Environmental Stimulants upon the Activity Potential of Political Party Committees: A Case Study of Michigan Congressional District Committees, 1969

Shirley M. McFee
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ENVIRONMENTAL STIMULANTS UPON THE
ACTIVITY POTENTIAL OF POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES:
A CASE STUDY OF MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT COMMITTEES, 1969

by

Shirley M. McFee

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April 1970
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In the writing of this thesis, I am indebted to Dr. Robert W. Kaufman, Dr. Richard McAnaw, and Dr. Jack C. Plano for their helpful suggestions and constructive criticism; to the many district chairmen for their invaluable cooperation in the accumulation of data; and to the state chairmen of the Republican and Democratic parties, both past and present, for their kind encouragement. My thanks go to all of them for their assistance in the preparation of this material, for whose final presentation I alone assume responsibility.

Shirley M. McFee
McFEE, Shirley M.

Western Michigan University, M.A., 1970
Political Science, general

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INTRODUCTION

Emergence of American Political Parties

In the contemporary world, democratic self-government and political parties are as natural partners as cake and ice-cream—yet at the inception of the first contemporary experiment in democratic self-government, the United States of America, this marriage was not considered a part of the plan. The Constitution of the United States makes no mention of political parties—indeed, its framers looked upon them as a plague to be avoided lest it bear fruit to irreconcilable polarization of conflicting interests. However, with the inclusion in the Constitution of guarantees of liberty, there was no legislative power to deny the right to organize political parties\(^1\) and, as the experience in self-government pursued its course, the political party emerged as a blending agent to hold its fundamental ingredients together.

Chambers attributes this emergence to interrelated and interacting existing conditions:

1. The development of a variety of groups or sub-groupings within the population as the social and socio-economic structures became more complex and differentiated;
2. The expansion of political participation to include an ever-widening portion of the population;

3. The existence of a common political arena, created by the adoption of the Constitution in 1789;
4. The sense of felt need on the part of those involved in government for an order with reasonable predictability through which they could conduct their political affairs, not the least of which was their continued election.¹

Chambers further suggests that these conditions associated with the emergence of parties support the hypothesis that parties and the party system in some form are essential parts of a viable democratic polity in a complex society, that without their organized order, such a polity could scarcely endure as a functioning entity.² Key asserts that organization is a condition precedent to the accomplishments of tasks that require the cooperation of many individuals, in the political sense the task being to seek control of the government with the political party providing the organization.³

While it might theoretically be possible to postulate upon the desireability of perpetuating a democratic polity through another means, the realities at this point in history substantiate the posture that, "whenever ultimate control of political institutions is determined


²loc. cit., pp. 10-11.

by free and contested elections, the chief agency for gaining political power is the political party."¹

What, then, is a 'political party'? Schattschneider describes it succinctly as "an organized attempt to get control of the government."²

Chambers more elaborately details a party as, "a relatively durable social formation which seeks offices or power in government, exhibits a structure or organization which links leaders at the center of government to a significant popular following in the political arena and its local enclaves, and generates in-group perspectives or at least symbols of identification or loyalty."³

Lowi adds another dimension in his definition: "Party is a means by which the electorates structure themselves in some manner which is institutionally related to government."⁴

Taking the substance of these three definitions, one might conclude that a political party is concerned with control of the government, that it acts as an intermediary between the electorate and the

---


³ op. cit., p. 5.

leaders of the government, and that the structure for so doing is fashioned by the government it serves.

The structure or framework of a political party provides the arrangement by which activities—such as winning elections and acting as a liaison—are performed. A general comprehension of the structure is fundamental to the understanding of the larger scope of a political party; it is thus appropriate to briefly review the framework within which American parties operate as a prelude to a more specific study.

General Structure of American Political Parties

American major political parties have primarily directed their activities toward trying to discover some way of bringing together into a reasonably harmonious relationship as large a proportion of the voters as possible for the express purpose of winning elections.¹ In seeking harmony, the parties have tended, with the exception of the cleavage over the issue of slavery, to contain or resolve political conflict rather than exacerbate it, to seek a compromise rather than insist on logic and adherence to issue, to hold together the many centrifugal forces through the prize of power, the yearning for which has kept the number of parties at two.²

Only rare exception interrupts an American history of two competitive political parties, parties which have been more concerned about the existence of competition rather than what the competition was about.¹ In a nation which is not only free but also huge, unity can be maintained only through compromise and a concern for minority interests,² and if at times it appears that the American party system tends to blur issues, the system does provide opportunities for individuals and minority groups to develop ideas and policies and pursue their realization.³ It provides these opportunities through its structure.

If there is one area of agreement among political scientists about American political party structure, it is on the acceptance of the word decentralized as an apt description. Beyond that the differentiations begin:

One major school of thought applies the term stratarchy—a series of layers of authority which so proliferates the ruling groups as to include a high proportion of the party activists in some phase of decision-making.⁴

¹ Lowi, in Chambers, op. cit., p. 255.
² Agar, op. cit., p. 56.
³ Herring, op. cit., p. 200.
Schattschneider employs the term "truncated pyramid", with the real authority resting below the dividing line where state and local organizations operate and only the ghost of a party existing above that line.¹

Sorauf describes American parties as a hierarchy of parties, from local units to national, in which the local units have become almost completely independent of the help and authority of central party organizations.²

Rossiter chooses feudalism, characterized with decentralization even down to local precincts with but few pledges of faith and bonds so loose as to border on anarchy.³

Whatever the descriptive term used, the consensus of opinion supports the suggestion of Hennessy that "party organization tends to assume structure and articulation paralleling that of the governmental system."⁴ An examination of American parties will bear this out.

¹op. cit., p. 163.


Within the federal composition of American government, American parties were organized on a federal basis, with autonomous state and local units—an autonomy which within the parties has persisted to this day, despite the strong nationalizing pulls of economics and national defense, in keeping the balance of power heavily weighted toward the state-local side.

With the recent exception of concern over financial expenditures, Congress has remained aloof from party organization, thus leaving each of the fifty states free to define a political party, outline its organization, determine who will choose the party leaders, and whatever else might be considered worthy of attention; the result is fifty parties which differ widely in particulars, but whose structures have certain common characteristics.

In general, the political parties have the right of self-government and the right to manage their own affairs. During the

---

1 Lowi, in Chambers, op. cit., p. 253.


4 Sorauf, op. cit., p. 141.


6 loc. cit., p. 448
period from 1828-1860, the parties developed the basic structure under which they operate today. In order to divide the labor and yet coordinate the many tasks involved in mobilizing the electorate, a variety of state and local committees appeared, ostensibly receiving their authority to conduct party affairs from popularly chosen delegate conventions on both state and local levels.¹ In no state did the party organize into a true hierarchy, with lower levels controlled and removable by the upper; to the contrary, party organization did not vest leadership as a whole in either a single person or committee, but rather elected that officers and committees at each level would be chosen locally and could not be removed by any higher party authority.²

Such confusing and sketchy lines of authority leave party leaders themselves unclear on the relationships within and between the maze of committees. Each committee has an independent concern, for the organizational pattern of the parties is predicated on the assumption that a party committee is necessary for each electoral area, ³ but each higher level must obtain the collaboration of the lower levels of organization—collaboration which must come about

¹ Chambers, op. cit., p. 13.
² Ranney and Kendall, op. cit., pp. 69-70.
³ Committee of American Political Science Association, op. cit., p. 44.
through a sense of common cause and loyalty acquired by considerable downward deference rather than by exercise of command. ¹

