local matters. Until within the past few years, were a cabinet officer to attack, even by indirection, his party organization in any community, no matter how corrupt or malodorous it might have become, it would have been considered heresy. Now it seems to be a popular move for them and for others high in office to throw their influence upon the side of decency and honesty.(2)

In fact, the federal administration's promotion of local reform was purely an act of political pragmatism; it aimed to maintain its popular support by deflecting publicity away from its contentious stand on the trust issue. The national administration's political stance, however, had encouraged the development of local reform movements which took reforms further than national politicians had intended them to go. Having been defeated by the Democrats in the election for state treasurer and facing impending divisions in the state Republican organization, the national

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1). Richard James Donagher, 'The Urban Bull Moose', p.36.

2). C.R. Woodruff, 'Municipal Progress: 1904-1905', pp.196-7.

administration withdrew its support for local reform and in November 1905, Roosevelt threw his support to the city's Republican machine.

The Republican organization also moved to steal the thunder from the reformers by enacting some of the legislation which they had put forward. Governor Pennypacker called a special session of the Pennsylvania legislature in January and February 1906, which considered and passed several of the reform bills that had been advocated by some of the groups involved in Philadelphia's reform coalition. These included a number of electoral reforms sponsored initially by the Municipal League and later by the Committee of 70 and the CSRA. The legislature also passed a bill providing for the better inspection and licensing of tenement housing in Philadelphia which had been advocated by the OHA through its participation in the Committee of 70. Finally, it approved legislation, initially promoted by the CSRA, which promised to enforce stricter adherence to the city's civil service code by ensuring that political appointees passed civil service examinations.<sup>1</sup> To further mollify reformers in the city, the state Republican organization nominated for governor Philadelphia's own Edwin Stuart, a man with an untarnished political reputation who had been mayor of Philadelphia between 1891 and 1894.<sup>2</sup>

In the city itself, the investigation of municipal departments and the City party's successes in local and state

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1). William L. Quay, 'Philadelphia Democrats', p.172; J.F. Bauman, 'Disinfecting the City', p.121.  
2). William L. Quay, 'op.cit.', p.175.

elections also prompted the state Republican committee to investigate the local organization.<sup>1</sup> The investigation resulted in Penrose's replacement of the machine's ailing leader Israel Durham with one-time Wanamaker-supporter David Martin in an attempt to assuage opposition from independent Republicans in the city. Thereafter, Martin was to act in close co-ordination with contractors William S. Vare and J.P. McNichol in the administration of the city's Republican machine.<sup>2</sup> The investigation also pressured the city organization into selecting as candidates for the local elections in November, 'clean men' who would 'conduct the campaign on the principles involved without any personal issues to complicate the situation'.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, in the closing year of his administration Mayor Weaver recoiled from reform when he was passed over as the Lincoln party's gubernatorial candidate.<sup>4</sup> Weaver's withdrawal from reform in several ways prevented the reformers from capitalizing on their political gains in municipal government. For example, Weaver removed his reform appointee, Frank Riter, as the secretary of the Civil Service Board and refused to approve the rules of civil service operation that Riter had drawn up during his tenure. After he replaced Riter and rolled back some of the gains that reformers had

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1). Of the 21 members on the investigating commission, eight were not Philadelphians; R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', 34(1905), p.141.

2). I.F. Marcossan, op.cit., p.6651; R.F. Donagher, op.cit., pp.35-8.

3). R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', 34(1905), p.141; C.R. Woodruff, 'Municipal Progress: 1904-1905', pp.191-6.

4). I.F. Greenberg, op.cit., pp.9-14.

made since 1905, Weaver re-appointed to municipal offices many of the machine men that Riter had helped to sack.<sup>1</sup>

With the breach in the dominant organization healed and the reform coalition divided, the machine's candidate, John Reyburn, won the mayoral election in February 1907 after campaigning for Roosevelt's principles of honest and efficient administration and for civil service reform.<sup>2</sup> Once in office, however, Reyburn altered his position significantly. 'Civil service reform is obsolete', the mayor declared publicly, 'it ought to be banished, as was done in the army...I want to be frank, and say that there will be no hypocrisy in this [Civil Service] Commission. We will obey the law, but we will not do any more than we have to.<sup>3</sup> But, according to Reyburn, laxity in enforcing the civil service code would not result in the inefficient administration of municipal government. To demonstrate this point, the mayor consolidated the Bureau of Street Cleaning with the Bureau of Highways. In effect, this enabled him to reinstall in municipal offices many more of the men who had been ousted from their municipal posts under Weaver's administration.<sup>4</sup> The mayor also replaced the executives that Weaver had installed in office in 1905.<sup>5</sup>

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- 1). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1907, pp.8-11.
  - 2). Frank V. Gable, 'The Critical Situation in Philadelphia', National Civil Service League Proceedings, 1907-8, pp. 136-7.
  - 3). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1908, p.7.
  - 4). Frank V. Gable, loc. cit., pp.136-7.
  - 5). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1907, p.7 and PMAM, John Reyburn, 1907, p.31.

Although the machine was more in control of the municipal government under Reyburn than it had been under Weaver, the new administration inherited Weaver's fiscal plight. This is seen on Graph 5.1 (page 282) between 1905 and 1907 where plummeting municipal expenditure reflects the machine's efforts to isolate Weaver and the reformers whom he appointed in 1905. The administration also inherited an incomplete water-works filtration project and the continued need to provide municipal services to the developing suburban wards. Consequently, when the UGI's lease of the gas works came up for review in 1907, the company managed to renegotiate it on terms similar to those presented to Weaver in 1905.<sup>1</sup>

The UGI's contribution to the city treasury and the decrease in the amount owed on the city's debts (Graph 5.4, page 287) placed the city on a relatively stable financial footing in 1907. This enabled the Reyburn administration to meet the demand for municipal investment in public works and utilities which had gone unmet by Weaver. Under Reyburn, in fact, the municipal corporation adopted comprehensive plans which defined long-term goals for urban development through the end of the Progressive period. The plans called for the development of a number of wide boulevards connecting the CBD with the northwestern and northern suburban wards, the construction of additional bridges across the Schuylkill River into the southwestern wards, the development of the port and the rationalization of railroad routes into and around the city.<sup>2</sup>

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1). W.S. Vare, op.cit., pp.93-4; R.F. Donagher, op.cit., p.39.  
2). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1907, xvi-xvii; PMAM, John Reyburn, 1908, vii-xii and the detailed map of the projected developments entitled 'Plan of Municipal Improvements Suggested for Philadelphia', and appended to PMAM, 1908.

To finance these municipal developments in the long term, the administration proposed to increase city borrowing; it claimed that the improvements would ultimately offset their initial cost because suburban development would increase property values thereby adding to the city's tax revenues. The city corporation, was, however, already near its borrowing limit. Hence, the mayor promoted state legislation to extend the borrowing limit to 10% of the total assessed valuation of real property in the city.<sup>1</sup> To meet the costs of the works in the interim before such legislation could be passed, the mayor reserved loan funds for large-scale and preferably revenue-generating, municipal works projects such as port and transportation improvements. Reserving loan funds for municipal improvements, however, meant that the administration had to find alternative sources of income to meet the city's daily operating expenses. It did this in 1908 when the mayor, claiming that the comprehensive plans of urban development benefited the suburban wards most of all, raised the suburban tax rates to the same level as those which applied to the fully developed wards.<sup>2</sup>

The machine clearly benefited from the municipal improvements that were inaugurated under Reyburn; their scale is evident in Graph 5.1 (page 282), which shows a dramatic increase in departmental and total expenditures respectively. It is also clear in Graph 5.2 (page 283) which shows the enormous increase in authorized and expended loans, in Graph 5.4 (page 287) which depicts the marked increase in the rate at which the city was incurring debt, and in

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1). Graph 5.4, p.287.

2). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1907, xvi-xvii.

Graph 5.3 (page 284) which shows a very large cash balance relative to other administrations. But municipal largesse and the machine-building that accompanied it once again aggravated the political situation in the city. Residents of the suburban wards who approved of the comprehensive plan of municipal development, did not approve of increased taxation from which they clearly suffered most with tax increases of over 10%. Suburban residents claimed that their wards were still under-developed relative to the city wards and were therefore deserving of a lower tax rate. Moreover, they claimed that the developments would benefit the CBD and the suburbs equally as property developments in the suburbs would generally increase the city's revenues. Many property holders in the CBD, on the other hand, turned against the machine, because they felt that they were bearing a share of the cost of suburban works which was disproportionate to their direct benefit from them.<sup>1</sup>

In 1910, hostility to the machine in both the CBD and in the suburban districts was provided with an opportunity to mobilize a political coalition in alliance with the Keystone party. The Keystone party which originated in the state-wide reform campaign of 1905-6, had broken with the Democratic party in 1910 over the selection of its gubernatorial candidate.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, it provided a

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1). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1909, vii. In 1910, the mayor further antagonized center-city voters. In response to efforts by downtown merchants to make Philadelphia's downtown the best lit area in the world, for example, the Mayor suggested that local areas be asked to pay for such municipal luxuries and that public money be reserved for necessary improvements which were at that time largely suburban; See Nicholas Biddle Wainwright, The History of the PECO, p.78; PMAM, John Reyburn, 1910, vi-xiv.

2). The Outlook, (16 Sept., 1911), pp.97-8.

political vehicle for reformers' attacks on the Republicans machine.<sup>1</sup> The reformers and the Keystone party also attracted support from social workers who came out in opposition to the machine because it had prevented the effective implementation of the housing reform legislation passed five years earlier as a result of the reform movement of 1905-6.<sup>2</sup>

Opposition to the incumbent machine leadership also emerged from within the Republican organization itself. In 1906, Boies Penrose had relied heavily on the political support of Republican ward leader William S. Vare when he organized the Republican machine's defense against Weaver and the reform City party. Thereafter, control of the local organization had been divided by Penrose between Vare, whose contracting firms held the public works contracts, and J.P. McNichol whose contracting firms held many of the city's utilities contracts.<sup>3</sup> The particularly costly port-development projects which were proposed in Reyburn's comprehensive plans enabled Vare to develop his political following and hence his influence in the organization. In 1911, Vare tried to extend further his influence in the machine by nominating his brother Edwin as the Republican candidate for mayor. McNichol refused to back the Vares and sided instead with Penrose who felt his leadership of the city organization was threatened. Together, Penrose and McNichol supported George H Earle, Jr. for the Republican mayoral nomination. Mayor Reyburn, on the other hand, threw his support behind the Vare

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1). William L. Quay, op.cit., p.61.

2). J.F. Bauman, <sup>loc.</sup>cit., pp.126-7.

3). George Norris, 'Strasbismus', The Outlook, (27 Dec., 1915), p.1050.

brothers early in 1911 and fired Penrose men in his administration replacing them with Vare supporters. Moreover, in the final year of his administration (which was eight month longer than the normal mayoral term of office since elections were moved from February to November beginning in 1911), Reyburn aided the Vares campaign by increasing municipal spending on public works in South Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

In the run-up to the Republican primary in September, Penrose played the part of the reformer in order to weaken the Vare's electoral chances. In August, a state investigation commission was set up to examine allegedly corrupt political practices in municipal contracting procedures under the Reyburn administration. The so-called Caitlin Commission unearthed a number of corrupt practices which linked several councilmen and department heads to Vare's ring of contractors in alleged attempts to defraud the city on contracts for Reyburn's public works projects.<sup>2</sup> The Commission stopped short of taking legal action against the individuals that it named for conspiring to defraud the city when Earle succeeded in defeating Vare in the September primary. It could not, however, put an end to the gathering momentum of the reform Keystone party which it had contributed to in no small measure as the reformers brought legal action against those accused by the commission and mounted its mayoral campaign with the slogan: 'all Philadelphia against two contractors'.<sup>3</sup>

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1). I.F. Greenberg, op.cit., p.59. Also note the dramatic increase in departmental expenditures on Graph 5.1.

2). 'Findings of the Caitlin Commission', Report of the Taxpayers' Committee on City Finances For the Years 1910 and 1911 (Phila., np., 1912), pp.10-14.

3). Ibid., p.8.

The reform campaign was also fuelled by a labor dispute in the transit industry in 1910-11.<sup>1</sup> By that time, the PRT had consolidated its hold over the transit industry in Philadelphia through its lease and purchase of railway franchises from smaller traction companies whose stock was often heavily watered. As a result, the PRT faced unusually heavy annual fixed costs which adversely affected its ability to provide an adequate transit service, especially during peak periods.<sup>2</sup> In an attempt to improve its financial position and so its service, the company applied to the state legislature to have its charter amended so that it could issue more stock. The state refused to increase the company's borrowing capacity but not before mounting an investigation into the city's transit situation. As a result, the company came under even greater pressure to improve its transit service. Unable to afford larger cars which could handle passenger traffic during peak hours, the company tried to improve its rush-hour service by running more cars. Simultaneously, the PRT tried to cut its expenses by restricting increases in train operators' wages. The strike that resulted embittered trainmen and passengers alike and resulted in the reorganization of the PRT under the Mitten Management Company whose financial backing came from Drexel, a Philadelphia-based House of Morgan affiliate.<sup>3</sup> Despite the

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1). Harry Allison Miller, 'The History of the Transit System in Philadelphia' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania MBA thesis, 1951), p.18.

2). Pennsylvania State Railroad Commission, Report to the Commission in the Matter of the Complaint Against the PRT, by Ford, Bacon and Davis (n.p., n.p., 1911), p.2, 63.

3). T.E. Mitten, PRT Stockholders Report...1913 (Phila., n.p., 1913), p.7.

reorganization of the company and the settlement of the labor dispute, trainmen in 1911 came out against the Republican organization which had supported the PRT with police action against the strikers.<sup>1</sup> The turmoil in the traction industry also provided a political issue with which reformers could mobilize electoral support, particularly after the new management announced its intentions to increase train fares and to eliminate free transfer privileges.<sup>2</sup>

In the mayoral election in November, the Vare brothers, embittered by the campaign in the Republican primary, neither sided with the reformers nor the machine.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, South Philadelphia did not return its usual majority for the organization.<sup>4</sup> In the meantime, the Democratic party moved to heal the rift with the break-away Keystone party and came out for the Keystone candidate, Committee of 100 member and successful merchant, Rudolph Blankenburg.<sup>5</sup> The Keystone party and the Committee of 100 split the municipal ticket with the regular Democrats but only Blankenburg and the Democratic candidate for city solicitor, Thomas Ryan, managed to win on the fusion slate. The rest of the offices up for election went easily to the Republican organization.<sup>6</sup>

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1). Harry Allison Miller , op.cit., p.18.

2). A.M. Taylor, The Self Supporting Transit Program (Phila., n.p., 1912?), passim; C.W. Cheape, Moving the Masses: Urban Transit in New York, Boston and Philadelphia, 1880-1912 (Camb., Harvard University Press, 1980), pp.188-9, 206.

3). I.F. Greenberg, op.cit., p.197; D.W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia', p.339.

4). William S. Vare, op.cit., pp.118-20.

5). Irwin Frank Greenberg, p.55. Blankenburg was also a member of the Committee of 70.

6). Karl DeSchweinitz, 'Philadelphia Striking A Balance Between Boss and Business Rule', Survey, 31(Jan. 17, 1914), pp.459-62.

Upon entering the mayor's office, Blankenburg staffed the municipal departments with reform-minded administrators including Frederick Taylor's friend and assistant Morris Llewelyn Cooke who became the director of the Department of Public Works, and CSRA members Frank Riter and Lewis H. Van Dusen who were made members of the Civil Service Board.<sup>1</sup> Blankenburg also pledged to adopt many of the recommendations that the recently founded Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research had made in its studies of various municipal departments. Consequently, the Bureau became active in the reorganization of the Department of Supplies and in designing and inaugurating a new accounting procedure for the municipal corporation.<sup>2</sup> The PBMR was also active in assisting Cooke in his reorganization of the Department of Public Works which laid off over 1,000 men and saved the city approximately \$360,000 in annual expenditures on wages alone.<sup>3</sup> With the exclusion of these departmental reforms, however, the Blankenburg administration was, for at least two reasons, incapable of advancing its program for effective and efficient business-like management of municipal government. First, the hostile Republican organization still dominated the councils. Second, divisions within the reform coalition appeared immediately after the mayoral election in November.

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1). Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the CSRA...1912, pp.5-7.

2). See Chapter 4, pp. 259-61 for an account of the PBMR's activities.

3). Philadelphia Department of Public Works, M.L. Cooke, Director, Business Methods in Municipal Works, An Informal Record of the Department of Public Works of the City of Philadelphia Under Rudolph Blankenburg (Phila., n.p., 1913), p.38; Martin Schiesl, The Politics of Efficiency: Municipal Administration and Reform in America, 1890-1920 (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1977), p.165.

The mayor alienated the political machine during his first few months in office when he promoted legislation with the expressed intent of interfering with machine practices. He tried, for example, to end the connections between politicians and land developers by passing legislation requiring land and buildings to be assessed separately. Under the existing system, property was taxed according to how it was developed. Therefore, real estate speculators could hold on to vacant property at very little cost to themselves until public works and private building increased the value of the property surrounding theirs. Under the proposed (and ultimately unsuccessful) legislation, speculators would be forced to build on their property to make it pay for itself as the vacant land was to be taxed irrespective of developments on it.<sup>1</sup>

Blankenburg also tried to curtail the practices of politically-connected land developers and contractors who attempted to defraud the city by building on sites before the Board of Surveyors had settled lines and levels. Such practices allowed the developers to claim against the city in mandamus executions when public works which graded streets damaged their developed property. The mayor also attempted to create an independent body responsible for the appointment of tax assessors, thereby equalizing the tax burden over all wards irrespective of their machine allegiances.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the mayor attempted to sever the connection between local and state party organizations by proposing legislation (again unsuccessful) which would allow the city to

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1). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1912, pp. 34-5.

2). Ibid., pp.78-9, 93-8.

retain all of its tax revenues instead of paying some personal and school taxes over to the state government and claiming a rebate as it did under the existing system.<sup>1</sup>

The city and state organizations responded by crushing Blankenburg's attempts to reform city government. In the state, the legislature refused to enact a bill which would have placed the appointment of tax assessors in the hands of a politically independent body. It also reduced from \$1,000,000 to \$250,000 the state's contributions to the city's port improvements (part of Reyburn's comprehensive plans). Finally, the legislature separated from the city's finances the money it paid for the operation of the public schools. This money which had contributed an annual average of nearly \$1,000,000 to the city treasury between 1905 and 1911, was, after 1911, given directly to the Board of Public Education.<sup>2</sup> In the city, the Board of Assessment failed to increase valuations of city property by the expected \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000 between 1911 and 1912 and again between 1913 and 1914. This left the reform administration with less money to spend and reduced the city's borrowing capacity.<sup>2</sup> Blankenburg's local opponents also reduced the administration's operating revenues by taking the city to court over a number of loan ordinances which, the claimants alleged, threatened to increase the city's debt beyond its current limit of 7% of all taxable real property.<sup>3</sup>

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1). Report and Reccomendations of the Advisory Committee on Municipal Finance...March 12, 1912 (Phila., np., 1913), pp.4-7.

2). The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1914, pp.8-9.

3). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1913, pp.15-16.

The councils, too, used every mechanism in their power to inhibit Blankenburg's effective administration of the municipal government. In 1912 and 1913, the councils granted increases to county officers and made appropriations to county departments before providing for the needs of municipal departments.<sup>1</sup> When the councils eventually came to provide the annual appropriations for city departments there were insufficient funds available to make more than piecemeal appropriations to them.<sup>2</sup>

Graph 5.2 (page 283) shows that the Blankenburg administration suffered as severely as any other administration during the period, in its inability to secure the legislation from the councils to issue as much loan money as was authorized during his term. Admittedly, total expenditure rose more rapidly under Blankenburg than under any other administration since 1891, but this was due to the fact that the Blankenburg administration was left with the high fixed costs of the public works that had begun under Reyburn. Despite these expenditures, Graph 5.1 (page 282) shows that the rate of departmental expenditure for the administration was approximately the same as for the previous administration. Moreover, Graph 5.5 (page 289) shows that the administration's tax receipts were severely affected by the state legislature's segregation of school taxes from the city's total tax rebate from the state.

It is difficult to assess the Blankenburg administration's overall financial management of city government in comparison with

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1). Karl DeSchweinitz, <sup>loc. cit.</sup>, p.462.

2). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1914, p.16 and 1912, p.28.

that of other administrations since the accounting system was changed in 1912 under city controller John Walton.<sup>1</sup> Walton's annual report in 1915, however, shows the administration with an average annual deficit of \$1,410,648. In 1915 alone, the city's operating deficit was over \$2,000,000.<sup>2</sup> With these figures it is possible to estimate that Blankenburg's administration was slightly more restricted by the machinations of party politics than Charles Warwick's had been at the end of the nineteenth century.

Caught in a fiscal squeeze and forced to find new means of raising municipal revenues, the mayor alienated those members of the reform coalition who had supported the Keystone party as he was forced to renege on a number of his campaign promises.<sup>3</sup> The reform administration, for example, operated under an annual operating deficit. Blankenburg was even forced to issue a 30-year loan to cover his annual deficits despite the fact that he had attacked such a practice throughout his career as a reformer and during his campaign against Earle. With his administration committed to keeping abreast of the public works that had begun under Reyburn, Blankenburg was also forced to abandon his campaign pledge of cutting the rate of municipal taxation. In fact, the mayor proposed several new bills designed to make more objects subject to taxation including corporate franchises, goods manufactured within the city, automobiles and furniture. He also proposed an occupation tax which would have acted in effect as a municipal income tax.<sup>4</sup>

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1). John M. Walton, 'The Application to the Municipality of Modern Methods of Accounting', Annals, 41(May, 1912), pp.64-8.