Although state issues cannot be totally isolated from national issues, primarily this need for cooperation stops at the state boundary, for even the election of the presidency is a state process.² Even within the states, political localism has flourished, oftentimes at the expense of internal party democracy, a condition which causes claim that Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" does prevail in American politics, even if only in small areas.³

The realization that intra-party elections were not in of themselves a sufficient insurance for internal party democracy — graphically illustrated by the rise of local party bosses and their machines — caused a wholesale endeavor to control the party organization through statutory regulation. Beginning in 1891, state legislatures began to build a great mass of legislation aimed at more popular selection of party officials and the functions of the organization by prescribing the manner of elections and powers of the party committees,⁴ attempts at regulation unknown in other democracies.⁵

¹Ranney and Kendall, op. cit., p. 72.
³Rossiter, op. cit., pp. 34-35.
⁵Starr, op. cit., p. 448
⁶Sorauf, op. cit., p. 141.
Even so, a great deal of party structure and activity remains unregulated.\(^1\) Furthermore, the American parties have in many instances circumvented the regulations through adaptations and modifications, indeed even ruses, in their practical operations.\(^2\) Some of the party committees established by law may be only 'paper' organizations, whereas others may be active and effective instruments.\(^3\) The range extends from the tough hyperactive urban machine to the immobile, chaotic, disorganized party of the rural area, with variations from time to time and place to place within one party as well as between the parties.\(^4\)

Such variations would suggest that whereas parties may be regulated by statute, they also exist independently of the statutes,\(^5\) that their structures are only a potential for activity,\(^6\) the ultimate extent of which is shaped by influences within the environment.

Two such influences and their effects are to be the concern of this research.

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\(^1\) Bone, op. cit., p. 104.

\(^2\) Sorauf, op. cit., p. 149.

\(^3\) Bone, op. cit., p. 158.

\(^4\) Sorauf, op. cit., p. 8

\(^5\) Starr, op. cit., p. 44.

Purpose and Method

In his book, *Party & Representation*, Sorauf presents the findings from his research in the State of Pennsylvania into the environmental influences effective in stimulating party activity. He observed two such influences—the nature—urban or rural—of the constituency and the potential of electoral victory.

Sorauf found a positive relationship between an urban constituency and a developed, alert, and unified party organization; he found a similar correlation with the party's ability to win elections. He further ascertained that whereas major and minor parties within the same constituency often develop differently in response to the incentive of the vote division, in urban areas both parties exhibited a highly developed organization. He thus distinguished the nature of the constituency as the more significant of these two environmental influences.¹

It is the intent of this research to further test this relationship. The State of Michigan has been selected as the site. The nineteen congressional districts within the state provide convenient units from which to collect data for comparison.

According to statutory requirement, a congressional district committee is selected for each district by each political party. There are no activities delineated in the statute, and casual observation yields the impression that these activities vary considerably from one

¹ loc. cit., pp. 47-49.
district committee to another. Can it, then, be determined that activity of this committee is a variable, dependent upon other variables or influences within the encompassed environment.

To what extent can the two variables suggested by Sorauf--urbanization within the constituency and the opportunity to elect for each party within the constituency--be ascertained as such influences.

From casual observation of these two variables, one can surmise the following:

Although the population of each congressional district is comparable numerically, it is distributed unevenly over extensively unequal amounts of terrain. The degree of urbanization will then vary from district to district; yet within any one district, this factor is the same for both political parties.

The opportunity to elect the congressional candidate of the two major parties ranges from a shoo-in to a foregone acknowledgement of defeat. Furthermore, in most districts the opportunity is polarized at opposite extremes, for if one candidate is a shoo-in, his opponent must recognize his potential defeat; only in a few districts is there a sufficiently narrow margin in the vote pattern to engender hope in the minority candidate, hope that an unusual combination of circumstances might cause the margin to reverse its advantage.

With Sorauf's findings as the inspiration, this research will undertake to transform these casual observations into factual data which will be used to test the following hypothesis:
A political party committee develops its activity potential in response to influences within the environment of its constituency. More particularly,

1. As urbanization increases, the activity of political committees flourishes whether or not there is an accompanying opportunity to elect;
2. As urbanization decreases, the activity of political committees responds more directly to its corresponding opportunity to elect.

Each variable will be explored for background and then delineated as to its application in the categorization of each district:

In context with a description of the population distribution of the state in its entirety, both at present and historically, the population density and distribution of each congressional district will be presented as the basis from which to determine the degree of urbanization within that district; the districts will subsequently be ranked in order and classified as high urban or less urban.

A review of the rise of two-party competition within the State of Michigan will set the stage for a breakdown of the State into the geographical areas of strength for each party; this will result in a determination of the potential opportunity to elect for each party within each congressional district, from which each will be ranked in order and categorized as either having or not having such an opportunity.
Within a description of the overall political party structure in Michigan as provided by state statute, particular attention will be given to the development and position of the congressional district committee. There shall follow an appraisal of the level of activity achieved within this statutory framework by the various district committees. The basis for the appraisal is a questionnaire submitted to the several district committee chairmen. The questionnaire poses specific questions pertaining to the committee's participation in party affairs within the district and the state, in campaign activities, and in the nomination and election of the congressional candidate. From the responses, an activity level will be determined for each committee; there will then be a categorization of each committee as very active or less active.

Thus the data will provide three delineated variables, each of which is ranked and classified into two categories. Correlation of the variables will be accomplished by use of a variety of statistical tests and the findings will be applied to the hypothesis as a test of its validity.

A discussion of the results, followed by other pertinent observations, will serve as a conclusion.
THE VARIABLES

The Variable of Urbanization

Following the second World War, Michigan, as did the nation, experienced a generous upsurge in population. Between 1940 and 1950, the number of inhabitants in the state increased by 1,115,560, to a total of 6,371,766;\(^1\) by 1960, the total reached 7,824,018, with an estimated population in 1969 of 8,790,000.\(^2\)

Accompanying the growth has been a significant in-state population shift, with that of certain areas—primarily the Upper Peninsula and the northern-most portion of the Lower Peninsula—actually decreasing, while other portions—primarily the southeastern corner of the Lower Peninsula—have disproportionately increased. By 1950, the thirty-four southern counties enveloped roughly 88 per cent of all Michigan's inhabitants, with over 50 per cent living in the southeastern counties of Wayne, Oakland, Genessee, and Saginaw.\(^3\) The estimated population for 1969 projects an increase in these four counties, but a drop in percentage to around 45 per cent of the total, because some of the other southern counties to the West—i.e.,

---


\(^3\) LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 10.
Kalamazoo, Kent, Muskegon, Ingham—have more than doubled in size since 1960.¹

This clustering of individuals around urban-industrial centers has developed first in the southeastern corner of the state and second in the outstate southern counties and has caused the rural population to constitute an ever-smaller proportion of the total.²

These figures illustrate that urbanization—the process of changing from rural to city—while ever increasing in Michigan is not increasing uniformly. An examination of the nineteen congressional districts reveals this succinctly.

Following the Supreme Court decision of 1964, which established the one-man one-vote principle, the congressional districts of Michigan were reapportioned to create nineteen districts of approximating populations. The criteria of population as a common denominator could be met only by a wide diversification in geographical encompassment, from 28 square miles in the thirteenth district in Wayne County to 20,445 square miles in the eleventh district, which encompasses the entire Upper Peninsula part of the northern Lower Peninsula; a further diversity in population density results, ranging from 16,017.4 persons per square mile in the thirteenth district to 19.7 in the eleventh.

(See Table I)

Population density is a significant indication of urbanization.


²LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 10.
It alone does not suffice, however; in some districts, a large densely populated urban center may be surrounded by an expanse of sparsely populated terrain. A more accurate description of each district can be realized by considering also the number of urban inhabitants in comparison to the number of non-urban inhabitants, thus arriving at a per cent of urbanization. Using these two criteria, the districts can be ranked in order of urbanization. (See Table I)

The analysis of Table I suggests the basis of categorization in terms of the degree of urbanization. A rather abrupt drop in both the per cent of urbanization and the population per square mile occurs between the districts within the greater Detroit area and those further outstate, going from 85.6 per cent urbanization and 635.6 persons per square mile in the nineteenth district in Oakland County to 76.5 per cent urbanization and 282.8 persons per square mile in the fifth district, which includes Grand Rapids.

While it is recognized that both the fifth district and the next in line, the seventh, contain large cities—Grand Rapids and Flint—and that the average density does not reflect these large areas of concentrated population, and although further examination of Table I reveals other cleavages, it yet seems desireable to make the break between high and less urbanization between the nineteenth and the fifth districts, as follows:

High urbanization—more than 80 per cent urbanization and in excess of 600 persons per square mile;

Less urbanization—less than 80 per cent urbanization and fewer than 600 persons per square mile.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Number and Largest City</th>
<th>Pop. per Sq. Mile</th>
<th>Per Cent of Urbanization</th>
<th>Degree of Urbanization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>13 Detroit-part</td>
<td>16,017.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Detroit-part</td>
<td>14,881.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Detroit-part</td>
<td>11,584.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Detroit-part</td>
<td>9,453.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Dearborn</td>
<td>3,457.3</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Royal Oak</td>
<td>1,526.0</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Lincoln Park</td>
<td>1,537.0</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Warren</td>
<td>854.4</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Pontiac</td>
<td>635.6</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Grand Rapids</td>
<td>282.8</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Flint</td>
<td>320.2</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Lansing</td>
<td>217.5</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Kalamazoo</td>
<td>144.1</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Ann Arbor</td>
<td>157.1</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Muskegon</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Saginaw</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Marquette</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Bay City</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Holland</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Variable of Opportunity to Elect

As the population increased and shifted, Michigan became a competitive two-party state.

Patronage had long served as the main incentive for participation in Michigan's political parties. In 1937, an act of the Michigan legislature instituted the merit system as the basis of securing and maintaining state employment, the permanence of which was solidified by an amendment to the Michigan constitution, effective January 1, 1941.\(^1\) About the same time, Wayne County also adopted the merit system.\(^2\)

The merit system so reduced the amount of state patronage available that it no longer was possible to build and maintain a party organization premised on that reward; when the parties could no longer provide spoils to those who enabled a victory, the traditional job-oriented party worker lost interest.

The parties needed a new incentive—and that incentive became program! Executives from the motor companies had, beginning in 1940, participated actively in the Republican party, a participation prompted by concern over the proper role of government in American society.\(^3\)

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2 loc. cit., p. 7.

and the maintenance of a tax program and governmental services which would attract industry. ¹

Beginning in the 1930's, the Democrats had begun to make significant inroads into what had been exclusively Republican territory, ² experiencing intermittent victories but suffering a major loss in 1946. At this point, new leadership assumed control. A group of liberals, led by Neil Staebler and G. Mennen Williams, had been actively working to revitalize and regenerate the party; in 1948, this group was bolstered by an official proclamation by the political arm of Michigan labor to join the Democratic Party. ³ This liberal-labor coalition realized the election of Williams as governor in 1948; after 1948, it sought government policies to promote the interests of unions and the working class, seeking to reallocate goods and opportunities in such a way as to produce a more egalitarian society. ⁴ The result was two political parties which represented very different groups and advocated policies which provided distinct alternatives to the voters. ⁵

The vanguard of Democratic strength in Michigan has been the highly-urbanized area of Wayne County; ⁶ yet the importance of votes

¹ loc. cit., p. 41.
² LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 22.
³ Sawyer, op. cit., p. 8.
⁴ Fenton, op. cit., p. 41.
⁵ loc. cit., p. 34.
⁶ Sawyer, op. cit., p. 9.
in outstate Michigan could not be discounted, not just because of their collective impact on state-wide races but also because of the congressional, senatorial, and legislative positions determined by those votes. In 1949, more than half of the outstate counties were without a Democratic county committee; by 1951, all but twelve of the eighty-three counties had been organized, and by 1960, those twelve had been brought into the fold.¹

Along with the increased committees came increased participation in the elections. In 1948, there were seven of the twenty-five Senate seats and twenty-nine of the seventy-three House seats outside of Wayne County which were uncontested; by 1958, this had changed to only one Senate and one House seat without Democratic candidates.² During this time, the Democrats increased their number in the Senate from four in 1947-48 to twelve in 1959-60; in the House, from five in 1947-48 to fifty-five in 1959-60.³

The state-wide offices were likewise going to the Democrats. Huge Democratic pluralities continued to be returned from Wayne County; at the same time, the percentage of the Democratic vote improved in virtually every county of the state.⁴ Williams was re-elected five

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¹ loc. cit., p. 12.
² ibid.
³ LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 23.
⁴ Fenton, op. cit., p. 34.
times, each time bringing several state candidates with him, until by 1959, the Democrats held thirty-two of the forty-one state offices. When the Democratic Party managed to survive the loss of Williams as the leading candidate and elect John Swainson as governor in 1960, there arose speculation that Michigan was again becoming a one-party state—now in control of the Democrats.\(^1\)

However, in 1962, the Republican candidate for governor, George Romney, defeated the incumbent Democratic Governor Swainson by about 80,000 votes, or 51.5 per cent of the two-party vote.\(^2\)

Romney's victory was attributed partially to his own personality and the issues—particularly the tax issue—peculiar to the 1962 election; it was also partially a product of a long term plus-Republican trend in the urban areas outside Detroit.\(^3\)

While the Democrats were increasing their percentage in most Michigan counties, the Republicans yet remained dominant geographically, with fifty-seven of the state's eighty-three counties casting a plurality of their vote for the Republican candidate for governor in every election from 1948-1962.\(^4\) In addition, in twelve counties a

\(^1\)LaPalombara, op. cit., p. 24.

\(^2\)Fenton, op. cit., p. 34.

\(^3\)loc. cit., p. 37.

\(^4\)Fenton, op. cit., p. 31.
plus-Republican change occurred—twelve urban counties with medium sized cities.\(^1\)

In the 1962 election, these metropolitan counties registered a Republican gubernatorial plurality of almost 120,000 votes,\(^2\) enough to put Romney into the winning column.

Romney was the sole victor, however, and Republican hopes to add other offices to the winning column received a tremendous set-back in 1964. The redistricting of 1964 included the congressional districts and all of the state senatorial and legislative districts. The Michigan Constitution established the Michigan Supreme Court as the final arbiter of any apportionment plan; ultimately this court, called upon to select a plan, accepted the one offered by the Democrats, which gave advantage wherever possible to the Democratic candidate.