2). The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1915, pp.12-13.

3). Charles F. Jenkins, 'The Blankenburg Administration', passim.

4). Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement', pp.118,112.

The reform movement was also subject to internal divisions similar to those which had limited the success of the City party and the Committee of 70 in 1905-6. The handling of appointments under Blankenburg was no different than under the City or Union party and Blankenburg soon alienated the contingent of his reform coalition that consisted of professional politicians. Moreover, the mayor alienated the Keystone and Democratic parties, and the independent Republicans by adhering to his campaign pledge to stay out of reform politics in the state and the national political arenas.<sup>1</sup> In this way, reformers in the city were prevented from taking full advantage of a three-year-long breach in the state Republican organization which began during the presidential campaign of 1912 when the party divided between the Roosevelt progressives and the Taft supporters who followed Penrose.<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly, despite the Republican organization's politics of containment and the internal divisions within the reform coalition, Blankenburg succeeded in introducing legislation for new financial procedures which would enable the municipal corporation to meet its increasing costs in the future. In the final year of Blankenburg's administration, 1915, the councils passed an ordinance allowing for various loan funds to be consolidated. Under the

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1). C. Jenkins, op. cit., passim.

2). Lloyd M. Abernathy, 'The Progressive Campaign in Pennsylvania, 1912', Pennsylvania History, 29(1962), pp.175-92; Stanley Coben, 'A. Mitchell Palmer and the Reorganization of the Democratic Party in Pennsylvania, 1910-1912', PMHB, 84:2(1960), pp.183-4; Martin Nelson McGeary, Gifford Pinchot (N.J., Princeton University Press, 1960), p.242; Martin L. Fausold, Gifford Pinchot, Bull Moose Progressive (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1961), p.147; Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia', pp.172-3, 184-6, 196.

previous system, loan money could only be spent for the purpose specified in the ordinance authorizing the loan. Consequently, money was often frozen in loan funds for municipal projects which had been completed.<sup>1</sup> This act simplified accounting and enabled the next administration to use loan money more efficiently. Also, in 1915, the state's constitution was amended to raise the city's debt ceiling to 7% of the real and personal property in the city. This act raised the borrowing capacity of the city from \$7,100,000 to \$47,700,000. In addition, it allowed the city to borrow up to 3% of its total assessed real and personal property for improvements in the city's transit and port facilities. The act which was approved by referendum in November 1917, instituted one of the fundamental features of Reyburn's comprehensive plans by effectively increasing the municipal government's borrowing capacity to 10% of the assessed value of real and personal property in the city. It did not, however, benefit the reform administration which ended in January 1916.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, neither the increase in the city's borrowing limit nor the consolidation of its loan funds were passed in time to assist the reform administration financially or politically.<sup>3</sup> In

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1). Report and Recommendations of the Advisory Committee, pp.4-7, and The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1915, p.10.

2). The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1915, p.11.

3). Ibid., 1915, p.7; only \$2,619.83 became available to the Blankenburg administration with the consolidation of the loan funds.

the mayoral election of 1915, Penrose moved to heal the breach in the state and city Republican organizations. In the state, Penrose agreed with Vare on the party's gubernatorial nomination of one-time Philadelphia school reformer, Martin Brumbaugh and he was successful in reuniting his organization sufficiently to defeat the Roosevelt progressives.<sup>1</sup> In the city, Penrose supported Vare's candidate, Thomas B. Smith as the machine's candidate for mayor. The Keystone party came out for Smith and then disbanded. George Norris, Blankenburg's Director of the Department of Public Health and Safety, opposed the organization and ran for mayor on the reform Franklin party ticket. He did not, however, have the support of his boss; Blankenburg refused to support either the machine or the reform candidate. In November, Smith won a resounding landslide victory and afterwards, in a public ceremony, Boies Penrose welcomed Norris and the independents back into the Republican organization.<sup>2</sup> Prevented structurally from consolidating their hold over municipal government, reformers' brief flirtation with high office ended as the other Progressive reform movements that had preceded it, with the triumphant return of boss rule.

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It was in 1903 that Lincoln Steffens, referred to Philadelphia as corrupt and contented.<sup>3</sup> In 1904, Gustav Myers, a nationally renowned municipal reformer concurred with Steffens

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1). William S. Vare, op.cit., pp.130-7.

2). The Penrose faction won 42 of the city's 48 wards in the election. Donald W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement', pp.395,228.

3). Lincoln Steffens, 'Corrupt and Contented', passim.

when he claimed that Philadelphia was the most corrupt city in the world.<sup>1</sup> Reformers in the city (like reformers elsewhere) generally explained away these criticisms by claiming that political corruption was due to the avarice of machine politicians and, as the introduction to this case study demonstrated, historians rarely questioned this explanation much before the late 1950s.<sup>2</sup> Afterwards, authors like Mandelbaum, Warner and Hays began to ask whether reformers' accounts of urban politics could be interpreted literally. Political machines, they claimed, developed in the second half of the nineteenth century largely because they satisfied urban economic elites' political interests. They provided a comprehensive network of social controls which could maintain social order amongst a highly diverse and potentially volatile working-class and immigrant population.<sup>3</sup> Machines also provided the municipal works and services that urban elites required.<sup>4</sup>

The self-interest of the urban economic elites was therefore, according to the revisionists, largely responsible for breeding avarice amongst professional politicians. The view that urban elites largely determined the organization and conduct of municipal government is only confirmed, according to the revisionists, by studies of Progressive urban politics which find that such elites

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1). Gustav Myers, 'The Most Corrupt City in the World (Philadelphia)', Living Age, 240(1904), passim.

2). See the introduction to this case study, pp.189-91.

3). This is a major theme in Ira Katznelson's City Trenches, p.52.

4). W.W. Cutler's and H.F. Gillette's 'The Emergence of the Modern Metropolis', passim. This is also a major theme in S. Mandelbaum's Boss Tweed's New York, chapter 4.

both led reform movements and benefited most from the changes that they produced in city government.<sup>1</sup> According to this view, then, both machine politics and Progressive reform reflect the 'privatism' and the political influence of urban economic elites and/or the functional responses made by city government to changes in the urban social structure.

Jon Teaforde's recent work on Progressive reform questions the revisionists' conclusions about the nature of Progressive political reform.<sup>2</sup> It agrees with the revisionists that the leading Progressive reformers were drawn from urban economic elites and that their assessment of machine politics cannot be accepted at face value. Nevertheless, it rejects the revisionists' claim that selfish political interests were hidden behind the Progressives' reform rhetoric. The reformers were, according to Teaforde, genuinely interested (and successful) in enabling city government work to provide public services which benefited the entire urban community. Interestingly, the apparent preoccupation with political corruption which informs Progressive rhetoric masks the reformers' significant achievements in implementing what Teaforde claims were enlightened municipal public policies.

In developing his account, Teaforde does not deny that boss politics and political corruption were prevalent in American cities at the turn of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, he claims that reformers managed to exploit both the division between the city's legislative and

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1). See the discussion of Hays et. al. in the introduction to this case study, pp.190-2.

2). J.C. Teaforde, The Unheralded Triumph.

executive branches, and the state legislature's influence over city government to minimize the machine's influence over municipal public policy-making. According to Teaforde, then, the very structure of government helped shape municipal reform and ultimately city government's response to social structural changes.

This chapter has adopted Teaforde's perspective on how political structures shaped the course of urban political history. It has shown, however, that in Philadelphia, despite Teaforde's claims, Progressive reform was hardly a triumph unheralded or otherwise. Indeed, it has shown that the structure of municipal government severely circumscribed reformers' political influence.

In Philadelphia, the city councils held the key to the effective control over the municipal administration and the machine managed to use its influence amongst the voters in the river wards to ensure its majority there at least after 1899. The machine was not as successful in maintaining its hold over the executive offices in the city and principle executive offices fell to reformers when bitter party factionalism momentarily disrupted the solidarity of the Republican organization as it did in 1905-6 and again in 1911. Indeed, it might even be said that in Philadelphia, reform movements were spawned by the Republican organization especially as they frequently attracted active support from disaffected organization politicians.

Reformers' successes in taking executive offices in the city, however, were short-lived for at least two related reasons. First, they discouraged factionalism within the Republican machine. As a result, the machine was able to use its influence in the city

councils and in the state legislature to manipulate municipal finances and so restrict reformers' ability to direct the executive departments which they controlled. Second, political success (and even political failure as was evident in the case of the Union party of 1900-1) promoted factionalism amongst the members of reform movements whose political aims, though equally self-interested, were diverse and frequently incompatible. The organization's hostility to reform executives and its ability to limit their influence in government only hastened the reformers' political decline as apparent incompetence devastated electoral support for political reform. Unsurprisingly, then, brief periods of successful political reform were immediately followed by the triumphant return of the political machine which, though constantly prone to factionalism and internal jealousies, maintained an upper hand in city politics throughout the Progressive period.

Philadelphia, then, was indeed a corrupt city. This chapter has shown contrary to Steffens's claim, however, that it was not contented with its corruption. Nor was the city corrupt because political corruption served the interests of economic elites. This is not to say that urban elites' self-interested political aims did not have a role in preserving machine politics in the city. On the contrary, reform movements failed partly because they were victims of the privatism of their supporters but also partly because of the structure of the urban polity.

## CHAPTER SIX

### MUNICIPAL PUBLIC POLICIES AS UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

#### i

During the Progressive era, the business of city government expanded dramatically. In order to keep pace with urban population growth and movement and the migration of industries away from the urban core, municipalities extended existing works and services and took over the provision of other necessary utilities from private companies. Some urbanists like Ashton, Friedland and Gordon, claim that urban political reform during the Progressive period occurred precisely because changes in the structure of urban society placed such heavy demands on existing municipal services.<sup>1</sup> David Hammack takes a similar but less extreme view. He agrees that structural changes in urban society increased the demand for more and better public utilities. The improvement of municipal works therefore took its place high on the political agenda but it was only one of many issues which together shaped cities' experiences of Progressive political reform.<sup>2</sup> Authors such as Hays, Wiebe, Kolko,

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1). This is a major theme in R. Friedland's Power and Crisis in the City, p.179, 201; Also see D.M. Gordon's, 'Capitalist Development in the History of American Cities', esp. pp.40-3, and P.J. Ashton's, 'Urbanization and the Dynamics of Suburban Development Under Capitalism', p.58, both in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers, Marxism and the Metropolis.

2). See David C. Hammack, Power and Society: Greater New York City at the Turn of the Century (N.Y., Russell Sage, 1982), chapter 1 esp. pp.20-3. Theodore J. Lowi constructs a similarly pluralistic analysis in his At the Pleasure of the Mayor: Patronage and Power in New York City, 1898-1958 (London, Macmillan, 1964).

Weinstein and Mandelbaum seem to lie somewhere in between the positions adopted by Friedland et.al. and Hammack.<sup>1</sup> They claim that structural changes played a major but not a totally deterministic part in shaping Progressive political reform by requiring city governments to provide more in the way of essential public municipal works and services. Social structural changes generally shaped the political interests of those groups which were most influential in city government during the Progressive period: the urban economic and social elites. The extension of municipal works and services during the period, therefore, reflects one of the several ways in which urban elites managed to make city governments more responsive to their demands.

In a recent work, Rosen has offered yet another variation on these several perspectives.<sup>2</sup> She accepts that city governments extended municipal works and services during the Progressive era as a response to fundamental changes in the structure of urban society. That response, however, took the form of municipal public policies which were shaped by at least two features of municipal government: its fragmented structures of decision-making, including the city's dependence on the state legislature, and the inability of political actors to overcome their individual self-interests in group decision-making.

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1). Samuel P. Hays, 'The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era' and 'The Changing Political Structure of the City in Industrial America'; S. Mandelbaum, Boss Tweed's New York; Robert Wiebe, The Search For Order, 1877-1920; R. Wiebe, The Businessman and Reform; Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism; James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State.

2). C. Rosen, The Limits to Power: Great Cities and the Process of City Government in America (Camb., Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.50-3.

This chapter develops a similar analysis with respect to public works policies in Philadelphia. It shows how changes in the urban social structure put the extension of public works and utilities high on the political agenda thereby shaping the course of Progressive urban politics. This is a theme which is already well developed in the literature on urban Progressive politics. A less developed theme which shapes this chapter is how the organization and practices of city government influenced the actual planning and implementation of public works policies. Indeed, this chapter demonstrates that urban political structures were perhaps as influential in determining the development of municipal public policies as the social structural changes which are often thought by historians and urbanists to have called such policies forth from city governments. The chapter also shows that the distribution to different urban groups of the costs and benefits of municipal public policies was also determined in part by political structures. It is perhaps in this respect that the urban polity was most influential in shaping the urban process as it helped to determine how political power was distributed between different urban groups.

## ii

### The City and the Traction Industry

Changes in the structure of urban society required that more and better transportation be provided for the people of Philadelphia. Suburban growth and the development of a central business district increased the demand for more railway routes between the city's central business district and its residential

periphery. Industries which had vacated the CBD in search of cheaper land on the outskirts of the old city also required more and better transportation for their work forces.<sup>1</sup> As private railway companies became increasingly unable or unwilling to respond to the growing demand for transportation in the city, the municipal government naturally became involved in the traction industry to ensure the supply of the necessary utility. By 1907, the municipal government had taken on a major regulatory role in the industry and at the same time guaranteed investments in the city's largest traction company, the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company. Within five years, the municipality's involvement in traction increased still further when it embarked on one of the nation's first municipally-owned high-speed transit systems. The city's involvement in traction in the twentieth century was necessary; it was not, however, entirely determined by changes in the urban social structure as traction policies were shaped by the structure of decision-making and by the balance of party competition in municipal government.

Traction companies, were from their very foundation in Philadelphia, subject to regulation by municipal government. Since railway lines occupied public streets, railway companies were required to obtain for each line that they operated a franchise from the city government. In 1857 when the state incorporated the city's first railway companies - the Frankford and Southwark, the West Philadelphia Passenger, and the Philadelphia and Darby - the city councils passed an ordinance which generally defined the

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1). David Ward, Cities and Immigrants, pp.86-102.

relationship between the municipality and the railway companies. The ordinance stipulated that railway routes should conform to the street lines and levels as determined by the city surveyor. It also made the railway companies responsible for maintaining, paving and repairing the streets on which their tracks were laid. To ensure that these regulations were observed, the ordinance reserved for the city the right to buy the railway companies by paying the original cost of their roads and rolling stock at a 'fair valuation'. By 1859, the city had increased its hold over the railway companies by including in some of their franchises stipulations which provided for a municipal tax of 6% on a company's declared dividends.<sup>1</sup>

Despite municipal regulations the traction industry was booming by 1864; by that time 130 miles of railway had been laid in the city by its several companies.<sup>2</sup> By 1876, the industry as a whole was earning \$7,600,000, its stocks and bonds were valued at nearly \$9,000,000 and it was paying dividends to its collective shareholders of almost \$1,300,000.<sup>3</sup> Competition in the profitable traction industry was intense throughout the period. It was also inevitably part of the competition between the major party factions in local government.

The intimate relationship between traction and politics was evident early in the industry's history. From the mid-1860s,

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1). F.D. McLain, 'Street Railways of Philadelphia', Quarterly Journal of Economics, 23(1908), pp.233-6.

2). Harry Allison Miller, 'History of the Transit System in Philadelphia' p.34.

3). Charles Richardson, Street Railways When Incorporated and When Merged: Tract No. 1 of a Series Relating to the Municipal Affairs of the City of Philadelphia, Its Stockholders and Directors (Phila., n.p., 1893), p.26.

state Republican bosses, U.S Senator Matt Quay and State Legislator Donald Cameron, sought to control Philadelphia politics by controlling the local traction industry. The Quay/Cameron faction was opposed by another Republican faction whose leader in Philadelphia, one-time mayor William Stokely, had built up his political organization by manipulating the distribution of public works and building contracts.<sup>1</sup> By using their influence in the state legislature, Cameron and Quay managed to consolidate their hold over the city's traction industry when they secured the enactment of the Railway Boss Bill in 1865. The Bill restricted the city's authority to regulate street railways and so removed a major obstacle to the growth of the Cameron/Quay organization in Philadelphia. By limiting municipal taxation on railways to a \$50/car licensing fee, the Bill also prevented Stokely from using railway taxes to build up his political organization by directing them into public works and buildings projects.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, party competition did not always benefit the railway companies. In 1873, for example, Stokely took advantage of a rift in the Cameron/Quay faction to secure state legislation which increased city government's control over the traction companies and so restricted the Quay/Cameron faction's influence on Philadelphia politics. The most important piece of legislation secured by Stokely made railway companies more accountable to city government by preventing the state legislature from providing special

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1). Edward P. Allinson and Boies Penrose, The City Government of Philadelphia, pp.53-4 and John D. Stewart, 'Philadelphia Politics in the Gilded Age', pp.151-3.

2). John D. Stewart, op. cit., pp.170-3.

immunities in corporate charters. In 1876, the rift in the Quay/Cameron faction was healed. As a result, the traction industry's political fortunes improved, and a piece of general railway legislation was passed in state government to liberate the traction companies from the city's control. This legislation also allowed those companies that could afford to do so to change their form of motive power from horse-drawn cars to cable cars.

With the introduction of cable-car technology, the industry entered a phase of unchecked competition during which transit stock was manipulated and great fortunes made in the struggle between companies to move people faster and further into the city's pleasant suburban distances.<sup>1</sup> By 1890, 14 years of unregulated competition in the traction industry had drastically reduced the number of companies operating in the city. Those companies which did survive were left with a legacy of stock frauds that had been perpetrated in the boom years of the 1870s and 1880s. Consequently, they were forced to pay enormous dividends on stock, much of which had not been paid in full. At the beginning of the Progressive era, then, urban transit was poised to become a major political issue as financially unstable companies proved incapable of meeting the growing demand for more and better transportation in the city.

The Citizens' Municipal Association first brought the traction issue into Progressive urban politics in 1886 when it secured a gubernatorial veto of an act which would have allowed the largest of the city's traction companies, Philadelphia Traction, to increase

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1). F.D. McLain, <sup>loc.</sup> cit., pp.250-1.

its fares and to extend its control over major railway routes in the city.<sup>1</sup> The act would also have abolished the city's right to purchase the railway company for the amount of their capital stock.<sup>2</sup> Despite the CMA's success in this instance the report points to certain circumstances which, in the future, would limit how far reformers could press upon the companies their demands for better service and lower fares. These included the companies' precarious financial position which was due to their continual need to upgrade motive sources, tracks and rolling stock. As important, many of the city's leading citizens stood to lose their investments in railway stock were the companies to fail. 'The railways', the reformers' reported,

plead everything including poverty, and one would imagine, if he did not know better, that their plausible cry of small fares and heavy taxes was not a sham and a delusion. Observe that the greater number of these companies are earning from 20 to 70% upon the amount paid in on account of capital stock; what new buyers paid for their stock matters nothing, just as the great respectability and influence of the stockholders should matter nothing.(3)

They neglected to mention, however, that the '20 to 70% upon the amount paid in' did not account for the annual dividends being paid out to shareholders whose stock had not been paid in full.<sup>4</sup>

In the long run these structural circumstances protected the railway companies from the CMA which, after 1886, succeeded only in its fight to ensure that the railway companies met their obligations to the city by paving and repairing the streets which their lines

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1). Ibid.

2). First Annual Report of the CMA of Philadelphia (Phila., 1887), p.19.

3). Ibid.

4). F.D. McLain, <sup>loc.</sup> cit., pp.251-3.

occupied.<sup>1</sup> Even such limited success was not won by reformers without some concessions to the traction companies. An ordinance of 1892, for example, reaffirmed the companies' paving commitment to the city. The ordinance, however, was part of an omnibus bill which met with stiff opposition from the CMA since it also permitted railway companies to introduce electricity conducted through overhead wires as the motive force of streetcar transportation.<sup>2</sup>

After 1892, the cost of electrifying and laying a trolley-track system was too great for the smaller companies and they were soon merged with the larger firms in the city. At first, municipal reformers opposed the move towards consolidation in the traction industry. The Municipal League, for example, continually pressed the city councils to preserve competition in the industry by not granting to any one company exclusive rights to the routes in a given area of the city.<sup>3</sup> The League, however, could not stem the tide of consolidation just as the CMA could not prevent the advent of electric-driven trolleys.

By 1893, three major holding companies, two of which were formed in that year, dominated the traction industry in the city. The People's Traction Company had leased or purchased the right to four railway lines comprising 117 of the 456 miles of the total track in the city. The Electric Traction Company had similarly merged seven of

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1). Annual Reports of the CMA of Philadelphia, 1886-1899.

2). PMAM, Stuart, 1892, pp.xxiv-xxviii, and Nicholas Biddle Wainwright, The History of the PECO, pp.45-6.

3). The Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1895-1896 (Phila., 1896), pp.17-19, and the 1894-1895 report, p.8, Appendix A, pp.18-19.

Philadelphia's companies and 129 miles of the total system. The Philadelphia Traction Company, established in 1883, remained the largest single holding company with 210 miles and 15 underlying companies. In 1895, the Union Traction Company was organized as a holding company by Philadelphia Traction capitalists to merge the three companies. Under the terms of the merger, the UTC had to pay dividends on the partially-paid shares which had been issued by the three holding companies and by their numerous underliers. As a result, the UTCs fixed costs were extremely high and the company was soon running at a deficit and forced to curtail free transfer privileges which had been guaranteed to consumers in the electrification ordinance of 1892.<sup>1</sup>

Political manipulation of railway franchises increased the financial hardship in the traction industry and fuelled reform sentiment in the city at the turn of the century. In 1901, under the city's first machine administration, the councils and the state legislature combined to grant to a number of local politicians-cum-capitalists - John M. Mack, J.P. McNichol and William S. Vare among them - the franchise for an elevated railway above Market Street. To preserve its hold over the industry, the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company was formed to purchase the new franchise from its holders and to lease the Union Traction Company as well.<sup>2</sup> The PRT was incorporated in 1902 and capitalized at \$30,000,000. It leased UTC

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1). F.D. McLain <sup>loc.</sup> cit., pp. 253-5.