Combine this situation with the overwhelming preference for the Democratic presidential candidate in 1964, Lyndon B. Johnson, and the formula is complete for a Democratic swoop. In both houses in the state legislature the Democrats won a majority of seats—twenty-three

\(^1\)loc. cit., p. 36. These included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
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<th>Population</th>
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<td>Lansing</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Holland</td>
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</table>

\(^2\)loc. cit., p. 37.
Democrats to fifteen Republicans in the Senate and seventy-three Democrats to thirty-seven Republicans in the House.¹ Five freshmen were elected to Congress, some of them unseating long-time Republican incumbents. Even many local county offices were won for the first time by the Democrats. Only George Romney remained undefeated.

The Republicans grasped this one straw, as had the Democrats with Williams in 1948, and began to build upon it. By 1966, Romney's personal popularity and his leadership within his party had gained enough momentum to turn the table upside down again and regain much of what had been lost in 1964, including a majority in the State Senate—twenty-one Republicans to seventeen Democrats—and an even split in the House, fifty-five to fifty-five.² All five of the freshmen Democrats in the Congress were unseated by Republican contenders; the state offices split. The governor was re-elected, along with his lieutenant governor who shared the ticket; and, in addition, the Republican candidate for the United States Senate, Robert Griffin, captured the seat formerly held by a Democrat, Patrick McNamara, defeating the former Governor G. Mennen Williams in the election.

1968 was again a see-saw. The Democrats carried the state for the presidential candidate and took all of the state-wife positions up for election. The governor enjoyed the respite of a newly-established four year term, as did the State Senate. The State House of


²ibid.
Representatives was returned to the control of the Democrats. The congressional seats were all held by the incumbents, keeping the ratio of twelve Republicans and seven Democrats.

Such election returns have established Michigan as a state with two-party competition.

Ranney used the figures from the elections from 1946 to 1963 to compile four basic figures, which were then averaged to produce an index of competitiveness, establishing the range of .3000 to .6999 as two-party. Michigan is listed at .3770, within the established range of competition.¹

Dawson also has compiled an index of competition, in which he designated a score of 60 per cent or less as highly competitive. In his computations, Michigan became increasingly more competitive, reaching, in the period of 1946-63, a score of 60.9 per cent, less than a percentage point beyond his highly competitive classification.²

Like the urbanization progression, however, the actual opportunity of the two parties to elect is an inconstant factor. While those offices whose constituency is the entire state may be involved in an intensely competitive contest, pockets of so-called safe districts for both parties exist for offices with less than a state-wide constituency, including the congressional district.

¹Ranney, Austin, in Jacob and Vines, op. cit., p. 65.

The reapportionment of congressional districts in 1964 precludes any long-range analysis of election statistics for each individual district, for the new boundaries are not coterminous with the old. In accordance with the 1960 census, Michigan was granted an additional congressman, increasing the number from eighteen to nineteen. The increased population in the southeastern corner of the state warranted this new district, as well as another, to fully recognize its proportion of the population of the entire state; such a district had to be gained by a loss in another part of the state, primarily in the Upper Peninsula.

Since this reapportionment, three elections—1964, 1966, and 1968—have been held. Table II presents a summary of their returns. For each party, the percentages of the vote received by district in the three elections have been averaged, and are shown in descending order in the columns labeled Average Vote Percentage.

Some areas have remained as relatively safe districts for both parties. In the metropolitan southeastern corner of the state, five incumbent Democratic congressmen were incorporated in 1964 by their new districts and have been reelected in both subsequent elections. Two new Democratic candidates assumed new districts in 1964 and have maintained the traditional Democratic dominance of their respective areas. The percentages of the Democratic majority range from

---

1 James G. O'Hara of the 12th, Charles C. Diggs, Jr. of the 13th, Lucien N. Nedzie of the 14th, John D. Dingell of the 16th, and Martha Griffiths of the 17th.

2 John Conyers, Jr. of the 1st, and William D. Ford of the 15th.
89.3 per cent to 63.2 per cent. Seven districts are similarly claimed by the Republicans,\(^1\) with averages ranging from 64.5 to 62.4 per cent.

At the same time, there have emerged five districts in which the average percentages of the two parties are close.\(^2\) These districts were won by the Democratic candidates in 1964; in 1966, the Republican candidates regained the seats. In 1968, all Republicans were reelected and all increased the percentage of their vote, thus apparently regaining a long-time Republican dominance but one of less than 55 per cent.

Thus there are seven seats held consistently by the Democrats, seven by the Republicans, and five which have been won by both at some time during the period under consideration. It is perhaps of value to consider this record of performance when attempting to establish a measure of electoral opportunity for a party.

Such consideration is accomplished in the columns listed as Opportunity To Elect in Table II. These percentages were derived by adding to the respective average vote percentage the per cent of elections won during the last three elections by the party concerned and dividing by two.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Edward Hutchinson of the 4th, Gerald Ford of the 5th, Charles E. Chamberlain of the 6th, James Harvey of the 8th, Elford A. Cedarburg of the 10th, William S. Broomfield of the 18th, Robert Griffin of the 9th, replaced in 1966 by Guy VanderJagt.

\(^2\)the 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 11th, and 19th.

\(^3\)100%, 66.7%, or 33.3%.
TABLE II

OPPORTUNITY TO ELECT

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<th>Democrats</th>
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<th></th>
<th>Republicans</th>
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<td>Average</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
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<td>Vote</td>
<td>to Elect *</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>to Elect *</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Average vote percentage plus per cent won of the last three elections, divided by two.

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By so doing, the strength of each party within its consistently-held districts leaps to beyond eighty per cent; the five swing districts reflect greater Republican strength than is exhibited by the electoral returns alone, with two hurdling the 60 per cent mark and three hovering just below.

Applying the range used by Ranney, the categorization of opportunity to elect would extend upward from .3000. Exclusively for the Democrats, this would include seven districts; exclusively for the Republicans, seven districts; for both parties, five districts, as is illustrated.
The Variable of Political Activity in the District Committee

The legislature of the State of Michigan has extensively exercised its prerogative to regulate the conducting of elections and the political parties which participate in them. Scrutiny of the Michigan statutes would cause one to assume that every conceivable detail had been thought of and included somewhere in the major election law of 1954 and its subsequent revisions.

Fortunately for the non-lawyer, a political handbook assembled by Dixon, revised in 1965, has organized the many statutes into a coordinated interpretation of the political spectrum, a source of considerable benefit.¹

The prevailing theme which one may detect is a concern for the protection of John Q. Public from an over-powerful party organization. The major portion of each party's candidates—governor, United States senator, congressman, state senator and legislator, county and township officers—is selected by the general electorate at an open partisan primary held in August of each even-numbered year on the first Tuesday following the first Monday.²

Candidates for certain designated state officials—i.e., the lieutenant governor, secretary of state, governing boards of the various universities—and the leaders of each political party are

² loc. cit., p. 19.

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selected through the convention system. Albeit a thin line, here too the general electorate has an opportunity to exercise the prerogative of choice, for at the August general primary, each voter is entitled to vote for a precinct delegate or delegates to serve as the link between him and the decisions made in his chosen party.

These decisions occur at three levels of party structure--county, congressional district, and state. The legal structure of the party within the first two was the object of revision in 1964.

Except for Wayne, the county organization is the basic unit of a Michigan political party. Its activities are directed and effected by an executive committee, which chooses as its officers a county chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer.

The basic obligation of this committee, led by the chairman, is to promote and secure if possible the election of all the party's nominees whose constituency extends into any portion of the county's boundaries. Such promotion encompasses not only money-raising and campaign activities, but also the maintenance of a party organization in-between elections.

The fulfillment of this obligation, although suggestions and encouragement may come from above, is entirely a local prerogative, for the position and authority of the chairman and his committee are derived locally.

Prior to 1964, the local county committee consisted of all the party's nominees within the county chosen in the August primary to run for election in November. Within ten days following the primary, this group—which included the legislative and senatorial
candidates whose districts fell within the county—met and selected the county chairman and other officers who would direct the party organization through the oncoming election and thereafter until the next primary election two years hence. ¹

The county chairman was, then, beholden to his party's candidates for his position. This provided the candidates with a built-in self-perpetuation vehicle, for through their control of the county chairman they could limit the influence of any volunteer party workers who might be unfriendly to their candidacy and deter any potential opponents. Obviously this gave a tremendous advantage to an incumbent or previous nominee when the next primary rolled around.

Should, however, a rival candidate or candidates succeed in upsetting a major incumbent, another unhealthy situation might result—a wholesale housecleaning of local party leadership and any unfriendly volunteers just at the time when the party needed to pull together to face its rival party in the oncoming election.

Within this close candidate-party leadership relationship, the volunteer found inadequate room to stretch his own political imagination. Issue-oriented volunteers have a tendency to think more broadly than a candidate protecting his own interests; furthermore, within any issue-oriented party, it is not uncommon to find a diversity of opinion, a diversity which might separate some candidates from some volunteers. Whenever the ideas of the volunteer conflicted with

those of the candidate, the volunteer lost out, with no recourse available.

Providing such recourse was one aim of the 1964 revisions—recourse which was manifested in a change in the composition of the county executive committee and the selection of its officers.

In 1964, the term of the county chairman was extended until after the November election, so that the party leadership could remain intact during the campaign; secondly, the county committee was enlarged to include, as well as the candidates, an equal number of volunteers chosen in convention by the county convention delegates. This enlarged committee would then meet and elect the county chairman and other officers.¹

The anticipations were an increase in volunteers, who through increased responsibilities and efficacy would find their party organization a rewarding challenge, and a more party-oriented county chairman who could act in the interest of the party as a whole.²

Should, however, these anticipations materialize, another problem of concern to the state chairmen of the two major parties would be further aggravated—the problem of communication, both upward and downward, between units of the party. As the growing number of

¹Dixon, New Michigan Politics, op cit., p. 17.

Ferency, Zolton, Democratic State Central Committee Chairman, 1964. Correspondence, August 26, 1969.
political participants enlarged the scope of local party activities, the state chairmen would not be able to keep as close contact with the eighty some county chairmen as was desirable. Some intermediate level of organization was needed and the two state chairmen agreed that the unit of the congressional district offered many advantages.¹

First, although neither state recognition nor provision by the parties for organization at the congressional district level occurs in the almost universal fashion that is true at state and local levels,² there was some precedent for a congressional district committee. In 1950, the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association made a study of political parties. Among its recommendations was a suggested approach to the problem of communication between party members and voters through the formation of an advisory council within the congressional district to serve as a liaison between the congressman and his constituents.³

Key observes that some state statutes provide special committees for districts not coterminous with county boundaries--i.e., congressional districts.⁴

¹Ibid.


⁴op. cit., pp. 348-9
In 1960, Hauge made a study of the statutory provisions of seventeen state party organizations. Of those studied, eight established some kind of party organization at the congressional district level, a tendency particularly evident in the midwestern and western states.\(^1\)

To some extent, Michigan had already yielded to this tendency. The heavily populated Wayne County, within which the City of Detroit is contained, had become an unwieldy unit, and for several years, the six congressional districts within Wayne County had provided the dominant political organization, with the county committee serving as a coordinating body.

This situation evolved around the selection of delegates to state conventions. According to the law, when there are two or more congressional districts within a county, each district shall hold a separate convention; in 1945, the Wayne County districts so separated,\(^2\) a separation which in 1948 was recognized by provision for the selection of officers and an executive committee for the districts at the fall convention.\(^3\)

The 1964 congressional district reapportionment caused other counties to encompass either all or parts of more than one district,

\(^1\)op. cit., p. 9.

\(^2\)Dixon, New Michigan Politics, op. cit., p. 15.

necessitating some provision to portions of these districts—the nineteenth, twelfth, and sixth—also to meet in convention to select their respective delegates.\(^1\)

Another type of district committee also existed. By statute, each congressional candidate of each party was authorized to select a congressional committee and officers\(^2\) This committee, however, contained a built-in incumbent bias; furthermore, it performed primarily within the realm of the congressional candidate, with no impetus to assume leadership for other district-oriented party activities.

Second, there was a need for some coordinating unit in all congressional districts.

The statutes established the congressional district as a basic unit from which specified party representation is selected. The delegate to the national convention is one such position; the members of the State Central Committee is another, four being chosen from each district.\(^3\) In multi-county districts, the several delegates to the state convention selected by their respective county conventions assemble in congressional district caucus to make these selections. One might easily conclude that some type of preplanning would be necessary to avert utter chaos. Some of the districts had indeed already

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\(^1\)Dixon, New Michigan Politics, op. cit., p. 15.

\(^2\)Michigan Statutes Annotated, op. cit., 6.1603, Sec. 603.

\(^3\)Dixon, New Michigan Politics, op. cit., p. 33.
initiated a committee for just such planning. As of February, 1959, nine of the twelve outstate districts had been so organized by the Democrats, with another in the process.¹

The focal point of opposition came from some of the county chairmen. This was to be a formal recognition of a new level of party organization, and some of its activities and authority had to be acquired by their forfeiture from the counties. Not all of the county chairmen were enthusiastic about this prospect, as they saw little to gain and prestige to lose by the introduction of a district chairman. To pacify such opposition, the original scope of the bill to create these district committees was diluted and a compromise reached in the form of an amendment to the existing statute.²

No guidelines, duties, or authority are specified; the amendment accomplishes the state-wide application of the district committee concept by extending the election of a district chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and treasurer, and a committee of fifteen members into all multi-county congressional districts, to be accomplished in the fall convention of 1964, and thereafter at the February convention of the odd-numbered years, beginning in 1967,³ thereby creating a skeleton legal framework. The legal obligation is met once the officers and committee are elected; the extent of their activity

¹Sawyer, op. cit., p. 154.

²Section 600 of Act No. 116 of the Public Acts of 1954.
Elliott, op. cit.

and function is an individual potential, with each district free to
develop whatever organization it will and can.

The activity potential of the district committee is widespread, but
can be categorized into four roles:

1. As a communication vehicle, which coordinates the
   activities of the component counties or areas as well
   as serving as an intermediary liaison between the state
   committee and the local units;

2. As an independent committee, which undertakes on a
   broader scale endeavors too ambitious for its component
   counties and/or areas;

3. As a leader at state conventions, wherein delegates
   from throughout the district meet to select party
   candidates and leaders and construct its platform;

4. As a helpmate to the congressional candidate, not only
   in the nomination and election process but also in the
   interim by assisting an incumbent or providing continu-
   ity within the losing party.

To what extent have the district committees in Michigan
developed any or all of these roles?

Such ascertainment has been sought through a questionnaire
sent to the nineteen district chairmen in both the Republican and
Democratic political parties—thirty-eight in all.

The goal of the inquiry is to grasp some measure of the
activity level attained by the respective committees in an attempt to
discover relationships between political activity and environment; it
is not to be construed as an evaluation of district activities or of the leadership which directs them.