2). The same legislation which granted the franchises to Mack and company also restricted future franchise grants by vesting the power to grant such franchises in the governor, the secretary general of the Commonwealth and the state attorney general. C.R. Woodruff, 'Street Railways in Pennsylvania and Philadelphia', p.424.

for 999 years preserving its routes and promising to pay its shareholders 3% a year on their stock for the first two years, 4% a year for the next two years, 5% a year for the subsequent two years and 6% a year thereafter. The PRT also guaranteed to continue paying the dividends to the stockholders of UTC's underlying companies.<sup>1</sup>

By 1906, the PRT was in financial trouble after four years of paying dividends on unpaid shares while investing \$25,000,000 in its elevated railway. The annual report of the PRT for the year ending June 30, 1906, showed that \$9,000,000 of the company's \$17,676,248.58 worth of receipts went to operating expenses, another \$1,000,000 went to state and city taxes and over \$7,000,000 went to pay dividends to the stockholders of the UTC and its underliers. The company was left with only \$300,000 for improvements to its system and for dividends on its \$30,000,000 worth of stock.<sup>2</sup> As a result of this financial strain, the company began to agitate for the city councils to lift certain restrictions which were written into the franchises of the UTC's underliers.

The PRT made an initial attempt at renegotiating the franchises of its underliers with the city in 1906 when a bill known as the 'Retail Merchants' Plan' was introduced in the councils. The bill failed partly because it met with the stiff opposition of reformers whose political strength in the city had momentarily

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1). 1854-1894. Fifty Years with Passenger Railways of Philadelphia, pp.14-15, and Harry Allison Miller, 'The History of the Transit System in Philadelphia', pp.11-13.

2). E.O. Lewis, 'Philadelphia's Relation to the Rapid Transit Company', Annals, 31(1908), pp. 601-2.

surged owing to Mayor Weaver's handling of the gas lease in 1905.<sup>1</sup> Reyburn's administration was more receptive to the PRT's demands as it was developing and attempting to finance a comprehensive plan of suburban development for which adequate urban transit was essential. On June 20, 1907, Governor Pennypacker signed a bill which authorized municipalities and transit companies to renegotiate all contracts which defined the rights and powers of the companies. By July 1, the councils passed an ordinance which defined the city's relationship with the PRT.<sup>2</sup> The terms of the lease partially eased the company's financial stress by committing municipal resources to the preservation and extension of the traction industry.

Since 1906, the directors of the PRT had been claiming that the company could not raise sufficient funds to complete the elevated Market Street railway which it had begun in 1903. They blamed this on the ordinance of 1857 which gave the city the right to purchase the underliers at fair valuation and therefore made transit stocks and bonds unappealing to potential investors. The contract of 1907 repealed the ordinance and all other similar acts that the councils had passed subsequently. The contract also repealed the companies' obligations to pave and maintain the streets which they occupied in return for annual payments of \$500,000 until 1927, \$600,000 until 1947 and \$700,000 thereafter. In view of the company's weakened financial position, the city extended the deadline for the completion of the elevated railway by three years

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1). PMAM, John Weaver, 1906, pp.Lii-Lvii.  
2). E.O. Lewis 'Philadelphia's Relation to the Rapid Transit Company', Annals, 31(1908), p.603.

from 1907. It also offered to protect the company from having to acquire franchises in the future (thereby adding even more water to its capital stock) by promising the company first option on any new lines. If the company turned down its option, the city could offer these lines on the same terms to other bidders.

In return for the city's protective legislation, the company agreed to regulate its finances more closely. In order to liquidate its dividend payments on unpaid stock the company called in half of its \$900,000 worth of outstanding capital in September 1907, and the other half in September 1908. This money was to be invested in the uncompleted elevated railway and in other capital improvements. The company also agreed to establish a sinking fund into which it would deposit monthly payments of \$10,000 from July 1, 1912, and of \$30,000 from 1942. At this rate the sinking fund would contain \$30,000,000 by 1957 with which the city could then purchase the PRT at the cost of its original stock issue.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the PRT gave the city a seat on its board of directors, and a half share of all of the company's dividends over 6%.

The contract was not a profitable one for the municipal corporation. The company had not paid a dividend greater than 1% since its formation. Profit from dividends in excess of 6% was therefore a distant prospect. As far as the sinking fund was concerned, the city was allowed to draw from the fund once it contained \$5,000,000. Given the extent to which the city treasury was subjected to raids by machine administrations, however, it

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1). F.D. McLain <sup>loc. cit.</sup> cit., pp.241-5, and Harry Allison Miller, <sup>op</sup> cit., pp.14-17.

seemed unlikely that the fund would contain \$30,000,000 in 1957. Regarding the annual payments to the city of \$500,000 in lieu of paving, snow removal and car licenses, those expenses in 1906 had cost the company \$586,000 and a provision for an increase in the annual payment did not take effect until 1927.<sup>1</sup>

Much as the contract benefited the PRT, the company was still in financial trouble and could neither extend nor improve its transit service. In 1907, for example, the PRT failed to meet its fixed charges of \$7,488,958 by \$364,048. The depression which followed the panic of 1907 did not help matters as the price of PRT shares fell sharply. The company responded by retrenching anywhere that it could; it reorganized its fare structure, reduced the number of cars in service and froze trainmen's wages.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the cost of transportation to the consumer increased and the service declined in its efficiency and comfort especially during peak periods. Moreover, the company could not afford to purchase the new rolling stock with more seating capacity as it was required to do by the contract of 1907.

Claiming that it did not want to breach its contract with the city with respect to the purchase of rolling stock, the PRT petitioned the state legislature to change its charter and allow for a further \$10,000,000 worth of stock shares to be issued. The petition was unsuccessful. Worse still, it led to the formation of a state investigation committee to examine the company's business

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1). F.D. McLain, op. cit., p.243.

2). Harry Allison Miller, op. cit., p.18.

practices. This ultimately put even greater pressure on the company to improve its service. To meet the growing pressure for better service, the company tried routing more cars during peak periods. This only agitated commuters who suffered from delays caused by traffic on the major lines. It also angered train workers who were already hostile to the wage freezes which the company had imposed and, by 1909, the company's problems were compounded still further when the trainmen took industrial action and struck against the PRT.<sup>1</sup>

The trainmen's strike was a bitter and protracted one during which consumers' discontent with the company almost equalled that of the striking workers. It also helped to make the PRT's service a political issue in Philadelphia as reformers and disgruntled commuters called for the municipalization of the transit industry.<sup>2</sup> In 1910, the PRT was reorganized in a move to alleviate labor unrest, to appease reformers and to allay stockholders' fears about their declining earnings and possible municipalization.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1). T.E. Mitten, PRT Stockholders Report, 1913 (Phila., n.p., 1913), p.7.
  - 2). The most comprehensive history of the strike is Robert Thomas's, 'A History and Analysis of Labor-Management Relations in the Philadelphia Transit Industry' (Phila., University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1959), also Harry Allison Miller, op. cit., p.18.
  - 3). This is a continuing theme in the PRT's relations with the city. T.E. Mitten, PRT Stockholders Report, 1914, p.10, suggests that Union Traction stockholders were unwilling to enter into negotiations with the city as they feared that public involvement in the transit industry would interfere with their dividends. The problem was recurrent through the end of the Progressive period, see Department of City Transit, William S. Twining Director, Report Upon the Proposal of the PRT Company for the equipment and operation of city-built high-speed lines... (n.p., n.p., 1917), p.13-4.

Under new management the PRT was made profitable but only through the consolidation of existing lines and the imposition of a moratorium on building extensions to the system.<sup>1</sup> The consolidation of the existing system was, in fact, prescribed by the state investigating committee.<sup>2</sup> One of the company's fundamental problems, the committee reported, was that its lease of the UTC in 1902 preserved the routes of the UTC underliers which had themselves evolved out of the competition between companies too easily enfranchised in the second half of the nineteenth century. In some areas of the city, the company was operating parallel services. Consolidation was therefore necessary if the PRT was to meet the demand for transportation in the city.

The consolidation of the PRT's archaic and inefficient system was, however, not the most important of the state committee's recommendations. More important was the committee's suggestion that the company or some other agency construct several high-speed transit lines between the CBD and the suburbs to which existing railway lines could be connected at various collection points as distributor- and feeder-lines. Clearly the PRT's no-growth policy prevented the company from acting on the committee's recommendations.

The PRT's inability to adopt the state committee's proposal for a high-speed system became a part of the 1911 Keystone campaign against the Republican machine as Keystoners promised to promote

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1). C.W. Cheape, Moving the Masses, p.206.  
2). Pennsylvania State Railroad Commission, Report to the Commission in the Matter of the Complaint Against the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company by Ford Bacon and Davis, p.9.

municipally-owned high-speed lines. The lines, the reformers claimed, would either be operated by the city, by the PRT or by other private companies. Upon assuming the mayor's office in 1912 Blankenburg moved towards fulfilling the reformers' campaign pledge by establishing the City Transit Department which, under the direction of traction magnate A. Merritt Taylor, was to devise a plan to improve the transportation service in the city. Within one year the development published the so-called 'Taylor plan'.<sup>1</sup>

The Taylor plan was modelled closely after the state committees' recommendation for a high-speed transit system. In its initial draft the plan called for the development of four new high-speed lines to be operable by 1919, and the construction of a delivery loop in the CBD where the four lines converged with the Market Street elevated railway.<sup>2</sup> Two of the lines and the delivery loop were to be built by the city. The first line consisted of a four-track high-speed subway under North Broad Street running from Broad and Market Street in the CBD, to Pike Street in North Philadelphia. The second proposed city-built line consisted of a two-track subway running south under South Broad Street from the CBD to Bigler Street and depressed tracks that continued further south from Bigler. Finally, the plan recommended that the city construct a delivery loop in the CBD consisting of a two-track subway running in a circle formed by Arch, Eighth, Walnut and Fifteenth Streets.

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1). A. Merritt Taylor, Report of the Philadelphia Transit Commission, (n.p., n.p., n.d.[1913]), passim.

2). See Map 6.1 on page 349.

All of the city-built lines were to be operated by the PRT (which under the 1907 contract had to be given the first option to bid on the service) or by one or more other lessees. The plan also recommended that the PRT or some other company build and operate two other high-speed lines. These included a Frankford line which consisted of a two-track elevated railway running from Arch and Front Streets to Bridge Street in the northeast, and a Darby line consisting of a two-track elevated railway running from Thirteenth and Market Streets in the CBD to Ninth and Main Streets in Darby, West Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

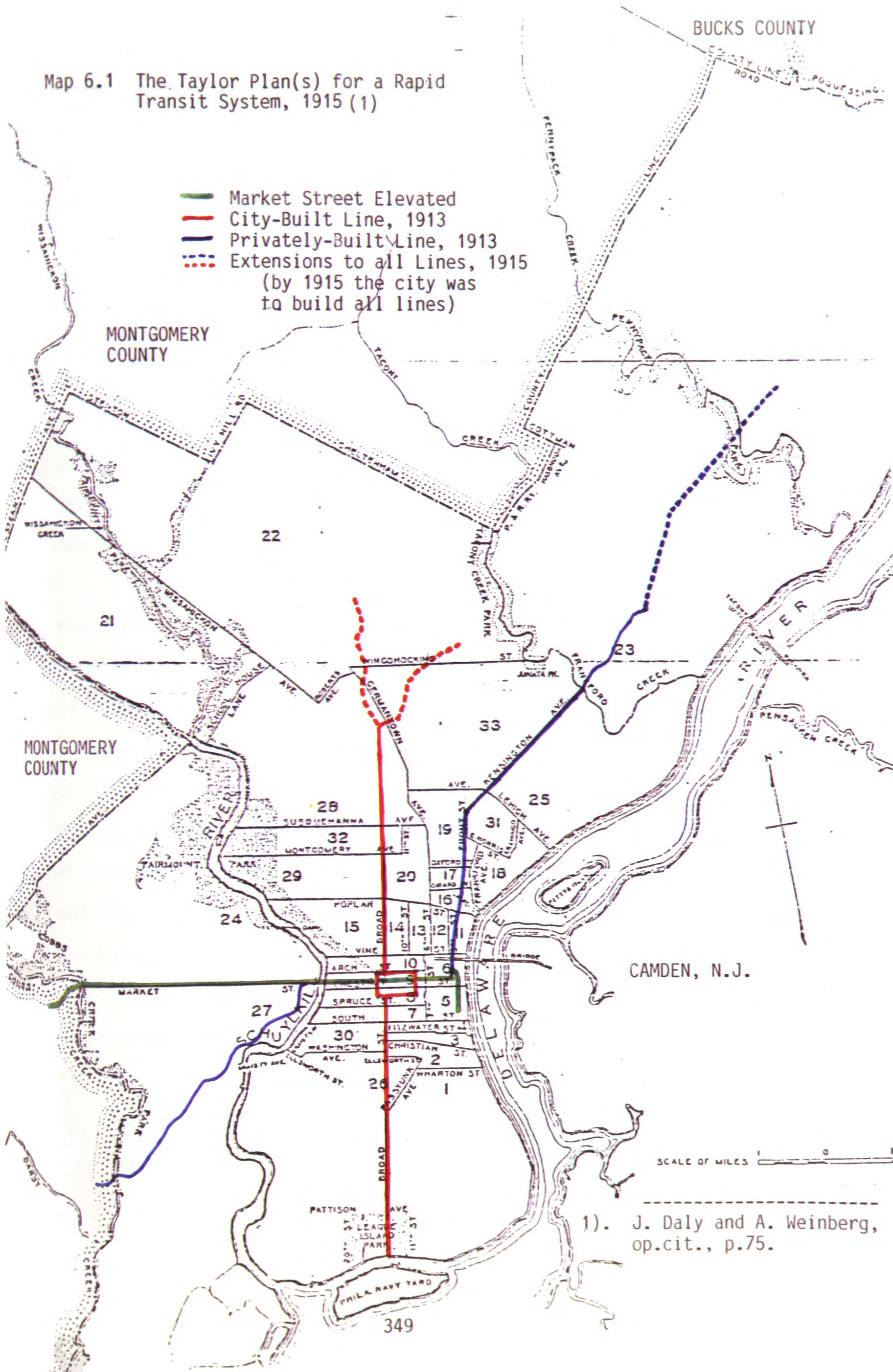
All four lines and the delivery loop would be operated jointly by the city and the lessee(s) as one system. A five-cent fare would be charged and free transfers would be allowed between lines on any continuous journey in the same direction into or out of the city. The lessee(s) and the city would divide the revenues from the system according to the number of passenger-miles that each party operated, and the city would pay the lessee(s) an additional 6% on its investment in track and equipment.

Taylor estimated that the system would cost the city \$34,682,000, and the lessee(s) another \$22,000,000. Despite the substantial initial cost to the city, however, Taylor demonstrated that the new transit system could be maintained with a five-cent, free transfer fare structure and be built without having to increase city taxes. This was possible, he claimed, because by 1930 the transit system would provide a surplus to the city of \$5,225,600

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1). Ibid., p.6. See map 6.1

Map 6.1 The Taylor Plan(s) for a Rapid Transit System, 1915 (1)



while the maximum annual deficit that the city would incur during the construction period would be only \$1,280,100. Heavy initial costs would therefore be reclaimed in excess in the long run. To meet the large short-term expenditure, Taylor recommended that the administration press for the passage of a bill, already pending in the state legislature, which extended both the city's borrowing capacity and the life of its loans. The reform administration's support for Taylor's plan in part accounts for the fact that this bill which Reyburn had proposed as a means of reorganizing the city's debt structure, eventually passed the legislature with the support of an unusual coalition of organization leaders and municipal reformers.

In the meantime, the 1913 draft of the Taylor plan met with resistance on a number of fronts and was revised accordingly. This is evident in the City Transit Department's annual reports of 1914, 1915 and 1916.<sup>1</sup> First, the plan met with resistance from a number of local interest groups which were formed in the wards on the boundaries of the old city. These groups objected to the plan because it proposed lines which ran through their wards but did not stop in them. Residents of the affluent districts of Chestnut Hill and Germantown on the extreme periphery of the city and people in the northeastern wards also objected to the Taylor plan because it proposed high-speed lines which did not extend directly into their respective areas.<sup>2</sup>

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1). See Department of City Transit, W.S. Twining, Director, Annual Report, 1916 (Phila., n.p., 1916), pp.23-8.

2). Ibid.

To safeguard the councils passage of the proposed transit system, Taylor altered his scheme to appease local sources of opposition. The North Broad Street line, for example, was altered to include a four-track subway to Pike Street with an elevated branch to Northeast Boulevard and a subway-elevated branch to Germantown. Similarly, to mollify opposition in the northeast, the proposed Frankford Line was extended further north to Rhawn Street. The system was also modified to assuage representatives from the wards through which railway lines passed but did not stop, by supplementing two-track express lines with additional tracks so that they could operate a local service as well as an express, through service.<sup>1</sup>

The Taylor plan also met with stiff resistance from the PRT when the city attempted to negotiate a deal with the company for the construction of the Frankford and Darby lines and for the operation of the entire high-speed system. The company opposed the plan for several reasons. First, the PRT objected because it claimed that the cost of constructing the two high-speed lines coupled with the company's already high fixed costs could not be met with the proposed five-cent fare.<sup>2</sup> Second, the PRT claimed that it simply could not reach any sort of agreement with its underlier, the UTC, since the UTC stockholders refused to approve any agreement which threatened to interfere with the dividends currently being paid to them by the PRT.<sup>3</sup> Finally, both the UTC and the PRT were concerned

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1). Ibid. Also see Map 6.1, page 349.

2). Department of City Transit, W.S. Twining, Director, Report on the Proposal, pp.28-9.

3). T.E. Mitten, PRT Annual Stockholders Report, 1914, p.10.

that the city was offering no guarantee against the possibility that the PRT's lines would suffer from competition with the city-owned high-speed system.<sup>1</sup>

Revisions of the Taylor plan reflect the city's difficulties in reaching agreement with the PRT over the construction and operation of the new system. The 1915 version of the plan, for example, called on the city to build the Darby and Frankford lines as well as the two lines along Broad Street. It also offered a number of incentives to induce the PRT to come to agreement with the city as lessee/operator of the city-owned lines. These included a guarantee to protect the company's earnings against loss occasioned by competition with the city-owned system. The company was also offered preferential payment to protect it against loss from the diversion of traffic to the city-owned lines. Furthermore, the city promised to relieve the company of some of its obligations to the city which had been spelled out in the contract of 1907. For example, the revised plan provided that the company defer until 1921 its annual payments to the city for street paving and the sinking-fund. Thereafter the company was to resume payment beginning at \$100,000 per year in 1921 and increasing progressively at a rate of \$100,000 per year up to its total liability under the 1907 contract. The 1915 plan also contained one or two disincentives to the company's failing to reach agreement with the city. It recommended, for example, that construction begin on all four lines without delay in order to demonstrate to the PRT the city's serious

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1). Department of City Transit, W.S. Twining Director, Report on the Proposal, p.13-4.

intentions and threaten the company with competition. It also threatened the company by stating that the city was prepared to operate the system itself or in conjunction with another lessee.<sup>1</sup>

These manifold alterations to the original Taylor plan had a dramatic effect on the projected costs and benefits to the city of the municipally-owned transit system. The estimated cost of the 1915 proposal was \$63,500,000 to the city (compared with \$34,682,000 in the 1913 plan) and an additional \$15,206,000 to the lessee (compared with \$22,896,000). In 1915, Taylor calculated that by 1930 the city would show a \$21,283,700 deficit (compared with the \$5,000,000 surplus that was projected in 1913) and that the maximum annual deficit that the city would incur between the inauguration of the works and 1930 was \$2,655,200 (compared with \$1,280,100 as calculated in 1913). The inflated cost of the 1915 proposal over the 1913 proposal was largely due to the city's commitment to build all four high-speed lines. The revised estimate was also inflated by construction costs which rose rapidly from 1914, and by Taylor's unyielding commitment to the five-cent fare.<sup>2</sup>

The revised Taylor plan also proved acceptable to its opponents and the city councils approved it in 1915. The politically besieged Blankenburg administration, however, was unable to procure from the councils the legislation necessary to begin work on the system. In November, the reformers were swept from municipal office when Thomas B. Smith won the mayoral election of 1915 in a landslide victory for the machine. In the aftermath of

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1). Department of City Transit, W.S. Twining, Director, Annual Report, 1916, pp.23-8.

2). Ibid., pp.23-8, 37.

the election, A. Merritt Taylor fell subject to the usual political misfortune that accompanied changes in the party in power. He was replaced by machine appointee William S. Twining who then took charge of the implementation of the Taylor plan.

In the Progressive period, then, changes in the urban social structure increased the demand for transportation. When that demand was not met by the private sector, the issue of municipal involvement in the traction industry was placed high on the political agenda. In this respect, the context in which different urban groups competed to influence municipal government during the Progressive era was shaped in part by structural changes in the city. This was evident throughout the period. In 1901, Matt Quay took advantage of the increasing demand for transportation in the city to launch one of the biggest franchise scandals in the city's history. The scandal had a devastating impact on the industry's finances. It also added fuel to growing reform sentiment in the city which reached a climactic moment in the reform movement of 1905-6.<sup>1</sup> Structurally determined demand for more and better transportation also fueled the reform movement of 1911 in which the Keystone party succeeded in electing Rudolph Blankenburg to the highest office in the city. Ironically, Blankenburg's inability to start work on a municipally-owned high-speed transit system was in part responsible for the reform movement's demise.