Initially the questionnaire was distributed to three chairmen, asking for their comments and criticisms. After incorporating their helpful suggestions, the questionnaire was then distributed through the mail to the entire group of district chairmen.

Of the thirty-eight questionnaires, thirty were returned. This is a high proportion of return but a proportion essential when dealing with such a small population.

Within the questionnaire, the four roles described above were probed to determine the various practices amongst the district committees. For purposes of tabulation, each role area was allotted twenty-five points. The responses to the questions determined the number accumulated, with a possible twenty-five in any one area and a total of one hundred as the maximum.¹

The numerical value of activity level used to determine the rank of that variable is not as definitive as those establishing rank for urbanization and electoral opportunity; nevertheless, it does provide a measure better than could be established by guesswork or even casual observation.

With these qualifications, a review of Table III and Table IIIa with accompanying explanatory remarks is appropriate.

Table III shows the total point accumulation of each district committee, with the subdivision listings included, arranged in numerical order for each party.

¹See Appendix.
### TABLE III

**POLITICAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**

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* Based on response from questionnaire

** No response

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<td>D-1</td>
<td>D-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-11</td>
<td>D-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
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<td>D-6</td>
<td>D-6</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-9</td>
<td>R-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-4</td>
<td>R-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the table it is easy to appraise the practices of any one individual district committee; summarization of some of the results provides an insight into the overall picture.

By selecting the highest role score of each committee, it was found that role three—a leader at state conventions—was by far the one in which most committees excelled, with no particular difference between the partial-county and the multi-county districts.

There was such a difference in the distribution of the role most frequently scored low. Here too there was no question—it was role two, the independent committee. In seventeen of the committees, this was found to be the least developed role, with fourteen of these being in multi-county districts. Of course, there are active county committees in these areas. In some districts, such as the fifth and seventh, the one county so dominates the entire district that a district committee might be somewhat superfluous. Nevertheless, even though for perhaps very valid reasons, it must be concluded that many district committees have not yet developed an independent identity.

The other scores were scattered. The one other noteworthy concurrence was in role one, in which six of the partial-county district committees scored low.

Table IIIa, rearranges the districts into a rank order according to the total activity level.

In order to accommodate the effect of occasional inapplicable questions, a rather generous breaking point of fifty was selected to differentiate between high and less activity.

Thus, twenty-one committees are described as very active,
nine as less active. Republican and Democratic committees are scattered fairly evenly throughout the area of high activity; yet in the lower range there is a predominance of Democratic committees. The reason for this distribution can perhaps be clarified as activity is correlated to the two environmental variables, urbanization and opportunity to elect.
CORRELATION OF THE VARIABLES

The previous chapter identified and delineated the three variables; it then ranked each and divided it into two categories of degree.

Political activity is here being considered the dependent variable, having been ascertained in thirty of the possible thirty-eight committees. After reducing the number in the independent variables to correspond, it is then possible to proceed to apply the data to the questions involved in the hypothesis:

1. Is there an association between political activity and each of the two independent variables?
2. If so, is the association with each independently or is there a multivariate relationship?
3. If multivariate, in what way?

Urbanization and Political Activity

The statistical correlation of the variables is shown in Table IV. Of the thirty political committees, thirteen operate within a constituency considered highly urbanized, seventeen in a constituency which is less urbanized; of the thirty, twenty-one are categorized as having high political activity, nine as having less activity.

From the further division of high and less urbanization into high and less activity, it is apparent that in a highly urbanized constituency only two of the thirteen committees, or 15 per cent, are less active, whereas in a less urbanized constituency, the less
### Table IV

#### Statistical Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urbanization and Political Activity</th>
<th>Opportunity to Elect and Political Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Opportunity to Elect</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanization</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>11 10 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>2 7 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 17 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambda $\lambda = 0$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q = 70%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Urbanization</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity to Elect and Political Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6 5 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>1 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambda $\lambda = 0$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q = 9%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$G = 36%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_s = 46%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less Urbanization</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity to Elect and Political Activity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>10 2 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less</td>
<td>2 3 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 5 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambda $\lambda = 20%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$Q = 77%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$G = 14%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R_s = 19%$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
active committees number six out of seventeen, or 35 per cent; this would suggest that some association is present between high urbanization and high political activity which warrants statistical analysis.

First consider predictability.

The statistical test lambda a is a measure of predictability—that is, it summarizes the degree of which knowledge of the values taken by one variable helps in guessing the values taken by another—an asymmetrical guessing. 1

In this instance, the question to be answered is: If there are thirty political committees, twenty-one of which are very active and nine of which are less active, will a knowledge of the degree of urbanization of the committee constituency improve the ability to predict the degree of committee activity?

The substitution of the appropriate numbers into the lambda a formula yields a result of zero. This occurs because the highly-active committees are distributed among both the high and less urbanized constituencies.

Thus there is no apparent improvement in predictability; is there, nevertheless, an association between the two variables.

A measure of association applicable when both variables are two-valued is Yule's Q, which runs from zero to one. 2 In this


2 Buchanan, William, Understanding Political Variables.
situation, Q equals 79 per cent.

It has thus been learned that while there is a strong (79%) indication of association between the dependent variable of political activity and the independent variable of urbanization, the degree of political activity cannot be predicted by knowledge of urbanization alone; this would suggest that political activity also is associated with another variable.

Opportunity To Elect And Political Activity

Let us next consider the relationship between opportunity to elect and political activity through the same procedure.

The test for predictability, lambda a, again results in zero, because, as in the previous analysis, high activity is divided between the divisions of the independent variable.

When the measure of association, Yule's Q, is applied to this situation, the result is twenty-four per cent.

There is, then, some indication of association between the dependent and independent variables, but of less import than the previous one. Here also the zero increase in predictability indicates that knowledge of electoral opportunity alone is not sufficient to predict political activity.

It would thus appear that political activity is associated with both of the independent variables, urbanization and opportunity to elect; it then becomes necessary to separate the two and seek to discover if any interrelationship exists.
Multivariate Relationship

It has been shown that in a highly urbanized constituency politically active committees are the rule, eleven out of thirteen; it has also been shown that in less urbanized constituencies there are many highly active but also many less active committees. Does the presence or absence of electoral opportunity offer any explanation for this distribution?

To find out, it is necessary to specify relationship by holding the variable of urbanization constant, correlating opportunity to elect and political activity and applying the above used testing procedures.

Consider the highly urbanized constituencies first.

There are nine congressional districts which fall into the category of highly urbanized; for each of these there are two committees, one for each party; of this number, there are thirteen respondents.

Application of lambda a again yields zero; in this instance, however, the Q value is only nine per cent (9%), which indicates only a small amount of association.

These statistics suggest that when urbanization is present, highly active political committees are found with or without the extra stimulation of electoral opportunity; that is, the impact of urbanization is alone sufficient to create political activity.

But what happens when urbanization decreases.
There are ten congressional districts considered to be less urbanized. Within these operate twenty committees, from which there were seventeen respondents.

Upon application of the lambda a test, the results show for the first time an increase in predictability of 20 per cent; that is, in a less urbanized constituency, knowledge of the electoral opportunity will increase the predictability of political activity by twenty per cent. The application of Yule's Q yields a measure of association of 77 per cent, again indicating a strong relationship between the two variables. Here then is indication of an interrelationship—that in a less-urbanized constituency, or in the absence of high urbanization, the presence of electoral opportunity assumes importance in the stimulation of political activity.

Further curiosity at this point prompts further statistical probing.

In the original analysis of the data, each of the thirty-eight cases was ordinarily ranked for each of the three variables, urbanization, opportunity to elect, and political activity.

Still keeping the urbanization variable constant, is it possible through a rank-order comparison to establish a directional relationship in the districts of less urbanization between opportunity to elect and political activity.

Two tests can be applied to investigate relationship of direction of these two variables. The first is the gamma formula, a measure of inversions and agreements, the results of which indicate a 14 per cent relationship of direction; the second is Spearman's
rank-difference coefficient, which yields a 19 per cent indication of relationship in direction.

While not overwhelming, these percentages do suggest that in the less urban areas, there is a rise in political activity which tends to correspond to the respective opportunity to elect.

For contrast, a similar rank-order procedure was applied to the highly urbanized districts. Here the results are negative and further establish that under the impact of high urbanization there is an absence of any relationship between activity and opportunity to elect.

For the Republican committees, the areas of no opportunity to elect are in the highly urbanized areas, where urbanization alone stimulates activity; for the Democrats, the areas of no opportunity to elect fall in the less urban areas. With neither stimulant present to generate activity, it is thus to be expected that such Democratic committees would be less active.
CONCLUSIONS

Validity of the Hypothesis

Application of statistics to the preceding data suggests the following conclusions about congressional district committees in Michigan:

1. Political activity responds positively to increasing urbanization.
2. Political activity responds positively to the presence of electoral opportunity.
3. Within highly urbanized constituencies, committees of both political parties tend to be similarly active even though there is a wide diversity in opportunity to elect.
4. When high urbanization is not an influence, the activity level of political committees tends to correspond to the respective opportunity to elect.

While the limited scope of the research precludes an assumption of proof, there does appear to be some support in these conclusions for the hypothesis:

A political party committee develops its activity potential in response to influences within the environment of its constituency. More particularly,

1. As urbanization increases, the activity of political committees flourishes whether or not there is an accompanying opportunity to elect;
2. As urbanization decreases, the activity of political committees responds more directly to its corresponding opportunity to elect.

Other Observations

In the pursuit of criteria upon which to determine political activity, much interesting information was collected concerning the composition, practices, and aspirations of the many district committees. For use in the development of the hypothesis, this was all reduced to the common factor of political activity; it is perhaps of general interest to now re-expand that factor.

As a group, the district chairmen themselves have amassed a huge fortune in political experience. In listing their respective political histories, over half of them could claim more than ten years of active participation, including service as county chairmen, state and national delegates, and state central committee members as well as precinct workers and county delegates.

The composition of the various committees also exhibits a collection of political talents. Many of the committee members are concurrently serving on their respective county committees. More than half of the committees include the county chairmen and state central members for the district as ex-officio members. Women members constitute a real minority, in most instances numbering five or less.

The various committee practices cover a wide range. Fifteen committees hold monthly meetings, eight meet four or less times a year; fourteen have adopted by-laws to govern their organization,
sixteen have not; seventeen raise money through either direct solicitation or support from their component counties; thirteen have no source of income at all; twelve maintain a headquarters, six full time and six part time, while eighteen have no headquarters; and eight are able to employ staff of some type.

As was mentioned earlier, most of the committees assume some responsibility for the district-based convention proceedings. Contests for the various party positions are frequent, although in most districts some type of slate arrangement precedes the actual nominations and voting; the voting is conducted as often by secret ballot as it is by open voting.

The majority of the districts profess little unified action in the nomination of state candidates, except for the quite vigorous promotion of one of their own district residents.

The congressional election receives general participation. Twenty-three of the committees assisted their congressional candidate in some manner and most have maintained close contact with him whether or not he won the election.

In their own perception of their positions, most district chairmen view coordination and support of the activities carried on by their individual counties or local units as their major purpose. The necessity for a close relationship with the primary party unit leaders is apparent throughout—from their inclusion as ex-officio members on many committees to an outright designation of their support as very necessary for securing the position of district chairman. By contrast,
similar support from the state chairman is considered unnecessary by most of the present district chairmen. Such answers indeed reflect the downward deference involved in political parties—a constant source of amazement to new volunteers.

With no suggestion of taking any authority away from the county chairmen, there were constructive ideas offered by many of the district chairmen for ways to strengthen the district concept.

One suggestion was to conduct role call at state conventions by district rather than county, so as to encourage delegate identification with the district.

Another suggestion, supported by several chairmen, was to include the district chairmen on the state central committee, either as one of the four from his district or as an additional position.

There was some criticism of the statutory provisions. Better definition of the district committee and its purpose was called for. Another proposed change involved the selection of the district officers and committee, the idea expressed being that this responsibility should be transferred from the state convention delegates to the county executive committees. A method of providing for vacancies was also indicated as needed.

Their many thoughtful answers gave clear testimony that the district chairmen as a group are in accord that—although yet in its infancy in most areas—the district committee can become a viable political organization which serves to innovate, communicate, and coordinate the many political activities within its constituency.
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**Public Documents**


*Michigan Statutes Annotated.* Vol 5, Elections and Vacancies.

1967-68. Pp. 1-545

Unpublished Materials


Interviews and Letters


Ferency, Zolton, Democratic State Central Committee Chairman, 1964. Correspondence, August 26, 1969.


McNeely, James, Democratic State Central Committee Chairman, 1969. Personal Interview, October 8, 1969.
EXPLANATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. For the Wayne County districts, pp. 60-63, of the regular questionnaire were condensed into pp. 69-71; the remaining pages were the same.

2. For tabulation of the questions, observe the numbers listed at the left margin:
   a. Large number indicates total points per section;
   b. Small numbers indicate distribution of points among the roles;
   c. Numbers within questions indicate individual question contribution to total.
   d. Personal data was not included in tabulation.
   e. In instances of uncertainty, value judgements were made by tabulator.
QUESTIONNAIRE TO CHAIRMEN OF DISTRICT COMMITTEES

I. Origin of the District Organization

To your knowledge, had any attempt been made to develop an organization in your district prior to 1964? Yes___; No____.
If yes, please answer below:

A. When did the initial attempts to organize occur?________

B. From where did the impetus for such organization come?

( ) Congressional candidate
( ) County chairman
( ) State organization and/or chairman
( ) Other. Please specify__________________________

C. What activities did this organization perform?

( ) Campaign for congressional candidate
( ) Coordinated business at state conventions
( ) Other. Please specify__________________________

D. What elements of formal organization were adopted?

( ) Officers. How chosen____________________________
( ) By-Laws
( ) Regular meetings.

II. Composition of the District Organization

A. District Officers

1. Since 1964, how many different chairman has this district had?
   ( ) One; ( ) Two; ( ) Three.
   When was the present chairman elected?____

2. Of the present elected officers, how many were first elected in 1969_____; in 1967_______; in 1964_________.

3. Of the present officers, how many are men_________; women______.

4. Of the present officers, how many had previously served as a member of the district committee?_______

5. To what extent is geographical distribution of residence a factor in electing officers?
   ( ) Of no importance
   ( ) Considered desirable
   ( ) Required in by-laws
B. Elected Committee, excluding officers

1. Of the fifteen committee members, how many were first elected in 1969_________; 1967_________; 1964______.

2. How many of the fifteen committee members are men_______; women________.

3. How many of the fifteen committee members are also or have been members of their respective county committee?____________________

4. How many of the fifteen committee members are an elected office holder, such as county clerk, prosecutor, township supervisor, etc.________

5. To what extent is geographical distribution of residence a factor in electing members of the committee?
   ( ) Of no importance
   ( ) Considered desirable
   ( ) Rearranged
   ( ) Required in by-laws
   ( ) Apportioned by population
   ( ) Apportioned equally to geographical areas or counties
   ( ) Other. Please specify.____________________

6. Of the fifteen committee members, how many live in an area which you would consider rural__________; urban______________.