Public policy-making with respect to urban transit, however, did not only reflect changes in the urban social structure. It also

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1). See Chapter 5, pp.314-18.

reflected how the organization and conduct of municipal government shaped the decision-making process and ultimately the way in which public policies were planned and then implemented in the city. This was evident in the franchise steal of 1901. Initially part of an attempt to build up the Quay organization in Philadelphia, the franchise steal compounded severe financial problems which already existed in the traction industry. This had two principal affects on the ultimate course of the municipality's traction policy. First, it accelerated the decline in the transit service offered by the PRT thereby placing the transit issue higher up on the political agenda. Second, the legacy of financial mismanagement of the PRT imposed severe constraints on the PRT's willingness to enter into negotiations with the city over the construction and operation of a semi-public transit system after 1912.

Nowhere is there a better example of how public policy-making was affected by the structure and conduct of government than the evolution of the Taylor plan. The development of a municipally-owned high-speed transit system was driven ahead in part by the dynamic of party competition. Within months of his taking office, Blankenburg found that his administration was impotent because of the machine's support on the city councils and in the state legislature. The development of the Taylor plan was therefore imperative if his administration was to save face and to maintain electoral support for reform in the city. Others have noted that A. Merritt Taylor's dynamic character and his determination to establish a municipal department which was entirely dependent upon his engineering expertise and that of his professional colleagues,

was largely responsible for the development and eventual adoption of the city's transit policy.<sup>1</sup> For both these reasons, the Taylor plan was pushed through the councils where it was altered and amended to make it generally acceptable to different local interests and to the PRT. As result, each draft of the Taylor plan extended both the city's role in municipal transportation in relation to the PRT and its share of the cost.

The structure and conduct of city government also affected how the costs and benefits of the city's traction policy were distributed to different urban groups. The benefits from the city's increasing involvement in transportation were distributed far more widely than Wiebe, Weinstein and Hays might suggest. The city's economic and social elites, in other words, were neither the sole nor the primary beneficiaries of public transportation policy. In 1901, for example, the franchise steal benefited Quay's political organization and perhaps the stockholders in the UTC whose dividends were guaranteed by the newly established PRT. The consumers of the PRT's service, including the affluent suburban residents and the industrialists who were most in need of better urban transit, lost from the franchise steal which adversely affected the PRT's finances and ultimately its service in the city.

The contract of 1907 and the development and eventual implementation of the Taylor plan after 1912 distributed their benefits far more widely than the 1901 franchise steal. First and foremost, the contract and the Taylor plan benefited the PRT and the

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1). C.W. Cheape, *op.cit.*, this is the theme of Cheape's analysis of the history of urban traction generally. See the section on Philadelphia, especially pp.198-211.

subscribers to its \$30,000,000 share issue. In 1907, the company was rescued from certain financial collapse and by 1915, the city had agreed to secure the company's profitability in return for its operation of the municipally-owned high-speed transit system. The contract of 1907 and the Taylor plan also benefited the Republican machine which controlled the distribution of contracts for work on the municipally-owned transit system. Professional politicians also benefited from the transit policy since they could use their machine affiliations to profit from property developments which traction extensions inevitably promoted. Center-city businessmen and industrialists because they were promised improved transportations for workers and shoppers, and suburban residents because they received promises of better transportation at no extra cost to the consumer, also benefited from the city's contract with the PRT and from the Taylor plan.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, the costs of the city's involvement in the traction industry were as widespread as the benefits making it virtually impossible to determine exactly who the winners and losers were in the development of municipal transportation policy. Self-interested political activity was chronic throughout the development of the city's traction policy. As a result, the city was forced to bear an ever greater portion of the cost of transportation. The 1901 franchise steal, for example, compounded the PRT's financial problems and limited the extent to which the company could respond to the city's need for transportation. As a result, city government was inevitably forced to take on a greater role in

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1). Ibid., pp.198-203.

the provision of transportation. Similarly, self-interest in the development of the Taylor plan increased the cost to the city of the proposed high-speed system. This is obvious on Graphs 5.1 and 5.4 (pages 282 and 287) which show respectively the massive increases in total municipal expenditures and total municipal debt that were largely caused by the implementation of the Taylor plan. Inevitably, of course, the financial burden for the city's transportation policy was shifted onto the taxpayers' shoulders in the tax increase of 1909 and in the three successive tax hikes which nearly tripled the city's tax rate between 1915 and 1920.<sup>1</sup> In the case of municipal transit, then, the structure of municipal government and the self-interested activity of political actors which at one level seems to have distributed the benefits of public policy rather widely, at another level failed to minimize the cost of such policy to the entire community.

### iii

#### The City and the Utilities: The Gas Works

The history of the city's gas works during this period, like that of the traction industry, exemplifies how changes in the urban social structure affected the organization and practice of politics by determining fundamental changes in the city's provision of an essential public utility. In turn, party politics influenced exactly how and when the city undertook its commitment to this essential utility, and how the benefits of municipal public policies were distributed to different urban groups.

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1). Tax rates rose from \$1.00 per \$100 to \$2.85 per \$100. See The Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, (1916), p.13, (1917), p.12 and (1920), p.12.

The gas works, like the traction industry, were increasingly subjected to the influence of party competition in the second half of the nineteenth century. Provisions in the Consolidation Act protected the administration of the works from becoming divided along party lines by vesting their control in a board of trustees which was independent of the municipal corporation. The board consisted of 12 trustees appointed by the city councils and was to remain in control of the gas works until the city's original loans were paid off.

Ironically, by making the administration of the gas works independent of the city councils' direct control, the framers of the Consolidation Act made the gas board a highly sought after political prize. This is precisely because the gas board acted independently of the city councils in spending public revenue. Indeed, the gas board was a rich source of political patronage. The trustees received no salary but they shared the 1,800 appointments and the \$2,000,000 worth of annual contracts in an industry which paid nearly \$4,000,000 per year in wages to more than 5,500 people.<sup>1</sup> For as long as both the Republican and the Democratic parties were more or less equally represented on the councils the power of the gas trustees was naturally curtailed by the partisanship of the members of the board. When the Republicans managed to consolidate their undisputed control over the councils in the 1860s, however, the operating costs of the works began to soar as its board could operate without interference from an effective political opposition.<sup>2</sup>

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1). John D. Stewart, 'Philadelphia Politics', p.00.

2). Howard F. Gillette, Jr., 'Corrupt and Contented', p.49.

By the late 1860s, a local Republican faction under the leadership of James McManes had developed effective control over the gas board. The so-called 'gas ring' built up its local political organization during the 1870s by playing one side off against the other in the intense political competition between the Quay/Cameron and the Stokely factions respectively. McManes' political fortunes changed, however, in the 1880s as the board approached its final payment on the city's original gas loan and the future administration of the works became a highly contested issue in local government. When the gas loan was finally paid off, McManes' gas ring found itself isolated from the Cameron/Quay faction which was in power in state government. It could not, therefore, prevent the works from being returned to the control of the city councils where the Cameron/Quay faction's influence was strongest.<sup>1</sup>

When the city regained control of the gas works in 1887, it acquired a plant which was in need of updating because the gas ring had squeezed enormous profits from the works and invested little in their improvement.<sup>2</sup> Despite their condition, the gas works benefited the city financially; at least initially.<sup>3</sup> Soon, however, party factionalism in local government made the administration of the gas works something of a political football as factions used gas works policy to build up their political organizations and to

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1). The political wrangling over the gas works, Quay's rise to power in state and local government, and his temporary demise in the mid-1880s were the events which prompted George E. Vickers, and Allinson and Penrose to write The Fall of Bossism: History of the Reform Movement in Philadelphia (Phila., Bryson, 1883) and The City Government of Philadelphia respectively.

2). D.W. Disbrow, 'The Progressive Movement in Philadelphia', pp.8-9.

3). Charles A. Howland, Philadelphia's Gas Problem, p.24.

humiliate and discredit their opposition. This was particularly evident in the struggle between the Quay/Penrose faction and the Martin/Wanamaker combine. With the run up to the 1894 Philadelphia mayoral contest in which Boies Penrose was staked against combine candidate Charles Warwick, factionalism began to seriously affect the performance of the gas works and their financial benefit to the city.

In January 1894, shortly after Warwick had beaten Penrose at the polls in the Republican mayoral primaries, the councils reduced the price of gas from \$1.50 per 1,000 cubic feet to \$1.00 per 1,000 cubic feet.<sup>1</sup> Warwick claimed triumphantly that such a reduction exemplified how citizens benefited from the public ownership of utilities. Despite appearances, however, evidence suggests that Warwick supported the price reductions only after their passage was inevitable. The Wanamaker/Martin combine did not need to increase its popularity in the city by reducing the price of gas. Warwick had already defeated Penrose in the Republican primaries. He was therefore assured of winning the mayoral contest in a city which had been solidly Republican since the Civil War. It is more likely, then, that a reduction in the price of gas was promoted by the Quay faction on the councils as a response to Penrose's defeat. By securing a lower price for gas, the Quay organization effectively decreased the operating revenues that would be available to the Warwick administration before Warwick ever took office.<sup>2</sup> The price

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1). PMAM, Edwin Fittler, 1893, p.154.

2). Graph 5.5, page 289, shows the effects that reducing the price of gas had on the municipal administration's income.

reduction had the added benefit of making the Quay/Penrose faction appear to be concerned with the city's business-like operation of necessary utilities and so won it some support from reform groups in the city.<sup>1</sup> Warwick's public acclaim for the price reductions was only an attempt to make political capital out of hostile and damaging legislation.

The reduction in the price of gas is only one example of how factional competition affected the city's gas policy. In fact, the lease of the gas works to the UGI in 1897 was also partly the result of party factionalism. The Warwick administration suffered repeatedly from politically motivated legislation.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, it was continually hard-pressed for money, and forced to use gas receipts to finance the city's day-to-day operating expenses. By syphoning gas revenues into the municipal departments, the Warwick administration only added to the deterioration of the gas plant.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, because of the plant's declining efficiency, the city was unable to meet its total requirement for gas and forced to buy a considerable quantity from private suppliers.<sup>4</sup>

The city's policy of purchasing gas encouraged the growth of a number of private gas supply companies, most notably the UGI. By 1896, the UGI had established itself as the major gas supplier in

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1). Third Annual Report of the CMA of Philadelphia (Phila., 1889), pp.18-21.

2). See Chapter 5, pp.280-8.

3). Communication; CMA to the Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee of Finance and Gas of Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, October 1, 1897 (Phila., np., 1897), pp.5-7, and Charles A. Howland, Philadelphia's Gas Problem, p.24.

4). Ninth Annual Report of the CMA of Philadelphia (Phila., 1895), pp.14-15.

the city and was both able and willing to assume further control over the gas industry in Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> The company's opportunity for expansion came in 1896 when Mayor Warwick whose administration was near its borrowing limit, behind in its payments due on the city's debt, and running at an annual cash deficit, asked that bids be submitted for the lease of the city's gas works.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of the administration's handling of the gas works lease, the city's neglect of the gas plant, the cost of private gas to the consumer and the estimated cost to the city of rehabilitating the plant all became political issues. This had the affect of arousing reform sentiment in the city which had already been stirred up by the Penrose-sponsored state investigating commission of 1896.<sup>3</sup> The CMA and the Municipal League, for example, publicly opposed the gas lease; but opposition was fruitless. The lease of the gas works was widely accepted in the city as the only means of keeping the price of gas down. In fact, even the CMA and the Municipal League did not so much question the financial sense of leasing the gas works. Instead, their discussion of the issue was framed in terms of a wider debate about the viability of the public ownership and control of necessary municipal utilities and so focused on the question of whether or not the city, in its operation of the works since 1887, had lost or made money.<sup>4</sup>

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1). Charles A. Howland, op. cit., pp.12-13, 42-3.

2). See Chapter 5, pp.280-1 for discussion of the Warwick administration's financial plight and 'Notes on Municipal Government: Philadelphia', Annals, 10(1897), pp.472-6.

3). See Chapter 5, pp.279-80.

4). See for example, Communication; CMA to the Sub Committee of the Joint Committee on Finance and Gas, p.3.

In 1897, the gas works were leased to the UGI which promised to spend at least \$5,000,000 over the first three years to improve and extend the plant, and at least \$15,000,000 for improvements over the first 30 years. Upon termination of the lease, all of the property of the gas works under the control of the UGI's holding company, the Equitable Illuminating Gas Light Co of Philadelphia, was to be turned over to the city without cost. If after ten years, the city councils were dissatisfied with the company's performance in supplying the municipality with gas, then the works could be returned to the city for the cost of the company's improvements plus 6% interest. For the duration of its tenure over the works the UGI was to pay the city \$10,000 a year to meet the expenses of the city's board of gas and to freely supply service and gas to public lamps.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the city reserved the right to pass legislation to decrease the price of gas. According to the lease, however, a reduction in the price of gas would result in an equivalent deduction in the amount of free gas that the UGI provided to the city.<sup>2</sup>

Because the gas lease was politically motivated, its benefits to the municipal corporation were rather limited. Between 1890 and 1896 inclusive, the gas works returned revenues to the city amounting to \$4,400,000 per year. Subtracting from that sum \$600,000 per year which was the average annual expenditure for private gas, the value of the gas works to the city may be calculated as

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- 1). J.C. Dickerman, Philadelphia's Utility Problem, pp.7-9.
- 2). Milo Maltbie, et. al. Report of the Gas Commission, p.18.

\$3,800,000 a year.<sup>1</sup> Under private operation from 1897 to 1907, the total value of the works to the city was substantially less, approximately \$2,300,000 a year.<sup>2</sup> The lease was even less beneficial to the city than it could have been since, under Quay's control, the Ashbridge administration was not vigorous in its enforcement of the terms of the lease. In 1899, the company had only paid the city \$188,000 of the \$300,000 owed on its acquired personal property. Nevertheless, the city solicitor made no effort to obtain the remainder.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the city had lost most of its control over the administration of the company. It was therefore extremely difficult for the city to obtain reliable information on whether or not the company was complying with the lease by investing in improvements and extensions or neglecting its responsibility and entering operating expenses into the improvements account of the company's ledger.<sup>4</sup>

The UGI, on the other hand, benefited from the lease, at least according to the Municipal League, which publicized the company's report on the profitability of its first two years in control over the gas works.<sup>5</sup> The UGI, however, was not in accord with the Municipal League's claims and, by 1903, was hoping to renegotiate its lease with the city on more favorable terms. In its preparation for the 10-year review of the lease, the UGI claimed

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1). This calculation is made from the Department of the City Controller, Annual Report, 1890 to 1896 inclusive.

2). Ibid., and PMAM, John Reyburn, 1907, pp.xii-xiii.

3). Thirteenth Report of the CMA of Philadelphia (Phila., 1899), p.2.

4). PMAM, John Weaver, 1906, p.xxix.

5). Annual Report to the Board of Managers of the Municipal League of Philadelphia, 1898-1899, pp.8-19.

that it had spent 40% more than originally expected on improvements, and therefore requested that it be relieved of some of its obligations to the city.<sup>1</sup> The company's opportunity to renegotiate its lease on more favorable terms came in the wake of Ashbridge's machine-building program. Spearheaded by the water-works improvements, this exhausted the city's resources and forced the Weaver administration to seek additional sources of income.<sup>2</sup>

In 1905, the UGI offered the city \$25,000,000 for a 75-year lease in lieu of its payments to the city which, in 1904, had cost the company \$655,000. Reformers attacked the company's proposal claiming that \$25,000,000 was only half of what the city would get in annual returns from the UGI under the terms of the present lease if the city's 1904 earnings were projected over the 75 years of the proposed lease.<sup>3</sup> There were, however, a number of limitations on the extent to which reformers could press their claims against the UGI's proposed lease. First, the provision in the 1897 lease for a 10-year trial period induced the company to invest enough money in the works so as to make it extremely expensive for the city to reclaim the works by meeting the company's costs plus 6%. The company was successful in this since, in 1905, the cost to the city of resuming the gas works was prohibitive. According to the UGI, the city would have to pay the company \$14,400,000 for improvements

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1). R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', 34(1905), pp.28-9.

2). See chapter 5 for a discussion of the Weaver administration's financial problems. Also see I.F. Marcossan, 'The Awakening of Philadelphia', p.6649.

3). Lloyd M. Abernathy, 'Insurgency in Philadelphia', p.9

and for the stock of gas and materials currently on hand and an additional \$5,000,000 of accumulated interest on the company's investment.<sup>1</sup> Resuming the works was, therefore a financial impossibility for the city corporation.

Second, the UGI was, in 1897, a publicly held company with 50,000 stockholders the majority of whom lived in the city of Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup> During the reform movement of 1905, the price of UGI stock fell, thereby hindering the reform movement from pressing its claims on the company. In fact, Weaver claimed that he and John Winston, the chairman of the Committee of 70, were forced to go to New York to obtain legal council for their struggle with the company since leading members of Philadelphia bar many of whom were affiliated with the Committee of 70 - refused to prosecute the city's case claiming that they had a conflict of interests.<sup>3</sup>

The reformers' opposition to the UGI's proposed lease renewal was therefore extremely weak in 1905. It was even weaker in 1907 when the city's treasury was all but exhausted after two years of intense competition between the reformers and the Quay organization. Owing to the city's weakened financial position, the UGI was capable of renegotiating its lease under Mayor Reyburn in 1907.<sup>4</sup> The terms of the new lease alleviated the UGI of having to make some its payments to the city but did not extend the lease beyond its initial

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1). Communication; CMA to the Sub-Committee on Finance and Gas, p.16.

2). Ibid., p.4.

3). 'The Uprising in Philadelphia', The Independent, 58(June, 1905), p.1260, and I.F. Marcossou, op.cit., p.6649.

4). R.F. Donagher, 'The Urban Bull Moose', p.39; W.S. Vare, My Forty Years in Politics, pp.2-4.

30-year period. They also provided the city with an immediate cash bonus which enabled Reyburn to introduce his comprehensive plans for municipal improvements.

The gas works were particularly profitable to the UGI after it renewed their lease with the city in 1907. The lease removed any incentive for the company to invest in the gas works. The works, afterall, were to be freely returned to the city in 1927 whether the UGI improved them substantially or not. Moreover, any investment that the UGI made in the gas plant had to be amortized over increasingly shorter periods of time. Unsurprisingly, then, after 1907 the UGI preferred profit over improvement in its operation of the city's gas works. This policy was extremely successful as the company earned approximately \$23,600,000 between 1897 and 1921; most of that in the period after 1907.<sup>1</sup> By 1916, however, the company's unwillingness to invest in the gas works seriously threatened the works' ability to meet the growing demand for gas in the city. At the end of the Progressive period, then, it was almost inevitable that the city government would, in 1927, once again resume control over a gas plant which had been squeezed for enormous profit and left in need of complete updating.

Improvements in the gas works, like the extension of the traction industry, then, were made necessary by the changing structure of urban society, most notably by population growth and by suburban development. These changes required investments in municipal utilities and so defined in part the parameters within

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1). M.R. Maltbie, op.cit., p.99, 104.

which urban groups and party factions competed in municipal government. In 1897, for example, the Quay organization capitalized on the gas issue to consolidate its hold over municipal government. In 1905, it was reformers who took advantage of the gas issue to obtain a foothold in municipal government.

Municipal gas policy was not, however, simply a reflection of changes in the urban social structure which required improvements in municipal works and services. Gas policy, in fact, was largely shaped by the structure and conduct of municipal government, particularly by the chronic competition between the Quay machine and reform coalitions. Political competition so frequently affected the city's finances that the UGI was able on at least two occasions, in 1897 and in 1907, to take advantage of municipal financial stress to negotiate extremely valuable concessions from the city in its lease of the gas works.

The structure of decision-making in city government not only shaped the way in which the city responded to the growing demand for gas, it also mediated the distribution of benefits from public policies relating to the provision of gas. Such benefits were much less widely distributed in the case of the gas works than in the case of municipal transportation. Obviously, the UGI and its stockholders benefited enormously by taking advantage of chronic party competition and its adverse effects on municipal finances. The Quay machine, too, seemed to benefit from the political contests that emerged around the gas issue. It managed to build up its political organization in 1897 and again in 1907 with the contributions that the UGI made to the city coffers while they were

under the control of machine administrations. Much as the structure and conduct of government tended to bias the distribution of benefits from the development of the gas works, it did not seem to bias the distribution of costs. Indeed, during the period, the fragmented organization of government and the party competition that it seemed to foster combined with the narrow self-interests of urban political actors to prevent the municipal corporation from securing an equitable arrangement for the operation of its gas works; an arrangement which would meet the city's immediate gas needs while continually updating and improving the gas plant. Ultimately, of course, it was the city taxpayer and the consumer of gas that were most affected by the shortcomings of municipal government since they had to bear the cost of refurbishing the gas works in 1887 and again in 1927 when the works were returned to the city in a dilapidated and obsolete condition.

iv

The City and the Water Works

So far the chapter has examined those municipal utilities which were operated wholly by private companies. It must therefore be asked whether the influence on public policy so far identified simply reflected the influence of private utility companies on city politics. In the next two sections, utilities which were provided almost entirely by the public sector will be examined.

The water works were under public control from their construction in the early nineteenth century. Their development in the Progressive period is nonetheless similar to that of

developments in the privately run utilities such as transit and gas insofar as their extension was necessitated by changes in the urban social structure and so affected the context in which parties and party factions competed in municipal government. In turn, the structure of the urban polity, especially the balance of party competition, influenced the formulation and implementation of municipal public policies and the way that the costs and benefits of such policies were distributed to different urban groups and party factions.

From the 1870s, the need to improve the water works and provide more and better water for the city was recognized by a number of water works engineers. By 1891, four basic schemes had been developed and committees appointed by the councils to report on their feasibility, but with no result.<sup>1</sup> The first called for the filtration of the Schuylkill river water met. It with vigorous objections from industrialists whose firms were located along the river, and who would therefore be saddled with pollution-control measures if the plans were adopted.<sup>2</sup> A second scheme which proposed to substitute the cleaner Delaware River for the Schuylkill as the city's primary water source, and a third scheme which called for the use of water from a distant mountain stream were rejected as being too costly.<sup>3</sup> Finally, a scheme to reduce the need for improving the water system by conserving water-use through the introduction of meters met with strenuous objections from both private and business consumers.<sup>4</sup>

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1). Rudolph Hering, et. al., Report...on the Extension and Improvement of the Water Supply, pp.38-40.

2). J.W. Follin, The Water Supply Problem of Philadelphia, p.49.

3). R. Hering, et. al., op. cit., pp.41-4.

4). J.C. Trautwine, Jr., 'A Glance at the Water Supply of Philadelphia', New England Water Works Association Journal, 22(1908), pp.419-41.

In 1892, a drought worsened the serious water problem forcing the councils to appropriate money to water-works improvement projects in a patchwork fashion, providing especially for more reservoirs and pumps particularly in suburban areas with growing residential settlements.<sup>1</sup> More comprehensive water-works improvements were prevented through intense party factionalism. This was particularly evident after 1894 when Charles Warwick became mayor of Philadelphia and tried to step up the pace of water-works improvements in part in a bid to build up the Wanamaker/Martin combine.<sup>2</sup>

As we have already seen on pages 280-1, Warwick's administration operated under severe financial constraints from the outset owing to opposition from the Quay faction on the city councils. This had a powerful affect over his water-works policy as Warwick was forced to economize wherever possible. His administration therefore opted to support the less expensive plan to improve the existing system by filtering Schuylkill River water over the plan to make the system reliant on the Delaware River.<sup>3</sup> This choice had the consequence of stirring up opposition from industrialists in the northwest of the city who depended upon Schuylkill River for use in production.<sup>4</sup> Some members of the Quay faction on the city councils took advantage of industrialists' opposition to Warwick's water-works plan and joined with local industrialists to form the Schuylkill Valley Water

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1). PMAM, Stuart, 1891, pp. xii-xiii and 1892 p. viii.

2). C.R. Woodruff, 'Philadelphia's Water: A Story of Municipal Procrastination', Forum, 28(1900), pp.311-2, and PMAM, Charles Warwick, 1898, pp. xviii-xx.

3). PMAM, Charles Warwick, 1895, p.xx, and 1896, p.xvii.

4). John C. Trautwine, Jr., op. cit., p.423.

Company. In 1898, the company attempted to lease or purchase the works from the city and probably would have been successful had it not been exposed by combine supporters for bribing city councilmen.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, by 1898, the Warwick administration's financial crisis had been alleviated to some extent by the lease of the gas works to the UGI.<sup>2</sup> The lease or sale of the water works was therefore less of a financial necessity than it might otherwise have been.

Unsurprisingly, when the Quay faction finally consolidated its hold over municipal government with the election of Samuel Ashbridge as mayor in 1899, a comprehensive plan for water-works improvements was launched. In that year, Mayor Ashbridge removed Warwick appointees on the city's Bureau of Water and appointed a commission of engineers to study the several water-works projects that had been submitted in the past and come up with a viable improvement scheme. When the commission submitted its report, the Ashbridge administration decided to reverse Warwick's policy of developing the Schuylkill facilities in favor of the proposal to use the Delaware River as the city's primary water source.<sup>3</sup> Under the plan, the

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1). PMAM, Charles Warwick, 1897, pp.vi-x, and 1898, pp.viii-xiii; Recommendation to Voters...City Elections, Tuesday, February 19, 1907 by the Committee of Seventy (Phila., Committee of Seventy, 1907), pp.4-5; C.R. Woodruff, 'Philadelphia's Water', pp.308-10; John C. Trautwine, Jr., op. cit., p.431. The Schuylkill Valley Water Company was only one of many such companies which bid for the water works in 1897 taking advantage of the UGI's success in obtaining the gas works. As many as six companies submitted bids to the councils in a single month (C.R. Woodruff, 'Philadelphia's Water', pp. 308-10).

2). See chapter 5, p.290.

3). R. Hering, et. al., op. cit., is the report upon which Ashbridge acted. Also see John C. Trautwine, Jr., op. cit., pp.434-5; and I.F. Marcossou, op.cit., pp.6640-47.

city would depend on the Schuylkill River for only one-third of its total water needs. This meant developing extensive facilities along the Delaware as the Schuylkill in 1899 was providing the city with 90% of its water.

Ashbridge's adoption of the Delaware project mollified industrialists. It agitated pro-Wanamaker Republicans, however, as they charged that Ashbridge had chosen the Delaware plan because its greater cost to the city provided Quay with more opportunity to build up his political organization.<sup>1</sup> Political considerations undoubtedly influenced Ashbridge's decision.<sup>2</sup> But Ashbridge could find plenty of justification for his water-works policy in the commission's report which found, for example, that the Schuylkill River was becoming increasingly polluted from industrial wastes and that its draft was too low, especially in summer months, to meet the city's water needs.<sup>3</sup>

The water-works improvements went ahead from 1900 and did not re-emerge as a political issue until the reform movement of 1905-6. When Weaver made his pre-emptive strike against the machine and removed the heads of the Departments of Public Works and Public Health and Safety, the Chief of the Bureau of Water, John W. Hill,

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1). Ashbridge removed from office the Warwick appointees who were responsible for drawing up the plans for the new water works, PMAM, S. Ashbridge, 1899, pp.xv-xvii. When reformers began to gain political strength under Weaver in 1905, the allegedly corrupt management of the water works became a contested issue.

2). R. Blankenburg, 'Forty Years in the Wilderness', 33(1905), pp.577-80; I.F. Marcossan, op.cit., pp.6646-7.

3). R. Hering, et. al., op. cit., pp.41-4.

immediately resigned. Hill was replaced by George S. Webster, who curious as to the reason for Hill's sudden departure from municipal office, conducted an investigation into the affairs of the Bureau of Water. Webster soon discovered that Hill had acted together with the removed Director of the Department of Public Works, Peter Costello and other organization leaders in the city, to defraud the city of \$6,000,000 worth of water-works contracts.<sup>1</sup> When Webster's discovery was publicized, the machine immediately moved to disarm the reformers in the Bureau of Water by having the councils refuse to appropriate money to continue water-works improvements.<sup>2</sup> Webster responded to the machine's interference by attempting to annul several outstanding contracts for work already underway on the system on the grounds that they had not been fulfilled to their specifications.

This tit-for-tat exchange had two immediate affects on the course of water-works developments in the city. First, it provoked a counter-attack by the machine which called upon the the state legislature to appoint a committee to investigate the problem of pollution in Philadelphia. Eventually, the committee recommended that the state legislature insist that Philadelphia's filtration works be completed immediately.<sup>3</sup> Second, the cessation of water-works improvements made the Weaver administration appear impotent and cost it some of its electoral support. In the mayoral election

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1). PMAM, John Weaver, 1905, xxi.

2). PMAM, John Weaver, 1906, Lx-Lxi.

3). 'Reform Work in Philadelphia', The Independent, 59(Aug., 10, 1905), p.33.

in February 1907, John Reyburn, the machine's candidate, was elected by a substantial margin.

Reyburn, of course, inherited the financial problems that had resulted from the struggle between Weaver and the machine. As has already been shown, the UGI took advantage of the poor condition of municipal finances to renegotiate its lease of the gas works.<sup>1</sup> It should not be a surprise, then, to learn that in 1907 a number of water supply companies were formed to try to do the same with the city's water works. One such company launched a campaign to inform the public that the increases in property assessment of 1903-4 and those currently being considered by Reyburn would be unnecessary if the city's water works were operated privately.<sup>2</sup> The company was unsuccessful in its bid for the water works but its attempt placed the water-works issue on the political agenda as the Reyburn administration came under attack by reformers over the gross amount of money that the city had spent for filtration.<sup>3</sup>

Fred C. Dunlap, Reyburn's chief of the Bureau of Water, also inadvertently helped to politicize the water works issue by his nearly annual complaints that the Reyburn administration did not furnish his Bureau with sufficient funds to keep the works in good repair and hence to keep up with the demand for water. Moreover, Dunlap re-opened the case for water metering by claiming that water wastage was putting the existing plant under a severe strain. The Keystone party adopted the water-metering issue in the mayoral

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1). See pp.362-4 in this chapter.

2). Municipal Improvement Company, N. Goodchild, Pres., Taxes and Their Meaning (Phila., np., 1909), pp.13-19.

3). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1909, pp.Li-Lxiii.

campaign of 1911 and promised that if elected it would conduct a campaign against water wastage. When Mayor Blankenburg took office in 1912, he helped the Bureau of Water, still under Fred Dunlap, to launch a city-wide anti-waste campaign.

Blankenburg's campaign to meter water met with stiff resistance from industrialists and from private consumers who feared that such a policy would result in significant increases in their water bills.<sup>1</sup> It therefore only diminished support for the reform administration which subsequently shelved its plans to introduce water meters. Indeed, water-metering measures were not adopted until 1918 when the Bureau of Water claimed that they were the cheapest way for the city to postpone another major and costly refurbishing of its water-works plant.<sup>2</sup>

Changes in the urban social structure influenced Philadelphia politics during the Progressive era insofar as they necessitated the extension of water works and so placed the water-works issue high on the political agenda. In fact, during the period, the success or failure of different political factions was determined in part by their ability to meet the demand for water and other necessary utilities. The Quay machine, for example, was able to manipulate the water works issue to help consolidate its political power in the city. In 1897, the Quay faction took advantage of imperative water-works improvements to build its political support especially among suburban residents who were most severely affected by the city's

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1). PMAM, John Weaver, 1904, pp.xxxvi-xxxvii; also see the Bureau of Water, A Great Industrial Plant and its Owners, (Phila., n.p., 1912), pp.10-17

2). J. W. Follin, 'The Water Supply Problem', p.31.

inadequate water supply. The Quay faction also benefited from the water-works improvements project that was launched under machine mayor, Samuel Ashbridge. Party factions were not always successful in turning necessary public policies to their advantage. This was obvious in 1905-6 when Weaver's reform administration collapsed in part because it was seen as being incapable of going ahead with the water-works improvements that had been inaugurated under Ashbridge.

The analysis of water-works developments has also shown how the structure and conduct of city government shaped public policies and hence the urban polity's response to fundamental changes in the urban social structure. This was as true for those utilities that were operated by private companies as it was for utilities such as water that were under complete municipal control. Water-works policies during the period were particularly influenced by party factionalism which limited the financial resources available to municipal administrations such as Warwick's which was forced to adopt the cheaper water-works policy of filtering Schuylkill River water. When party factionalism was less intense, as under the Ashbridge administration, water-works policy was affected by the dominant factions' attempts to build up its political organization. This explains in part Ashbridge's decision to reject Warwick's plans to filter the Schuylkill River water and to adopt instead a more expensive plan to use the Delaware River as the city's major water source.

Finally, the analysis of water-works developments demonstrates how the structure and conduct of municipal government added to the cost of water-works improvements. Party factionalism

and the manipulation of municipal finance that was associated with it, prolonged the implementation of a comprehensive water-works improvement policy for seven years after 1892 when the need for such improvements was first recognized as being chronic. Unable to implement plans for necessary and extensive water-works improvements, a more costly piecemeal policy of patch and repair was pursued. Party organization building, fraud and graft also undoubtedly added to the cost of the water-works improvements. In fact, when the works were completed under Mayor Blankenburg, their total cost to the city was calculated at \$31,990,000, more than two-and-a-half times the amount of \$12,000,000 that was estimated by the Ashbridge commission in 1899.<sup>1</sup>

v

Public Works and the Pressure on Municipal Spending

During the Progressive period the structure of city government and the dynamic of party and factional competition shaped municipal works policies and affected how the costs and benefits of such policies were distributed. This is particularly evident with respect to the structural influences which forced up the cost to the city of its public works. The dynamic of organization building on the part of the political machine tended to increase municipal spending under machine administrations. Under reform administrations there were different pressures to increase municipal expenditure. There was, for example, pressure on reform administrations to keep up municipal expenditure on public works in order to maintain their electoral support in the city. In fact, once

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1). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1908, p.xL, and 1909, p.xLiii.

in executive offices, reformers found that their campaigns for economy and efficiency in municipal government were neither practical nor politically successful. This was particularly true of the Blankenburg administration which temporarily eliminated graft but could not check the rate of municipal expenditure or maintain its reform coalition.<sup>1</sup>

This does not suggest that political structures and practices explain increased municipal expenditure during the period. Increased expenditure was necessitated by changes in the structure of urban society which placed a great deal of pressure on municipal government to improve and extend existing public works and to develop new municipal services. Governmental structures and practices only determined how necessary expenses were met as they shaped the organization and administration of the city's finances. At least by 1900, these structural influences had so aggravated the cost of necessary municipal expenditure that city government was plunged into a spending spiral. This was first identified by Mayor Reyburn whose comprehensive plans for public works were launched after several years of party and factional competition and machine-building under the Quay and Penrose organization had ravished the city's treasury. To improve the city's financial position and to satisfy the demand for public improvements, Reyburn proposed to invest heavily in large-scale, revenue-generating public works projects. The mayor's program, however, presented a peculiar dilemma. To increase revenue the city had to spend more money on

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2). See Graphs 5.1 and 5.4 on pp.282 and 287.

revenue-generating projects. To spend money on revenue-generating projects the city had to increase its revenue. In 1913, this course of municipal spending became policy when Rudolph Blankenburg and an unusual cotery of councilmen, reformers and capitalists successfully petitioned the state legislature to increase the city's borrowing limit by 3% of the assessed value of all property in the city, nearly \$100,000,000.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the period, the major influence on public-works spending was the rate of suburban development and industrial relocation. As the population of the suburban wards expanded, the municipal government came under increasing pressure to provide peripheral areas with basic works and services. In their crusades to protect the interests of the city and the average citizen from scheming politicians and contractors, suburban reform groups did not hesitate to call for the expansion of municipal services and increased municipal expenditure. In fact, reformers often concerned themselves with municipal necessities including paving, cleaning and lighting. Ironically, reformers' nemesis, politically-interested contractors, flourished by providing these services. During the early 1890s, for example, the CMA demanded that the city provide the developing suburbs with properly paved streets and sidewalks.<sup>2</sup> Other groups such as the Conference of Moral Workers reflected a growing awareness of poverty in the urban core when they insisted that the city pave and resurface the streets and alleys in

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1). See Chapter 5, pp.324-5.

2). Ninth Annual Report of the CMA (Phila., 1895), p.30.

the downtown and in the river wards so that the diseases which flourished there would not infect the rest of the city.<sup>1</sup>

Reformers' insistence on more and better quality services provided politically interested contractors with greater opportunities to monopolize municipal works. The Vulcanite Paving Company, for example, owned in part by State Senator and combine member, Charles Porter, had the greatest success in obtaining municipal contracts at its price because it was one of the few firms using the patented 'Trinidad' asphalt. The words 'Trinidad asphalt' were actually written into paving contracts thereby preserving Vulcanite's monopoly over the business.<sup>2</sup> When Vulcanite's monopoly was broken in 1895 by reformers' legal action, bidding became more competitive, and prices for city contracts fell.<sup>3</sup> By 1899, however, Vulcanite and its two leading competitors had agreed to fix prices to eliminate competition and to increase the price that the city had to pay for its paving work.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, by 1903, street-cleaning firms had co-ordinated their activities in order to keep the price of city contracts high.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, in these instances then, reformers' special and often local interests combined with professional politicians' attempts to build up their organizations to increase municipal expenditure.

Both suburban residential development and industrial migration also placed increased pressure on the city to make greater

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- 1). Harlan B. Phillips, 'A War on Philadelphia's Slums', *passim*.
  - 2). Fourth Annual Report of the CMA (Phila., 1890), pp.8-11 and Fifth Annual Report of the CMA (Phila., 1891), pp.6-7,11,47.
  - 3). PMAM, Charles Warwick, 1897, p.xxiv.
  - 4). Thirteenth Annual Report of the CMA (Phila., 1899), p.3
  - 5). PMAM, John Weaver, 1905, pp.xxviii.

expenditure for municipal services such as roads and bridges which connected the CBD with the peripheral wards, and for other amenities such as parks and streets within the suburban wards themselves. During the 1890s, for example, several bridges were built over the Schuylkill connecting the city with its southwesten, western and northwestern sections, and a parkway was developed to connect the City Hall in the CBD with Fairmount Park and west Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> By 1906, ad hoc expenditures on suburban improvements had resulted in a patchwork of suburban development. In the south, the city planned to widen Broad Street from Oregon Avenue south to League Island making a 'magnificent' approach to the island, to provide a recreation park for South Philadelphia and to provide better access to the Navy Yard.<sup>2</sup> In the southwest, the development of a recreation park along the Pennypack creek was already underway.<sup>3</sup> In the northeast, the Torresdale Boulevard had been proposed to link the northeastern suburbs with the CBD.<sup>4</sup>

These investments in necessary municipal works also provided opportunities for machine-building as professional politicians with business interests in the building and real estate trades together with local traction magnates, amassed enormous fortunes and political followings in developments in the outlying areas of the city.<sup>5</sup> Politicians with real estate along projected roads

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1). The Bureau of Highways, 'Annual Report', PMAM, 1890, p. 267, and PMAM, Stuart, 1892, p.xx and 1893, p.20.

2). PMAM, John Weaver, 1906, p. xxix and PMAM, John Reyburn, 1907, p.xxxiii.

3). Ibid., John Weaver, 1904, p.xvi.

4). Ibid., 1903, pp.xxiv-xxv.

5). PMAM, Edwin Fidler, 1890, p.6.

managed to artificially inflate the prices of their properties which the city had to acquire by condemnation proceedings.<sup>1</sup> The property along the projected Torresdale Boulevard, for example, was purchased in one section by Quay supporter, John M. Mack, and in another section by a combine man, David Martin. The ensuing battle between these two men and their respective Republican factions was resolved by rerouting the Boulevard so that it encroached on both men's properties leaving the twisted line which exists to this day.<sup>2</sup>

In certain instances corrupt practices were reformable. Weaver's administration actually managed to decrease the rate of municipal spending well before his support of the reform coalition alienated the mayor from the organization-dominated city councils.<sup>3</sup> In 1903 and again in 1904, Weaver had the Bureau of Street Cleaning reject all of the bids it received for street-cleaning contracts and a second round of bidding yielded lower rates on both occasions.<sup>4</sup> In 1903, the mayor discovered the monopoly over city paving contracts and for the next two years maintained more competitive bidding which reduced contract prices and hence the city's paving expenditures.<sup>5</sup> Finally, in 1905 Weaver moved to stem mandamus abuses by refusing to sign ordinances which opened up

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1). PMAM, John Weaver, 1903, pp.xxvii-xxix, and 1904, p.x; and 1905, pp.x-xi.

1). Recommendations to Voters...City Elections, Tuesday, February, 19, 1907, p.7.

3). See Graph 5.1, p.282.

4). PMAM, John Weaver, 1903, p.xxxiii, and 1904, pp.xxiv-xxv.

5). Ibid., 1903, pp.xx-xxii, and 1904, p.xxiii.

streets unless property owners had dedicated to the city their property that abutted the proposed works.<sup>1</sup>

Economical approaches to the administration of municipal works, however, could only be short-lived. By 1907, public expenditure on municipal improvements could not be withheld without interfering with suburban growth in which both the machine and reform coalitions had vested political interests. Even Mayor Weaver recognized the need to raise enough to fund public works in the suburbs; throughout his administration he insisted that the councils provide money for road works, even through deficit spending, since property development in the suburbs depended on such services.<sup>2</sup> Pressures to increase municipal spending on public works which emanated both from reform and machine factions could not, however, be sustained without a considerable increase in annual revenues.

In 1907 Reyburn announced his comprehensive plans for Philadelphia. The plans promised to furnish the 'necessary improvements' that Weaver in his efforts to economize had neglected. At the same time they promised to increase municipal revenue. The works which were financially and politically lucrative to the Penrose organization included, in order of their priority: river front improvements; extensions of the parks and parkways; and orderly suburban development.<sup>3</sup> The proposed improvements favored the outlying districts and so exposed the machine to opposition on two fronts. First, it encouraged greater demands for municipal

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1). Ibid., 1905, pp. x-xi.

2). Ibid., 1904, p.xxii.

3). Ibid., John Reyburn, 1907, pp.xxxvii-xxxix, and 1908, xxxvii.

expenditure from suburban citizens. Second, suburban developments annoyed center-city taxpayers who alleged that they were paying for public works from which they derived no direct benefit.<sup>1</sup> The plans also placed the administration's finances in jeopardy as the city approached its borrowing limit in 1908.<sup>2</sup>

But Reyburn had designed and marketed the comprehensive plans, in part, as a means of expanding the city's revenues. In 1909, the mayor clearly defined three classes of municipal expenditure: revenue-producing and wealth-creating expenditures (boulevards to suburbs, services to sites of potential industrial and residential developments, parkways and abolition of grade crossings, river front development and transportation); municipal necessities which were not wealth-creating (paving and schools); and current expenses for running the city. He went on to say that

'the objects enumerated in class one have to do with the production of wealth, the furnishing of employment, without which the City cannot continue to grow or even maintain her present prosperity, and, therefore, even when the great value to the City of, and obligations imposed upon the City by the objects enumerated in class two is admitted, and the necessity also admitted of making the expenditures under class three, or those of the current expenses of the City, liberal, it must be admitted that the first claim upon the consideration of [the councils] is for those objects represented in class one.(3)

The comprehensive plans were clearly developed as municipal improvements in the revenue-generating category. In fact such expenditures had become both a financial and a political necessity. They were a financial necessity because suburban development

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- 1). Ibid., 1908, pp.xxxv-xxxix, and 1909, pp.vii-ix.
  - 2). See Graph 5.4, p.287.
  - 3). PMAM, J. Reyburn, 1909, p.xxiv.

promised to generate more tax revenues which were essential if the city corporation was even to meet its annual operating expenses. They were a political necessity because they offered opportunities for machine-building, and because by withholding municipal services to the suburban wards for whatever reason, an incumbent administration was liable to generate opposition from reform associations which had their electoral strength in the suburbs. The introduction of the comprehensive plans, then, shows how the structure and practices of municipal government affected the cost of municipal works as it heralded the city's departure on a downward spending spiral; municipal expenditures on public works and services were increased simply to increase municipal revenues.

The comprehensive plans provided for a \$20,000,000 port development program specifically designed both to enhance Philadelphia's commercial position relative to her sister cities and to increase the city's revenue from property developments along the Delaware River and at the Navy Yard in South Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> The program also called for significant developments in South Philadelphia which would support port improvements. The South Philadelphia project stipulated that railroad terminals be transferred from the center of South Philadelphia to a point contiguous with League Island thereby eliminating a nuisance which inhibited the commercial and residential development of 4,000 acres of valuable property.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the city would acquire water

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1). Ibid., 1908, xLix-Liii.

2). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1913, pp.25-8; Karl DeSchweinitz, 'Philadelphia Striking a Balance', p.461.

front in South Philadelphia along the Delaware to build more than a dozen 900-foot piers to accommodate large steamships. Finally, the city together with the city's railroad companies would complete a Belt Line Railroad connecting the city's major railroad terminals and ports along the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers.<sup>1</sup> This project, too, was designed so that new industrial and residential developments in South Philadelphia would increase municipal revenues sufficiently to offset the initial cost of the project and to provide funds for other necessary but non-revenue-generating municipal works.<sup>2</sup> 'No section of the City', the mayor claimed,

will return quicker and better results in the way of taxation than this provided such facilities are given and streets are opened, graded and paved. The City should always have in mind (sic) the development of its income from taxation, and in planning new streets and other public improvements give serious consideration to the results they will produce through taxation.(3)

Of course the surge in municipal expenditure under Reyburn catered to as much graft and corruption as any comparable increase in municipal spending had done in the past. It also generated a rift in the organization as South Philadelphia's political boss William Vare used public works contracts issued under the comprehensive plans to build his political following sufficiently to make a bid for the leadership of the city's Republican machine. As a result, the Keystoners were able to elect Rudolph Blankenburg as mayor in 1911.

Despite the fact that Blankenburg headed a reform administration which prided itself upon its economy and efficiency,

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1). PMAM, R. Blankenburg, 1912, p.25.

2). PMAM, John Reyburn, 1909, pp.xi-xii,Lviii.

3). Ibid., 1909, p.xL.

he was incapable of decreasing, even temporarily, municipal spending. He could not. The city corporation was by then forced to continue the revenue-generating public works projects that had begun under Reyburn. Reformers not only accepted Reyburn's comprehensive plans, they even added to them the Taylor plan for a municipally-owned high-speed transit system. Despite its enthusiasm for public works improvements, however, the Blankenburg administration was politically besieged and unable to secure adequate appropriations from city councils to go ahead with a number of necessary public works, most notably the transit system. Ultimately, the administration's inability to keep up the pace of municipal expenditure on public works cost it the support of residents in the developing suburban wards, many of whom had rallied behind the Keystone party in 1911.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the period, then, party politics and political reforms were largely influenced by the imperatives of urban growth. Reform and machine factions alike were often mobilized with the political issues which were generated as essential utilities and services required updating, improvement and extension. Likewise, reform and machine factions' political successes and more often their political failures were related to their handling of public works policies. The organization and practices of city government and the dynamic of party competition, however, did influence the way in which municipal resources were invested in works and services which were necessary to keep pace with changes in the structure of urban society. In fact, more often than not they tended

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1). Ibid., 1909, pp.xiii-xiv.

to increase the eventual cost of such projects as municipal finances were continually exhausted and destabilized from periods of party competition. Such periods threatened the city's credit and its ability to raise sufficient revenue to meet its daily operating expenses let alone the cost of significant municipal improvements. The political influence over municipal finances also ensured that the projects that were instituted were often reactive measures designed to meet only the most immediate needs. In this respect, the political influence over the administration of municipal works and services proved anathema to city planning. More importantly, it plunged the city government into a self-sustaining cycle of municipal investments which were designed quite specifically to enable the city to maintain its basic non-revenue-generating services.

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The urban polity, then, played an influential part in shaping Philadelphia's experience of urban growth and industrial development in the Progressive period. Undoubtedly, as chapter four demonstrated, changes in the structure of urban society helped to generate reform movements amongst the city's middle and upper classes. The existence of what Frisch refers to as reform-generating structures, however, cannot by themselves explain the occurrence of urban political reform. This was evident in chapter five which showed how the fragmented organization of authority in municipal government (including the municipality's dependence on the state legislature), the chronic competition between different political factions and the self-interestedness of political actors

all shaped the extent to which reformers could obtain some access to the political arena and influence municipal government. In fact, chapter five demonstrated that reformers' access to the political arena in Philadelphia is perhaps better explained with reference to factionalism within the machine than to the existence in the city of reform-generating social structures.

The organization and conduct of municipal government also shaped the city's responses to fundamental changes in the structure of urban society which required the extension of municipal works and services. This chapter demonstrated how the structure of decision-making in municipal government shaped the way that public policies were formulated and implemented as well as the way that such policies distributed their costs and benefits to the people of Philadelphia. In this last respect, both chapters five and six suggest that the structure of the urban polity helped to shape the distribution of political power in urban society both in terms of urban groups' access to the political arena and in terms of their ability to benefit from political decision-making.

This case study which emphasizes the role that political structures played in shaping the course of political reform has ramifications for other histories of Progressive urban politics which analyze political reform primarily as a response to societal changes. Take, for example, Richard Hofstadter's and George Mowry's claim that members of the middle class were responsible for urban Progressive reform. The claim is substantiated by the authors' literal analysis of what progressive reformers said about themselves, their social origins and their political aspirations. For Mowry, the

reformers' own words tell us that progressivism in part represented a middle-class crusade against the 'unprincipled, half-taught plutocracy' of the ethnic-based urban political machine.<sup>1</sup> For Hofstadter, progressivism was also a middle-class crusade, but one which was rather more idealistic than moralistic as it professed that urban social ills could be eradicated if people fulfilled their public duty and participated responsibly in the governance of urban society.<sup>2</sup>

This case study has shown that in Philadelphia at least, progressive reform was hardly a movement consisting of a group of individuals with common interests in local government. If political consensus did exist amongst the 'progressives', then it was fragmented at the municipal level. This is evident through an analysis of the membership of some of the city's political reform coalitions which, taken together, consisted of changing combinations of different urban groups whose members participated in reform politics for different and occasionally competing reasons. Take, for example, the coalitions which conducted reform campaigns under the Union party in 1900-1, the City party in 1905-6 of the Keystone party in 1910-11. The coalitions consisted of professional politicians who participated in political reform because reform served as convenient vehicle on which to mount struggles for leadership within the Republican machine.

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1). George Mowry, 'The California Progressive and His Rationale: A Study in Middle-Class Politics', Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 36(1949), pp.241-50, passim.

2). See Arthur Mann, 'Partial Success in the Progressive Years' in A. Mann ed., The Progressive Era, p.169

Chapter four also demonstrated that reform coalitions received support from professionals particularly in social work and related fields who saw ways of advancing the status of their professions through their participation in municipal government. Finally, reform coalitions were supported by associations such as the Municipal League, the Committee of 70 and the CMA whose leaders were drawn from among the city's economic and social elites. The members of these associations had many things in common with one another, most notably their wealth and status within the city. It is interesting, however, that such groups, much as their members shared a common position in the urban socio-economic order, were so prone to internal divisions on specific policy issues

One thing that all members of Philadelphia's reform coalitions did have in common was that they participated (albeit for different reasons) in political campaigns against the Republican machine. As such they shared in the production and perpetuation of reform rhetoric which resonated with calls for responsible democratic governance to eradicate the social ills of urban life. It is possible, then, that Hofstadter and Mowry discovered that the urban progressives were part of a coherent middle-class movement because their analysis of that movement was conducted at perhaps the only level that any sort of coherence existed.

Hays, Wiebe and others have also rejected Hofstadter's and Mowry's claim that the urban reformers were middle class precisely because the claim assumes the social-class origins of an ethos which is said to be reflected in political rhetoric. Preferring to use collective biography to analyze of reformers' social-class origins,

such authors have found that the progressives were members of an urban elite whose interests in the utilization of government had changed due to other structural changes in society. Progressive leadership, Hays found, consisted of an upper class interested in transcending the growing physical distance between the suburbs where they lived and the central business districts where they worked since this distance was adversely affecting by their political and social influence in the city. The progressive leadership also included an upper crust of professional groups 'working out the inner dynamics of professionalization in modern society', and the cities industrialists for whom more efficient use of municipal government meant better and cheaper municipal services and consequently a better local economic climate.<sup>1</sup>

The analysis conducted in chapter four seems to support Hays's conclusions about the social composition of the reform leadership. Nevertheless, a number of problems still exist with his analysis. It is too prone, for example, to infer actors' political interests directly from their position within the socio-economic order. This is not always possible to do. At least it is not entirely possible to do this for Philadelphia where, as chapter four demonstrated, the social structure seemed to exercise opposing influences on reform elites. Chapter five, then, showed that the fragmented organization of decision-making in municipal government and the perpetual competition between professional politicians within

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1). S.P. Hays, 'The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era', pp.208,213.

the Republican machine were perhaps as important as social structural changes in precipitating elite-led reform movements.

Another problem with Hays's work, as with other works which derive elitist conclusions from their analyses of progressive urban reform, is that urban elites are identified as being responsible for reforms largely because they are seen as being the primary beneficiaries of reform. The Philadelphia study shows that the relationship between responsibility for political reform and benefit from it is not necessarily a direct one. The interests of urban elites were influential in shaping the political agenda insofar as changes in the urban social structure provoked the wealthy suburban residents and downtown industrialists who participated in reform groups to lobby for more and better municipal works and services. Indeed, chapter six supports the claim that municipal government responded to such pressure by extending public works and services where the private sector was unable or unwilling to do so. The chapter concludes, nonetheless, that urban elites were neither entirely responsible for nor the primary beneficiaries of public works policies whose formulation and implementation were so deeply affected by the fragmented structure of decision-making and by the balance of party competition. This analysis ramifies wherever studies of political power are conducted as it suggests that the structure of the polity is so influential in shaping policies that policies may bear little or no relation to the policy preferences of any or all of the individuals or groups who participated in their production.

This position is not identical with one adopted by David Hammack whose analysis of Progressive urban politics also finds that urban elites were neither the sole beneficiaries nor the leaders of reform.<sup>1</sup> Hammack claims that public policies that were produced during the Progressive era distributed their benefits widely to many different urban groups. He concludes, therefore, that urban society was pluralistic insofar as many different urban groups could, if they so desired, enter into the political arena to influence decision-making. The analysis of Philadelphia does not support Hammack's assessment of Progressive politics. In the first place, the case study of Philadelphia shows in chapter five that access to the urban political arena was hardly accessible to urban groups generally. It also showed in chapter six that the costs and benefits of public works policies were widely distributed because the fragmented structure of decision-making, the balance of party competition and the self-interestedness of political actors proved anathema to the formulation of public policies which had well defined objectives and could benefit any one individual or group. Interestingly, for Hammack and in some respects Jon Teaforde, the fact that public policies distributed their benefits widely in the Progressive period represents the triumph of pluralistic democracy in early-twentieth-century American cities.<sup>2</sup> In this study of Philadelphia, the same phenomenon seems to show just how unsuited the structure of urban government was to ministering to the needs of the urban community.

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1). David C. Hammack, Power and Society, pp.103-5.

2). No where is this more evident than in the title of Teaforde's The Unheralded Triumph.

PART III:  
CONCLUSION

Sam Bass Warner once reflected that if only all the world were Philadelphia, then the history of the urban process and, indeed, even capitalist development would be evident through an intensive analysis of the one city.<sup>1</sup> Alas, all the world is not Philadelphia and case studies of two periods of political reform in the city of brotherly love can support only limited and highly qualified conclusions about the urban process. Some of the political organizations and practices, and some of the socio-economic and spatial developments discussed here are peculiar to Philadelphia's history. They were not present elsewhere. What can be applied elsewhere, however, is the conceptual orientation which this study has developed, for it has emphasized the role played by the urban polity in shaping the urban process.

It is feasible to derive a number of general hypotheses from the particular studies of Philadelphia about how both social and political structures shape the course of urban political development and, as importantly, the way that the urban polity helps to shape the urban process. The second case study shows, for example, that the socio-economic and spatial structure of the city was in part responsible for two contradictory tendencies which helped shape the course of urban reform in the city: the one was reform-generating, the other machine-sustaining. These particular structural circumstances may be special to Philadelphia. Not every city at the turn of the twentieth century, for example, had the same pattern of

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1). Sam Bass Warner, Jr., 'If All the World Were Philadelphia: A Scaffolding for Urban History, 1774-1930', American History Review, 74:1(Oct., 1968), pp.26-43.

spatial differentiation by wealth as the city of Philadelphia. Similarly, political structures which were shown in chapters five and six to influence the course of political reform were also unique to Philadelphia. What hypotheses, then, can be drawn from the particular history of Philadelphia and applied generally to studies of urban politics and the urban process?

First, the case studies show how the socio-economic and spatial structures of urban society influenced urban politics in at least three ways: they helped to shape the political agenda, the political interests of different urban groups and the distribution of the costs and benefits of municipal public policies. The first of these propositions is amply demonstrated in the first case study which shows how municipal investments in utilities, especially in transportation, were responses to policy options which were at least in part determined by socio-economic structures, particularly by the economic competition between Philadelphia and the neighboring commercial centers of New York and Baltimore. Similarly, the second case study demonstrates how changes in the urban social structure, especially suburbanization and industrial relocation, influenced urban politics by placing the improvement and extension of public works and services high on the political agenda.

The two case studies also show how the urban social structure shaped city-dwellers' political interests. In Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century, the political interests of the business elites who dominated municipal government were defined in part by their leading economic positions in a pre-industrial city whose economy depended largely on their successful commerce.

Unsurprisingly, the business elites directed municipal resources into works and services which were personally profitable and which promised to benefit their commerce. The 'private' interests of the city's business elites produced some benefits to the people of Philadelphia generally. Nevertheless, as was discussed in chapters two and six, neither actors' political interests nor their political power may be easily or readily inferred from analyses of how the costs and benefits of public policies were distributed.<sup>1</sup>

The impact made by socio-economic and spatial structures on city-dwellers' political interests is even more evident in the second case study. For example, the spatial concentration of the urban poor, many of whom were immigrants, had two opposing effects on the political interests of the urban middle and upper classes. First, it caused anxiety about the social and moral order of the city. At the same time, it enabled a political machine to take hold of city government. As a result, middle- and upper-class crusades to contain urban poverty and to preserve the social order became intimately linked with campaigns against machine politics. Second, the urban social structure determined that the middle- and upper-class residents of the city's developing suburbs required most the extension of necessary public works such as water, gas and transportation. Consequently political reform movements, because they were built largely upon the support of middle- and upper-class suburban residents, were limited insofar as their momentum ceased

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1). See Chapter 3, pp.183-5 and Chapter 6 pp.395-6.

when they interefered with the provision of those public works and services which suburban-dwellers both needed and desired.

Third, both case studies demonstrate how the spatial location of different urban groups defined the parameters within which political actors competed to advance policies which distributed costs and benefits unequally across urban space. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the spatial consequences of municipal public works policies caused the greatest amount of conflict between the political leaders of the city and the districts respectively. The first case study shows that in at least two ways, such conflicts severely interfered with urban business elites' direction of city government. First, they encouraged district leaders to seek, in alliance with rural factions, state legislation which restricted urban business elites' authority in municipal government. Second, conflicts between the city and districts' leaders provided the basis for the local development of mass political parties. By mid-century, local party organizations were increasingly interfering with urban elites' direction of municipal government because they provided non-elites with some access to the political arena.

The second case study also shows how the spatial distribution of urban groups helped to define the parameters within which political contests occurred. In fact, chapters five and six in particular show how the successes and failures of both the machine and the several reform coalitions depended upon two things simultaneously: the provision of necessary municipal works and services to the developing suburbs, and the maintenance by whatever means of electoral support in the less affluent urban core.

Of course, the reader might object that all of these hypotheses about the relationship between the urban social structure and the urban polity are already available in the literature of urban studies in recent works by such authors as Ashton, Piven and Cloward, Pickvance and Dunleavy. Ashton, for example, demonstrates how the spatial mobility of different economic sectors in the late nineteenth century generated new problems in municipal government concerning the maintenance of existing services and utilities.<sup>1</sup> He claims that during this period, industrialists, for reasons which can partly be explained by the dynamic of economic competition and growth, began to move out of the urban core to less expensive districts on the city's periphery.

At the same time, center-city was increasingly given over to the retail and financial businesses. The changing location of urban industries brought municipal governments under pressure to extend their investments in water, transportation, police, gas and electrical services.<sup>2</sup> Similar examples of how changes in economic activity affect the spatial organization of cities and urban politics are available in the current literature on the urban crises. There it is demonstrated that industry's migration from northeastern U.S. cities left municipal governments with blighted areas to redevelop and with masses of un- and under-employed industrial workers.<sup>3</sup>

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1). P.J. Ashton, 'Urbanization and the Dynamic of Suburban Development', in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers, Marxism and the Metropolis, passim.

2). See D.M. Gordon, 'Capitalist Development and the History of American Cities', in W.K. Tabb and L. Sawers op.cit., passim.

3). See George Sternlieb, 'The City as Sandbox', in S. David and P.E. Peterson, Urban Politics and Public Policy, passim.

This second example, in fact, also shows that recent urban studies have demonstrated how the spatial location of urban groups influences urban politics. Piven and Cloward in particular show how the welfare rights movements in the 1960s had their origins in the changing social structure of America's northeastern cities.<sup>1</sup> Rural blacks moved to northern cities from the 1950s when opportunities for employment in southern agriculture contracted as that industry became increasingly capital intensive. In the north, migrant blacks found housing in inner-cities, far removed from the jobs that were available to unskilled laborers. Moreover, the number of job opportunities that did exist was contracting as industries were already beginning to retreat from the northern cities. The spatial concentration in northern cities of a rapidly growing number of recent black immigrants placed an enormous burden on existing social services thereby bringing the issue of welfare reform into the municipal politics. Urban politics were also affected by the growth in the number of un- and under-employed blacks as the balance of party politics was increasingly tipped towards the Democratic party which, for historic reasons, was able to solicit the electoral support of the cities' newest immigrants.

Finally, Patrick Dunleavy's work on urban politics demonstrates how the spatial location of urban groups influences political contests as groups are affected differently by public policies depending upon where exactly they live and work in the city.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Dunleavy claims that the spatial consequences of

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1). F.F. Piven and R. Cloward, Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed and How They Fail (N.Y., Pantheon, 1977), chapter 5.  
2). Patrick Dunleavy, Urban Political Analysis, chapter 3.

city-dwellers' consumption of municipal works and services is one feature of city government which distinguishes local politics from state and national politics.

Historians cannot, however, simply adopt the perspectives that are developed by Piven and Cloward, Friedland and Dunleavy, and integrate them easily into their analyses of the urban polity and its role in shaping the urban process. As the introduction showed, these works form part of a much more general literature about the relationship between the state and capitalist society.<sup>1</sup> That literature is primarily concerned to amend orthodox-Marxist economic determinism in order to develop an adequate explanation for why radical movements have failed in the past and to simultaneously design a strategy for radical change in the present.<sup>2</sup> It is not concerned to analyze either the urban polity or the urban process, and so tends to obscure vitally important aspects of urban historical development.

Neo-Marxist analyses of urban politics assume, for example, that the state, of which the urban polity is one part, acts to rationalize social and economic contradictions which are said to be inherent in capitalist society.<sup>3</sup> Hence, Ashton's analysis of the extension of municipal works and services in the early part of the nineteenth century, and Piven and Cloward's work on the welfare

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1). See Introduction, pp.3-4.

2). M. Harloe, 'Introduction: New Perspectives in Urban and Regional Research: Progress and Problems', in M. Harloe, ed., New Perspectives on Urban Change and Conflict, p.24.

3). See for example, Fred Block, 'The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State', Socialist Revolution, 33:7(1977), passim.

rights movements in the 1960s, for example, both focus on structural factors which compelled the urban polity to make necessary investments in the urban infrastructure. At the turn of the twentieth century, city governments invested in transportation, water, and gas to support rapid industrial expansion which, in the U.S., took place primarily in cities. In the 1960s, according to Piven and Cloward, social structural changes determined that urban governments invest heavily in maintaining the social order through its extension of locally distributed welfare.

Focusing primarily on how socio-economic structures call forth necessary political action, neo-Marxist analyses have somewhat ironically undermined a very explicit neo-Marxist concern: to develop an effective political strategy for radical equalitarian change.<sup>1</sup> More important, however, is that the neo-Marxist analysis of urban politics obscures the very influential role that the urban polity played in that process of urban growth and change. Nowhere is this more evident than in the work of the urban historians who, in the late 1960s, embraced neo-Marxist analytical perspectives to analyze the urban process. These works by authors such as Thernstrom, Hershberg and Katz examined in intimate detail how socio-economic and spatial structures shaped the experience of urban life but, as was noted in the introduction, entirely neglected to examine how urban politics affected either the structure of urban society or the quality of urban life.<sup>2</sup>

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1). With respect to urban change see, for example, W.K. Tabb, 'A Pro-People Urban Policy', in W.K. Tabb and L.Sawers, op.cit., passim.  
2). See Introduction, p.13.

Those historians who integrate a neo-Marxist analytical perspective into studies of urban politics also tend to conceive of the urban polity as being subordinate to social structural forces. This is evident insofar as studies conducted by Hays, Katznelson and Cutler and Gillette, for example, explain urban political reform as being either a requisite or functional response to fundamental social structural change and/or a reflection of changing social class relations. The two case studies of Philadelphia, however, find that the urban polity does not simply respond to or reflect fundamental social structural changes. The first case study demonstrates how urban politics actually helped to shape the urban process by influencing the formation of social groups identities. In the second case study, the urban polity was also seen to play an active part in shaping the structure and experience of urban life as it determined relations of political power between urban social groups whose identities were already well established.

It is possible, then, to draw from this work a number of other general hypotheses about the relationship between the urban polity and the urban process. Taken together, the case studies demonstrate in at least four ways how political structures act as independent influences on the urban process by shaping political responses to fundamental changes in the structure of urban society and indeed the very quality and experience of urban life. First, the studies contest a view, too easily adopted, that people's political interests are determined by their socio-economic position within society. Instead, they claim that the act of participating in

the political arena is itself influential in forming actors' political interests. In order to obtain and preserve their positions which are vulnerable to changing political tides, for example, political actors in a quasi-democratic political system will seek to do what is necessary to ensure their continued electoral success.

The influence of political participation over actors' political interests is evident in the second case study where many political actions were seen to have resulted from nothing less than political pragmatism pure and simple. Warwick's lease of the gas works, and the Blankenburg administration's development of the costly Taylor plan are perhaps the best examples of political actions which cannot easily be linked to the socio-economically determined interests of any one group of political actors. As a result, many of the public policies that were developed during the period had consequences which were neither intended nor desired by the actors who were involved in their production. The Taylor plan, for example, was amended and altered by a reform administration that was desperate to maintain the confidence of its suburban supporters and at the same time appease the hostile organization which controlled the city councils. Consequently, the plan in its final form defied reformers' concerns with municipal economies as it plunged the municipality into a hitherto unprecedented debt.

Interestingly, the second case study provides an example in reverse of how the experience of political participation affects political actors' interests. Urban business elites who dominated municipal government during the first half of the nineteenth century

cared little about how their political activities might affect their positions of political leadership in the city. Indeed, the study shows that in the early years of the nineteenth century such care was unwarranted, because access to the urban polity was highly restricted to urban elites whose political activities were therefore guided more by material self-interest and less by the desire to preserve political position. One consequence of this, albeit an unintended one, was that elites ultimately helped to undermine their own politically privileged position in city government. Their self-interested development of municipal works and services, for example, precipitated conflicts between city and district leaders which encouraged the local development of a popular political system in which business elites could not successfully compete.

A second way in which political structures independently shaped both political responses to social structural changes and the urban process is evident in the case studies which show how political actors' behavior was influenced by the political organizations and institutions in which they operated. Though this proposition is related to the first, it directs our attention to specifically non-electoral organizations within the urban polity. It does no more than claim that political activity was influenced by the constituted way in which executive and legislative authority over the resources available in municipal government was divided between the various bodies that made up municipal government. This proposition is demonstrated in both case studies which show how the organization of administrative and legislative authority in

municipal government and the structure and practice of party politics shaped the opportunities for different urban groups to enter the political arena and try to realize their objectives in policy-making.

One feature of the organization of government in Philadelphia which was especially influential in both periods was the relationship between the state and local governments. The state legislature held the authority to alter or amend the organization of municipal government and the authority to change the means by which municipal works and services were financed. This relationship between the state and municipal governments provided numerous opportunities for local opposition factions to realize their political objectives in the city by forming alliances with state-wide factions and securing state legislation which could seriously undermine the incumbents' control over municipal government. This relationship irrevocably bound state and local politics together from the beginning of the nineteenth century and was influential in shaping the political opportunities available to different urban groups as well as the formulation and implementation of municipal public policies.

A third proposition concerning the efficacy of urban political structures is evident in the two case studies which demonstrate how the organization and administration of municipal finances effect both the political agenda and political actors' influence over the decision-making process. The first case study shows, for example, that the issue of consolidation arose in part because the city treasury had been exhausted owing to business

elites' repeated capital expenditures on large-scale municipal works and utilities. The second case study also shows that municipal finance had its effects on urban politics as it influenced the rhythm of machine-reform political contests. Machine administrations which spent huge sums on municipal improvements and built up the Republican organization often provoked reform movements from tax-conscious middle-and upper-class voters who formed alliances with the organization politicians who were dissatisfied with their share of the machine's spoils. Reform administrations which economized in municipal government (intentionally or otherwise) also provoked their own political decline. They alienated the support of professional politicians by adhering to the civil service code and sacrificed middle- and upper-class supporters by appearing to be incapable of meeting the growing demand for municipal works and services. As chapter six shows this 'politics of municipal finance' ultimately prevented the formulation of coherent municipal improvements policies and inflated the price that the city paid for its municipal works and services.

The fourth way in which political structures influenced the course of urban politics and the urban process is evident insofar as the case studies show how the very conduct of government often facilitated the political mobilization of groups which were previously politically inactive. The first case study demonstrates how competition between city and district political leaders, and between business elites in the city provided opportunities for state-wide party factions to organize themselves locally. One result of the involvement in local politics of state-wide parties

was that local political contests became increasingly popularized providing non-elite urban groups with some access to and influence over city government. As chapter three shows, the popularization of local politics had an irreversible affect on both the organization and practice of urban government and the structure and experience of urban life. Similarly, the second case study shows how the structure of government which perpetuated factionalism within the Republican organization, actively encouraged reform coalitions to mobilize politically outside the Republican party.

Of course, there is a large literature in the field of political science which focuses on how political structures influence decision-making. Political scientists have paid particular attention to urban political structures largely because the development of political science as an independent academic discipline was fostered around the turn of the twentieth century by studies of municipal government which were themselves conducted in the spirit of municipal political reform.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, some of whose most prominent senior members were active in political reform in the city, was the first U.S. university to appoint a political science professor of municipal government. Since then, political scientists' interest in analyzing urban government has intensified, especially with the urban crisis of the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>2</sup> Writing in the tradition of their Progressive forebears, authors such as Douglas Yates and

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1). See Martin Shefter, 'Images of the City in Political Science: Communities, Administrative Entities, Competitive Markets, and Seats of Chaos', in L. Rodwin and R. Hollister, Cities of the Mind, p.55.  
2). See Introduction, pp.4-5.

Herbert Kaufman and Wallace Sayre examined how decision-making is influenced by the bureaucratic organization of modern political institutions which are staffed by permanently employed political managers or civil servants.<sup>1</sup> The so-called 'managerialist' studies of political decision-making derive conclusions similar to the ones outlined above about the influence of political structures on the interests of political managers and on the process of decision-making generally.

Managerialist perspectives on urban politics, like neo-Marxist perspectives, cannot, for a number of reasons, be integrated easily into historical analyses of urban politics and the urban process. First, they too often neglect to examine how social structures influence urban politics. This was all too evident to revisionist historians such as Hays and Wiebe who, from the late 1950s, repudiated a liberal historical tradition of high political narrative precisely because it employed a conception of the urban polity which is no less narrow than that employed by the political scientists; a conception in which, as the introduction explained, only the people and institutions within the political arena are of any central importance to the investigation of political history.<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly, high political narrative has enjoyed something of a revival over the past twenty years. A number of historians have repudiated the revisionists' uncompromising focus on socio-economic determinants of political developments and the course of history generally, and called for a return to the narrative

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1). Ibid., pp.7-9.

2). Ibid., pp.20-1

tradition.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the present work also objects to revisionists' apparent social structural determinism and criticizes their neglect of the importance of the polity in shaping the course of urban history. It does not, however, call for a return to high political narrative. Instead, it embraces revisionists' quantitative methods and their focus on how social structures influence the political process. It supplements these analyses however, by suggesting that political structures may also be influential in shaping both governments' responses to changes in the structure of urban society and the very structure and experience of urban life itself.

A second reason why historians cannot readily adopt political scientists' perspectives on the urban polity is that such perspectives are generally ahistorical. As the introduction shows, they are developed by political scientists who are interested primarily in analyzing contemporary political events and who therefore make few attempts to examine the development of the institutions and institutional practices which they see as shaping the process of decision-making.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore inappropriate to an historical study of the urban process since, as this study has shown, the structure of the urban polity changes in interaction with changes in the social structure of urban society.

Indeed, the suggestion that the urban polity plays a dynamic role in shaping the urban process is yet another hypothesis which can be

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1). Ibid.

2). Ibid., pp.7-9.

derived from the studies of Philadelphia. Both studies show that the urban polity was simultaneously influenced by and influencing changes in the structure of urban society. The genuinely interactive relationship between urban politics and urban society is evident by looking, for example, at the development of public works and services in Philadelphia in the two periods covered by this work. Both case studies demonstrate how the urban social structure defined both the market for public works and services and urban groups' political interests and consequently affected the development of municipal public works policies. Such policies were also influenced by political structures which included existing party practices and the administrative and financial organization of city government. Together, these structures shaped urban groups' opportunities for influencing the direction of municipal public works policies. As these were developed and extended, they contributed in part to changes in the urban social structure which altered both the market for municipal works and the way in which different urban groups perceived their political interests. The extension of municipal works also affected political structures such as the administrative and financial organization of municipal government and the balance of party competition. Consequently both the way urban groups perceived their interests in municipal works policies and the structure of political opportunities that were available to them to influence those policies were redefined.

Interestingly this last hypothesis, developed as it is from historical investigation has ramifications for the neo-Marxist debates about the relationship between the polity and society and

for the political scientists' analysis of the institutional influences on the process of decision-making. As is shown above, the studies bear on political scientists' analyses of the urban polity since they show that urban political structures are not static institutions which exist separately from society. Rather, political structures too have a history - a history which reflects the interaction between urban politics and urban society. The impact of political structures on the decision-making process cannot be understood without first understanding the process by which those structures themselves are shaped over time.

The Philadelphia-based conceptualization of the urban polity's part in the urban process also has relevance for neo-Marxist investigations of the relationship between the state and capitalist society. The studies show that the urban polity was dynamically a part of the process of urban growth. It did not simply respond functionally to fundamental changes in the structure of society. In fact, there is evidence in the case studies that the polity had some part in shaping urban social structures which neo-Marxists claim to be determined primarily by class relations.

The first case study shows, for example, that the urban polity was a fundamental agent in the city's transition from a pre-industrial to an industrial society as its resources were directed into municipal works which, though designed to protect trade and commerce, ultimately promoted the growth of manufacture in the city and so fostered industrialization. The study also shows that the urban polity was influential in the process of social group

formation as it informed city-dwellers perceptions of themselves as being members of a social class or an ethnic or racial group.

In the second case study, the urban polity is also shown to be an active agent in processes for which responsibility is generally attributed by neo-Marxists to economic and social class conflicts. For example, the distribution of political power, at least insofar as it was evident in urban groups' ability to direct and/or benefit from municipal public policy-making, was shaped as much by the fragmented structure of municipal government and the balance of party competition as it was by social class relations. The study also suggests that the extension of municipal works and services which neo-Marxists take to represent the polity's functional response to rapid industrial development, was in part pushed forward by a party system in which both machine and reform factions were forced to invest municipal resources to maintain their political coalitions.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, it would be a grave oversight to close this discussion without at least some reference to one other area of academic investigation on which the historical analysis of the urban polity and its role in the urban process has some bearing. Contemporary debates about the distribution of political power in modern society are frequently based upon investigations of decision-making in urban government. Such investigations, as the introduction demonstrates, are less concerned with the urban polity than they are with advancing theories about the nature of democratic society. Nonetheless, such theories are often either

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1). See P. Dunleavy, Urban Political Analysis, pp.78-9.

accepted or rejected on the strength of their analyses of urban politics. They are therefore inevitably dependent upon the strength of their conceptualization of the urban polity.

The 'pluralists', represented by political scientists such as Dahl and Lowi, and by historians such as Hammack, are perhaps the most prominent amongst the participants in the debate about who rules in democratic society. For the pluralists, power is defined in Weberian terms as an individual's or group's ability to realize its interests in political decision-making even in the face of opposition from other individuals or groups.<sup>1</sup> Employing such a definition in their investigations of decision-making in city governments, the pluralists find that political power has been increasingly diffused throughout society since the beginning of the nineteenth century when urban economic elites dominated political decision-making. In fact, Hammack and Lowi claim that as early as the turn of the twentieth century, no one urban group was capable of dominating municipal government.

Both of the Philadelphia case studies seem at first glance to support the pluralists' conclusions. Philadelphia's government, initially directed almost exclusively by urban business elites, was by the turn of the twentieth century dominated by no one urban group. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the pluralists' view of power in urban government is in fact refuted in both case studies.

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1). R. Dahl, Who Governs; T. Lowi, At the Pleasure of the Mayor. David Hammack, Power and Society.

The first case study does not, in fact, show that economic elites controlled political decision-making in municipal government. Rather, it shows that municipal elites had privileged access to the political arena. It does not, however, infer from this that business elites held political power. In fact, the study shows that despite business elites' domination of municipal government, they were not able to direct public policies according to their will. The fragmented structure of the urban polity combined with business elites' narrow self-interest to produce public policies many of whose consequences were neither intended nor desired by elites.

The second study, too, repudiates the pluralists' argument. It agrees with Hammack and Lowi that no one socio-economic group dominated the political arena. It also agrees that benefits of municipal public works policies were widely distributed to different social groups. Chapters four and five, however, show that the benefits from public works policies were not distributed widely as a result of urban groups having free and equal access to the political arena. In fact, they show how opportunities for urban groups to enter the political arena were strictly defined by the structure and conduct of municipal government. Moreover, chapter six demonstrates that the greatest influence over the distribution of the benefits of municipal works and services was not the diversity of interest groups involved in policy-making, as the pluralists would argue - but the fragmented organization of political authority and the narrow self interestedness of political actors generally. Together, the fragmented structure of the urban polity and political actors' 'private' political interests prevented the

construction of policies which were coherent enough to benefit any one group consistently.

Philadelphia's government, then, was pluralistic, at least in appearance, but not because it was an arena in which urban groups could contest policy issues on equal terms, as Dahl, Banfield, Hammack and Lowi suggest. Instead, pluralism was structurally inherent in the city's municipal government, a legacy of political fragmentation and a culture of privatism. Consequently, this study does not conclude as some others have, that a pluralist form of government represents a laudable or even a useful feature of modern democratic society. In Philadelphia, anyway, the price of pluralism was very high, particularly for the city taxpayer who was forced to pay excessively for public works which were inevitably developed in a piecemeal and haphazard fashion by political actors who, to paraphrase Warner's words, 'neither understood the city as a whole nor wanted to deal with it as a public environment of a democratic society'.<sup>1</sup> Ironically, then, the discovery that decision-making in Philadelphia's was pluralistic at the turn of the twentieth century is neither cause for celebration nor self-congratulation. Rather it is cause for some serious reflection about the nature of the city government, its influence over the quality and experience of city life and its ability to serve the needs of the urban public.

In conclusion, then, the studies of Philadelphia have produced a final hypothesis which can have wider application in the

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1). S.B. Warner, The Private City, p.223.

study of urban history. The case studies have shown that urban political history can be informed by a variety of theoretical and conceptual perspectives drawn from work in a number of the social sciences. More important, the work shows that writing a theoretically informed history is not simply a matter of borrowing bits and pieces from other academic disciplines but is more a synthetic process; one which produces a history that provides hypotheses that can possibly influence related developments in other fields. Of course two case studies of Philadelphia politics can neither resolve the problems that are inherent in neo-Marxist analyses of the state in capitalist society nor the many difficult issues which emerge from debates about who rules in American society. Nonetheless, as this chapter has shown, they can have some bearing on those problems and perhaps even contribute something to their resolution.

More important, the case studies point the way towards a political history which can examine the urban polity's active role in shaping the urban process while remaining sensitive to the social structural forces which influenced urban political activity. Admittedly, no work conducted on this scale can examine in their entirety the many important ways in which urban politics influences the structure and experience of urban life; whether through the city government's provision of social services, through civil servants' influence over public policy-making or through the political interests and behavior of the less articulate groups of urban voters. For as Hershberg has rightly insisted, a total analysis of the urban process depends upon so wide a focus of enquiry and so

extensive a range of disciplines that it requires collaborative research. Despite Hershberg's comments, the Philadelphia Social History Project and, indeed, many of the new urban historians, neglect to analyze how the urban polity shapes the urban process.<sup>1</sup>

The present studies, despite the necessary limitations in their scope, demonstrate the central role that the urban polity plays in shaping the urban process. Indeed, the case studies show that at two fundamentally different periods in the history of Philadelphia, the structure of government was at least as influential as socio-economic and spatial structures in shaping both the municipality's responses to structural developments and the changing experience of life in the city itself. Just as historians are accepting that to understand American social development the state must be a focus of attention, so too must the local state.<sup>2</sup> Urban historians seem to recognize this.<sup>3</sup> Few, however, have produced analyses in which the urban polity is seen as playing a dependent as well as an independent role in the urban process. This work, provides such an analysis and, it is hoped, may encourage others to investigate the dynamic relationship that exists between the urban polity and urban society.

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1). T. Hershberg, 'The New Urban History', pp.23-8.

2). Indeed, this was the thrust of the keynote speech at the annual conference of the Organization of American Historians. See W.E. Leuchtenberg, 'The Persistence of Political History: Reflections on the Significance of the State in America', Journal of American History, 73:3(Dec., 1986), pp.585-600.

3). T.J. McDonald, 'The Problem of the Political in Recent American Urban History: Liberal Pluralism and the Rise of Functionalism', Social History, 10(1985), pp.323-45.

## Appendices and Bibliography

# APPENDIX ONE

## THE DIMENSIONS OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE, 1800-1854<sup>1</sup>

Table A1.1. Appropriations made by the city councils and the standing debts of the city (both floating and funded) in selected years.

| YEAR              | APPROPRIATIONS        | DEBTS FUNDED AND FLOATING |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1800              | \$78,485 <sup>a</sup> | \$4,000                   |
| 1827 <sup>b</sup> | 230,380               | 1,686,000                 |
| 1846 <sup>c</sup> | ----                  | 3,111,500                 |
| 1854 <sup>d</sup> | 1,005,535             | 10,788,700                |

1). Unless otherwise indicated the figures in Tables A1.1, A1.2 and A1.3 were compiled from the OAA and the OCP.

a). The figure denotes the city's total income for that year which includes a \$10,000 loan.

b). Figures obtained from E.P. Allinson and B. Penrose, City Government of Philadelphia, p.46 and J.A. Scott, 'The Businessman, Capitalism and the City', p.44.

c). Figures calculated from Report of the Joint Special Committee....Relative to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, see the reports of the city treasurer appended to that document.

d). Figures obtained from OAA and OCP which list acts and ordinances appropriating money to various committees and for various purposes. The 1854 appropriation is actually an average yearly appropriation figured for the years 1850-1854 inclusive see Table A1.2 below.

Table A1.2. Appropriations made and debts incurred,  
1800-1854.

| COUNCILS'<br>COMMITTEES                | 1850    | 1851                | 1852    | 1853      | 1854 <sup>a</sup>    | AVERAGE<br>1850-54 |
|----------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Ice Boat                               | \$7,500 | \$7,500             | \$7,500 | \$7,500   | \$7,500              | \$7,500            |
| Legacies<br>& Trusts                   | 7,320   | 6,500               | 9,880   | 8,100     | 7,900                | 7,924              |
| Water                                  | 63,800  | 21,000 <sup>b</sup> | 82,347  | 53,986    | 20,000               | 48,227             |
| Police                                 | 207,806 | 276,344             | 191,845 | 278,252   | 113,150              | 213,479            |
| Street<br>Cleaning                     | 14,500  | 19,000              | 20,987  | 31,500    | 12,000               | 19,597             |
| City<br>Property                       | 32,000  | 49,579              | 40,000  | 126,000   | 680,000 <sup>c</sup> | 185,516            |
| Public<br>Highways                     | 103,000 | 92,000              | 90,000  | 133,000   | 237,600 <sup>d</sup> | 131,120            |
| Library                                | ---     | 500                 | 200     | 400       | 100                  | 300                |
| Misc.                                  | 15,000  | 3,000               | 13,200  | 2,000     | -----                | 8,300              |
| Finance <sup>e</sup><br>(sinking fund) | 277,307 | 310,343             | 345,921 | 524,990   | 25,000               | 296,712            |
| TOTAL                                  | 728,233 | 785,766             | 801,880 | 1,165,728 | 1,103,250            | 916,974            |

a). Figures listed for 1854 only account for temporary appropriations made during the six months between January and June, 1854, after which the city was consolidated with the districts.

b). This figure is artificially low as it does not account for the \$115,000 loan taken by the city corporation and appropriated to the water works committee; see Table A1.3 below.

c). This figure is out of proportion to the others in the row as it includes a \$650,000 loan made by the city corporation and appropriated to the committee on city property; see Table A1.3 below.

d). This figure includes a \$150,000 loan made by the city corporation and appropriated to the committee on public highways; see Table A1.3 below.

e). The money appropriated to the finance committee was used to pay the interest on the the city debt and to sink the principle of the city's various loans.

Table A1.3    Loans Taken by the city, 1846 and 1854 inclusive  
(all figures in dollars)

| DATE ISSUED | PURPOSE OF LOAN                                                         | AMOUNT OF LOAN |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 12/11/46    | Pennsylvania Railroad stock                                             | \$2,500,000    |
| 14/3/50     | Schuylkill Railroad Company stock                                       | -----          |
| 10/3/53     | Philadelphia, Euston and Water<br>Gap Railroad Co. stock                | 500,000        |
| 14/4/53     | Hempfield Railroad Co. stock                                            | 500,000        |
| 22/12/53    | Hempfield Railroad Co. stock                                            | 100,000        |
| 7/1/54      | Sunbury and Erie Railroad Co. stock <sup>a</sup>                        | 2,000,000      |
| 16/2/54     | Northern Railroad Co. stock                                             | 750,000        |
| 22/11/49    | To improve the water works                                              | 166,000        |
| 14/3/50     | To build a permanent bridge over the Schuylkill                         | 100,000        |
| 3/4/51      | To improve the water works                                              | 115,000        |
| 24/4/51     | To build a permanent bridge over the Schuylkill                         | 50,000         |
| 9/10/51     | To build a permanent bridge over the Schuylkill                         | 6,000          |
| 23/12/52    | To purchase lots in the city                                            | 18,100         |
| 3/3/53      | To the Board of Health                                                  | 23,000         |
| 10/3/53     | To pave streets and build culverts                                      | 50,000         |
| 5/1/54      | To pave streets and build culverts                                      | 150,000        |
| 30/1/54     | To buy land for the markets                                             | 650,000        |
| -----       |                                                                         |                |
| SUB-TOTALS  |                                                                         |                |
| 1.          | Total Railroad Loans                                                    | 6,350,000      |
| 2.          | Total Other Loans                                                       | 1,328,100      |
| 3.          | Total Debt Incurred in 1854 (immediately<br>prior to the consolidation) | 3,550,000      |
| 4.(1+2)     | Total of All Loans                                                      | 7,678,100      |
| 5.          | Total Standing Debt in 1846                                             | 3,110,600      |
| TOTAL       |                                                                         |                |
| 6.(4+5)     | Total Standing Debt of the Consolidated<br>City in 1854                 | 10,788,700     |

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a). Allegations against the company's corrupt practices led to the city's withdrawal from its purchase agreement.

## APPENDIX TWO

### THE DIMENSIONS OF URBAN GOVERNMENT 1789-1854

I. **THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA** (consisting of the mayoral and councilmanic appointments including the year that such appointments were created)

#### 1. MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

##### a. Before After the Political Reorganization of 1839

| YEAR<br>APPOINTMENT<br>ESTABLISHED | NUMBER AND NAME OF POSITION APPOINTED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1806                               | 2 Regulators (one of them an assitant)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1811                               | 1 City Clerk                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1814                               | 1 Regulator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1817                               | 1 City Solicitor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1818                               | 3 City Commissioners who appoint the following:<br>1 Clerk<br>39 Day Police (see the Police Force<br>4 Night Watchmen III.6 below)                                                                                                                                              |
| 1822                               | 1 (or as many as necessary) Collector(s) of Water Rents                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1826                               | 1 (or as many as necessary) person(s) to take up loose swine                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1828                               | 1 (or as many as necessary) person(s) to take up loose dogs                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1830                               | 1 City Physician (see the Board of Health II.1 below)                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1830                               | 4 Collectors of Vaccines (see under Board of Health)                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1831                               | 1 (or as many as necessary) Clerk(s) of the Market who appoints assitant(s) as necessary                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1833                               | 1 President of the Board of City Commissioners                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1834                               | 1 Superintendent of the Broad Street Railway                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1835                               | 1 (or as many as necessary) Clerk(s) of the West Market who appoints the following:<br>1 Watchman of the City Hall<br>1 Turnkey of the City Hall<br>1 Watchman of the State House<br>1 Member of the Board of Prison Inspectors<br>(see Board of Prison Inspectors II.2. below) |

b. After the Political Reorganization of 1839

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Carried over<br>from before<br>1839 | 1 (or as many as necessary) person(s) to take up<br>swine<br>1 (or as many as necessary) to take up dogs<br>4 Clerks of the Markets who appoint their<br>assistant(s)<br>1 Clerk of the West Market who appoints his<br>assistant(s)<br>1 Watchman of the City Hall<br>1 Turnkey of City Hall<br>1 Watchman of the State House |
| 1842<br>1848                        | 1 Messenger of the Mayor's Office<br>Members of the Police Department (see<br>the Police Force III.6 below)<br>4 Captains<br>4 Lieutenants<br>200 Nighth Police<br>4 Turnkeys<br>4 High Constables<br>34 Day Police<br>4 Superintendents of the Lamplighters<br>57 Lamplighters<br>1 Special Constable                         |
| 1851                                | 2 Special Constables                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

2. COUNCILS' APPOINTMENTS

a. Before the Political Reorganization of 1839

|      |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1799 | 1 City Treasurer who appoints the following:<br>1 Clerk<br>1 Messenger<br>2 Clerks of the Councils<br>2 Messengers of the Councils<br>2 Doorkeepers of the Councils |
| 1803 | 24 Directors of the School Districts (see Board<br>of Education II.5 below)                                                                                         |
| 1818 | 6 Members of the Board of Health (see Board of<br>Health II.1 below)<br>4 Members of the Board of Port Wardens (see<br>the Board of Port Wardens II.4 below)        |
| 1826 | 1 Mayor chosen from amongst the citizens of<br>Philadelphia                                                                                                         |
| 1827 | 36 Directors of the School Districts (see the<br>Board of Education II.5 below)                                                                                     |
| 1828 | 6 Guardians of the Poor (see the Guardians<br>of the Poor II.3 below)                                                                                               |
| 1835 | Trustees of the Girard Fund as necessary (see<br>the Girard Estate I.4.c and I.4.d below)                                                                           |

1837 12 Trustees of the Ice Boat (see the Trustees of the Ice Boat I.4.b below)

a. After the Political Reorganization of 1839

1839 1 City Solicitor  
1 President of the Board of City Commissioners  
3 City Commissioners who appoint the following:  
    1 Clerk (see the Police Force III.6 below)  
    39 Day Police (see the Police Force III.6 below)  
    4 Night Watchmen (see the Police Force below)  
1 City Clerk  
2 City Surveyors  
1 Assistant Surveyor who appoints the following:  
    1 Assistant Surveyor  
4 Collectors of Vaccines (Physicians) (see the Board of Health II.1 below)

1842 6 Trustees of the Ice Boat (see the Trustees of the Ice Boat I.4.b below)  
54 Directors of the School Districts (see the Board of Education II.5 below)  
16 Guardians of the Poor (see the Guardians of the Poor II.3 below)

1844 8 Collectors of Vaccines (Physicians) (see the Board of Health II.1 below)

1845 4 Collectors of Vaccines (Physicians) (see the Board of Health II.1 below)

1855 Police Force (see the Police Force III.6 below) includes:  
    4 Lieutenants  
    55 Constables

3. SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCILS, THEIR APPOINTMENTS AND DUTIES  
(the councils' sub-committees, unless otherwise indicated, were established in 1835 and consisted of members of both councils)

a). Committee on Finance

i. General Duties:

pre-1835 1. To quarterly check the receipt books of the city clerk and the city commissioners, against the appropriations made to them by the councils  
2. To quarterly check the receipts of the treasurer  
3. To check the accounts of the city surveyor  
4. To make investments in support of the sinking fund and to pay off and cancel the city's funded debt

post-1835 5. All of 1 to 4 above  
6. To supervise all of the city's financial concerns  
7. To issue requisitions for the interest payments on the debt of the city, for the salaries of the officers of the municipal corporation and for incidental expenses

8. To report annually the necessary tax income, and in what manner and proportion city taxes shall be levied
9. To examine the reports furnished by the standing committees and to estimate their forthcoming yearly expenses

ii. Appointments: Collectors of the City Taxes (as necessary)

b. Watering Committee

i. General Duties:

To employ labor, purchase materials and make contracts in order to supervise, maintain and repair the water works and collect the water rents

ii. Appointments:

Collectors of the Water Rents (as many as necessary)  
 1 Superintendent of the Water Works  
 1 Registrar  
 1 Secretary  
 1 Messenger

c. Committee on City Property

i. General Duties:

To employ labor, purchase materials and make contracts for the 'preservation, repairs and improvements of the real estate, market houses, wharves, landings and public squares belonging to the city

ii. Appointments:

|      |                                                                    |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      | 1 Commissioner of City Property                                    |
|      | Collectors of the City Rent (as many as necessary)                 |
|      | 1 Superintendent of the State House                                |
| 1840 | 5 Night Watchmen of the Markets                                    |
| 1842 | 4 Night Watchmen of the Markets                                    |
| 1842 | 1 City Carpenter                                                   |
|      | 1 Watchman of the Tobacco Warehouse                                |
| 1843 | 1 Inspector of Tobacco                                             |
|      | 1 Clerk of the Tobacco Warehouse                                   |
|      | 1 Superintendent of the Permanent Bridge Over the Schuylkill River |
|      | 2 Watchman of the Permanent Bridge Over the Schuylkill River       |
| 1851 | 3 Watchman of the Permanent Bridge Over the Schuylkill River       |

d. Committee on Public Highways

i. General Duties:

To employ labor, purchase materials and make contracts in order to pave, repair and grade public streets, lanes and alleys, and to build and repair the sewars and culverts

ii. Appointments:

1 Superintendent of the Broad Street Railway  
Watchmen and Turnkeys of the Police Stations

e. Committee on Police (see the Police Force III.6 below)

Appointments:

|      |                                                    |
|------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1839 | 1 Clerk of Police                                  |
| 1841 | The 1841 Police Force (see the Police Force below) |
|      | including:                                         |
|      | 1 First Lieutenant                                 |
|      | 1 Second Lieutenant                                |
|      | 1 Special Constable                                |
|      | 1 Assistant Clerk of Police                        |

f. Committee on Cleansing the City

i. General Duties:

To employ labor, purchase material and make contracts as necessary to clean the city streets and other property

g. Committee on Legacies and Trusts

i. General Duties:

1. To distribute councils' annual grants to the fire companies
2. To look after all legacies and trusts given to the city with the exception of the Girard estate and the Wills' hospital (see I.4.a and I.4.c below)

#### 4. OTHER BOARDS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE CITY COUNCILS

a. Managers of the Wills' Hospital Trust Fund

i. General Duties:

'To manage the Wills' Hospital and to request money for this purpose from the Mayor who draws orders on the trust fund from the city treasury

ii. Appointments:

1833            3 Managers each elected for a three-year term  
                1 Treasurer of the Wills' Trust (the post is filled  
                    by the city treasurer)

b. Trustees of the Ice Boat

i. General Duties:

To use the \$70,000 borrowed by the city in 1837  
to build and operate an ice boat in order to keep the  
Delaware River clear of ice

ii. Appointments:

6 trustees created in 1837 and appointed by the councils for a three-year term (in 1842 the number of trustees was decreased to 3)

c. Commissioners of the Girard Estate

i. General Duties:

To superintend the estate left to the city by Stephen Girard and to to collect the rents thereof

ii. Appointments:

1 Agent of the Estate (elected by the councils)  
1 Treasurer of the Estate (elected by the councils)

d. Directors of the Girard College for Orphans

i. General Duties:

To administer the Girard College for Orphans with the money drawn from the Girard Estate in compliance with the will of Stephen Girard - all appropriations to the Board and to the College to come from the estate through the councils

ii. Appointments:

16 Directors of the College (8 each elected by the common and select councils respectively to serve three-year terms) to make the following appointments:

1847                    1 President of the Board (selected from among the directors )  
                          1 Secretary of the Board  
                          1 President of the College  
                          1 Steward of the College

And for every 100 pupils:

1 Principle female teacher  
1 First Assistant female teacher  
1 Second Assistant female teacher  
4 Governesses  
2 Visiting Physicians  
1 Janitor

And these other servants as necessary:

                          1 Gardener  
1848                    2 Prefects  
1850                    1 Librarian  
                          1 Governess  
                          1 Dentist  
                          1 French and Spanish teacher  
                          1 Natural History teacher  
                          1 English and Math teacher  
                          1 Principle teacher  
                          1 First Assistant teacher  
                          2 Second Assistant teachers  
                          1 Messenger of the Board  
1851                    1 Assistant teacher  
                          1 Drawing Instructor

II. INDEPENDENT COUNTY-WIDE CORPORATIONS - (boards with corporate charters from the state legislature whose members consisted of officers appointed by the councils and by the commissioners of the districts of the county, and which have the power to raise and spend revenue independently of the councils and the districts and to administer the affairs under their supervision independently of those bodies)

1. BOARD OF HEALTH (established in 1799, its members appointed by the state governor until 1818)

i. General Duties:

1. To secure the port of the city of Philadelphia from pestilential and contagious diseases
2. To make rules etc. for the government of the Lazaretto (the port of immigration) and the vessels, persons and cargoes detained there in quarantine
3. To make rules etc. for the governemnt of the health office and city hospital, and for the mode of visiting and examining vessels, persons, goods and houses in the city and districts
4. To appoint such officers and attendants necessary for the Lazaretto, the health office and the city hospital
5. To make laws and rules to protect the health of the city
6. To quarantine any part of the city infected with contagious disease and to remove inhabitants therefrom
7. To enter and inspect homes or stores suspected of containing dangerous substances
8. To keep the birth and death records for the county
- 1828 9. To receive a tax from immigrants in order to defray the cost of immigrants on public welfare

ii. Appointments:

- 1818 11 board members to be appointed annually as follows:
- 6 by the city councils
  - 2 by the commissioners of the Northern Liberties
  - 1 by the commissioners of Southwark
  - 1 by the Commissioners of Moyamensing
  - 1 by the commissioners of Penn Township
- 1 Physician of the Board of Health (appointed by the governor)
- 1 Port Physician (appointed by the governor)
- 1 Lazaretto Physician (appointed by the governor)
- 1 Quarantine Master (appointed by the governor)
- 1853 7 additional members added to the Board

2. BOARD OF PRISON INSPECTORS (established in 1789, the members appointed by the courts of the districts and the mayor, recorder and aldermen of the city)

3. GUARDIANS OF THE POOR (established before 1803)

i. General Duties:

- |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| pre-1803 | 1. To assess and levy a poor tax on the people of the county of Philadelphia                                                                                                                            |
|          | 2. To govern the almshouse                                                                                                                                                                              |
|          | 3. To distribute outdoor relief as necessary                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1803     | 4. 8 Guardians to act as almshouse managers and to assess and levy the poor tax (with the consent of the justices of the peace of Southwark and the Northern Liberties and of the aldermen of the city) |
|          | 5. 24 remaining Guardians to collect the poor tax, administer the distribution of outdoor relief and visit the poor                                                                                     |
| 1820     | 6. The almshouse managers and the rest of the guardians begin to meet and act separately                                                                                                                |
| 1828     | 7. Term of the guardians is extended from 1 to 3 years                                                                                                                                                  |
|          | 8. The authority to levy the poor tax is taken from the guardians and vested in a board consisting of 12 city councilmen and district commissioners                                                     |
| 1842     | 9. The state legislature abolishes the board of 12 that was established in 1828 to levy and collect the poor tax and reinvests the guardians with that authority                                        |

ii. Appointments:

- |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| pre-1803 | 24 Guardians of the Poor appointed annually as follows:<br>4 by the justices of the peace of Southwark<br>4 by the justices of the peace of the Northern Liberties<br>16 by the city councils                                                                                 |
| 1803     | 32 Guardians of the Poor appointed annually as follows:<br>16 by the city councils<br>8 by the justices of the peace of the Northern Liberties<br>8 by the justices of the peace of Southwark                                                                                 |
| 1820     | Number of guardians increased to 50 with the addition of those appointed by the newly-incorporated districts of Spring Garden and Kensington                                                                                                                                  |
| 1828     | Number of Guardians reduced from 50 to 12 to be appointed as follows:<br>6 by the city councils<br>2 by the commissioners of Southwark<br>2 by the commissioners of the Northern Liberties<br>1 by the commissioners of Spring Garden<br>1 by the commissioners of Kensington |

- 1844                      Number of Guardians increased from 12 to 15 with the addition of one each from Spring Garden, Kensington and the newly incorporated district of Moyamensing
- 1850                      Number of the Guardians increased from 15 to 17 with the addition of one each from the newly-incorporated districts of Penn and Richmond

#### 4. BOARD OF PORT WARDENS (established in 1818)

##### i. General Duties:

1. To look after the wharves and docks of Philadelphia
2. To receive applications for and issue building permits

##### ii. Appointments:

- 1 Master of the port (appointed by the governor)
- 13 Assistant Masters of the port appointed as follows:
  - 4 by the city councils
  - 2 by the commissioners of Kensington
  - 2 by the commissioners of the Northern Liberties
  - 2 by the commissioners of Southwark
  - 1 by the commissioners of Moyamensing
  - 1 by the commissioners of Richmond
  - 1 by the commissioners of Bridesburg

#### 5. BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION (established in 1818)

##### i. General Duties:

1. To choose from amongst themselves a Board of Controllers, 1 Controller for every 6 Directors
2. To assess and levy a school tax
3. To administer and govern the public schools in the county of Philadelphia

##### ii. Appointments:

- 1818                      54 Directors each to serve a three-year terms and to be appointed in the following manner:
- 24 by the city councils
  - 12 by the commissioners of the Northern Liberties
  - 6 by the commissioners of Moyamensing
  - 6 by the commissioners of Southwark
  - 6 by the commissioners of Spring Garden
- 1827                      12 additional directors added to the Board, all of them appointed by the city councils
- 1842                      Number of Directors increased to 111 to be appointed in the following manner:
- 54 by the city councils

24 by the commissioners of the Northern Liberties  
 12 by the commissioners of Moyamensing  
 6 by the commissioners of Southwark  
 15 by the commissioners of Spring Garden

6. THE BOARD OF POLICE (established in 1851 consisting of the presidents of the city councils, the district commissioners and the police marshall who is elected annually by the people of the county see Police Force below)

### III. OTHER MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS - (to which the officers of the corporation of the city of Philadelphia had no appointments)

1. COUNTY BOARD COMMISSIONERS (consisting of 3 county commissioners elected in county-wide elections and their appointed clerk, treasurer, sheriff and 3 auditors)

2. COUNTY BOARD (composed of the county's representatives in the state legislature)

#### i. General Duties:

1. To check on the county commissioners (see above)
2. To fix the rate of county tax

3. DISTRICT CORPORATIONS (including the dates of their incorporation by the state legislature)

|                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| 1. District of Southwark              | 1762 |
| 2. District of the Northern Liberties | 1771 |
| 3. District of Moyamensing            | 1812 |
| 4. District of Spring Garden          | 1813 |
| 5. District of Kensington             | 1820 |
| 6. District of Penn                   | 1844 |
| 7. District of Richmond               | 1847 |
| 8. District of West Philadelphia      | 1851 |
| 9. District of Belmont                | 1853 |

#### 4. BOROUGH CORPORATIONS

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Aramingo   | 4. Frankford |
| 2. Bridesburg | 5. Manayunk  |
| 3. Germantown | 6. Whitehall |

#### 5. TOWNSHIPS

|             |                 |               |                             |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Aramingo | 4. Germantown   | 7. Moreland   | 10. Passyunk                |
| 2. Bristol  | 5. Kingessing   | 8. North Penn | 11. Roxborough              |
| 3. Byberry  | 6. Lower Dublin | 9. Oxford     | 12. Unincorporated Northern |

6. POLICE FORCES - (each of the following police forces operated independently within the city of Philadelphia. In addition, each district also maintained its own sheriff. The county-wide police force which was eventually established in 1850, did not supersede any of the other independent forces)

a. Constabulary - (existed from at least the first decade of the nineteenth century and operated under the city commissioners. In 1835, the constabulary was placed under the control of the councils' Committee on Police (see I.4.e above)

39 Night Watchmen (appointed by the city commissioners)  
15 Constables chosen by the Mayor

b. 1841 Police Force - commissioned to work in conjunction with the constabulary when the need arose. The members of the 1841 police force were appointed and supervised by the councils' committee on police (see I.4.e above)

|      |                                        |
|------|----------------------------------------|
| 1841 | 1 First Lieutenant (abolished in 1850) |
|      | 1 Second Lieutenant                    |
|      | 1 Special Constable                    |
|      | 1 Clerk of Police                      |
| 1853 | 1 Assistant Clerk of Police            |

c. City Militia - (after the 1844 nativist riots the city was placed under martial law and a city militia was formed to maintain order)

1 battalion of artillery  
1 regiment of infantry  
1 (or more if necessary) full troop of horses  
1,350 total force of men available in the Militia by  
September, 1844.

d. Night and Day Police - (established in 1848, appointed and supervised by the mayor in accordance with a state law which provided that the city employ one policeman for every 150 people in the city, see I.1.a and I.1.b above)

4 High Constables  
34 Day Policemen  
1 Special Constable  
4 Superintendent Lamplighters  
57 Lamplighters

e. City and County Police Force - (established in 1850 and consisting of 1 Marshall of police who was elected in county-wide elections for a three-year term. With the establishment of this force, the city was divided into four police districts and the city councils elected to the police force one lieutenant from each of the four districts. The city councils also elected at least three times the number policemen as prescribed by state law as being necessary given the population of Philadelphia (see III.6.d above), and presented the list to police marshall who then selected the required number of men)

i. General Duties:

1. To hold the police powers formerly vested in the mayor, the city commissioners and the sheriffs of the districts
2. To be present (or represented by a lieutenant) at all fires
3. To break up riots
4. To call in the militia if necessary
5. To appoint policement from amongst the candidates nominated by the city councils and by the districts' board of commissioners (see III.2 above)
6. To form part of a Board of Police along with the mayor and the district commissioners (see II.6. above)

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