C. Ex-Officio Members

Does your district committee have ex-officio members?
Yes_______; No_____
If yes, please answer below:

1. How many are there?________________

2. Do they include ( ) County Chairman; How many____
   ( ) State Central Committee Members
   ( ) Congressional Candidate
   ( ) Other. Please specify.______

3. Do ex-officio members have a vote? Yes_____; No_____.

4. Are ex-officio members considered a part of
   ( ) Committee at large only
   ( ) Executive committee of the district committee
III. Operation and Procedure

A. Meetings

1. How often does the district committee meet?
   (I) Annually; (II) Every 6 months; (IA) Bi-monthly;
   (IIA) Monthly; ( ) Other. Please specify

2. What is the approximate average attendance of committee members at meetings?
   (A) Above 75%; (B) 50-74%; (C) 25-49%; ( ) Below 25%.

3. Is proxy voting allowed: Yes X; No ______.

4. Does the meeting agenda include a speaker? Yes X; No ______. If Yes, give examples

5. Does the executive committee hold meetings in addition to those of the entire committee? Yes X; No ______. If yes, how often?

B. General

1. Has the district committee adopted by-laws? Yes X; No ______. If yes, when

2. Does the district committee have a budget? Yes ______; No ______. If yes, what are the sources of income?
   (I) Assessment of individual members
   (II) Assessment of component counties or areas
   (III) Money-raising function. Please specify ______
   ( ) Other. Please specify ______

3. Does the district organization maintain a headquarters? Yes ______; No ______. If yes,
   a. Is the headquarters separate from that of the congressman?
      Yes 2; No 1; No incumbent congressman ______.
   b. How many persons are employed?
      Secretarial or clerical 2
      Executive 3
   c. When is the headquarters open?
      Days per week Full time - 2
      Hours per day Part time - 1

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C. State Conventions

1. Internal district elections.

   a. Elections to party positions—i.e. state central committee members—are conducted by delegates in district caucus at state conventions. Check the column below which best describes how your district uses the suggested procedures for determining the nominees for these elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0 2 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- X 0: The component county chairman decide
- X 2: The district officers and/or committee meet with county chairmen and decide.
- X 2: District officers and committee and county chairmen work out an apportioned plan, with each area deciding upon its own nominee.
- X 5: District officers and committee recommend a slate-at-large to the convention delegates.
- X 5: Candidates are individually nominated and elected on an at-large basis.
- Other. Please specify.

b. How often do contests occur for

- X 3: District chairman
- District committee members
- Other district officers
- State Central Committee Members
- National delegates

c. When contests occur, are they resolved by Secret ballot by the delegates in district caucus

- Voice vote or show of hands by delegates in district caucus.

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2. Nominations of state candidates (Lt. Governor, Sec. of State, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>a. When there is no candidate from your district, check the column which best describes how your district uses the listed procedures through which the delegates may determine their choices.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District chairman and/or committee recommend a slate or individual candidates to the delegates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District delegates meet prior to the convention and decide upon a slate of individual candidates to endorse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District delegates caucus but do not take any unified action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other. Please describe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. When there is a candidate for a state office from your district, check the column which best describes how your district uses the listed procedures for promotion of that candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District committee endorses the candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>District committee actively promotes candidate in other delegations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Convention delegates meet prior to the convention and endorse the candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Convention delegates support candidate through vote trades with candidates for other positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No district activity, left to home county or individual supporters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other. Please describe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Congressional Candidate

A. What communication did the district chairman and/or committee have with candidates for the congressional nomination during the last three primaries?

( ) Encouraged one or more individuals to run
( ) Actively promoted one candidate above others
( ) Remained completely neutral
( ) Were not contacted by any candidate
( ) No contest
( ) Other. Please specify.

B. In what way or ways did the district chairman and/or committee assist the congressional nominee in the last general election?

( ) Directed the entire campaign
( ) Assisted his campaign committee
( ) Raised money specifically for his campaign
( ) Other. Please specify.
( ) None of the above.

C. Answer the appropriate section below:

1. If your candidate is the present incumbent,
   a. How often does he attend district committee meetings?
      ( ) Never; ( ) Sometimes; ( ) Usually.
   b. How often does he consult with the district chairman?
      ( ) Whenever he is in the district
      ( ) Whenever a district concern arises
      ( ) Sometimes
      ( ) Never

2. If your candidate did not win the election,
   a. How often does he attend district committee meetings?
      ( ) Never; ( ) Sometimes; ( ) Usually.
   b. To what extent has he been an integral part of the district organization:
      ( ) Not at all; ( ) Somewhat; ( ) Very.

V. Relationship of the district chairman to other levels of party organization.

A. Check below the degree of importance of support from the listed individuals in securing the position of district chairman:
### Congressional candidate or incumbent

### County chairmen within district (or area chairmen)

### District committee members

### State Central Committee members

### Chairman of State Central Committee

### Other. Please specify.

**B. How often do the district chairmen of your party meet together to discuss party policy and programs?**

( ) Never; (f) Seldom; (•) Only in conjunction with county chairmen; (q) Regularly

**C. On matters of appointments within your district, with whom does the state chairman consult?**

(•) Both the district and county chairman

(F) Only the county chairman

(•) Only the district chairman

(•) Neither

( ) Other. Please specify.

**D. How often do most of the individual county chairmen within your district consult the district chairman about problems within their specific county?**

( ) Never; (f) Sometimes; (•) Usually.

**E. Check the extent of responsibility the district chairman and/or committee have for the following:**

None  Some  Much

---

Getting out the vote for all candidates

---

Assisting the congressional candidate

---

Conducting party business at state conventions

---

Acting as a liaison between the State Central Committee chairman and the component counties.

---

Coordinating county activities within the district

---

Other. Please specify.
F. Check the extent of importance of an elected district organization to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chairman of the state party organization
County chairman within district
Congressional candidate

VI. In a paragraph, please describe what you consider to be the proper and desirable function of a district chairman and committee. Include any suggestions or changes you would recommend in the existing situation, either in law or practice. Use the back of the paper if you wish.

VII. Personal and Family Background

A. Age  
( ) under 30  
( ) 30-39  
( ) 40-49  
( ) 50-65  
( ) over 65  
B. Sex  
( ) Male  
( ) Female

C. Race  
( ) Caucasian  
( ) Negro  
( ) Mongoloid

B. Religious Preference  
( ) Catholic  
( ) Jewish  
( ) Protestant  
( ) None  
( ) Other

E. How many years have you lived in Michigan:  
( ) under 4  
( ) 5-9  
( ) 10-14  
( ) more than 15
F. Please check the type of locality in which you lived during most of your first 20 years; at present.
   ( ) Major city (500,000 or more)  ( )
   ( ) Large city (100,000-499,999)  ( )
   ( ) Medium city (25,000-99,999)  ( )
   ( ) Small city (2,500-24,999)  ( )
   ( ) Town (less than 2,500)  ( )
   ( ) Farm

G. Please indicate your highest educational level.
   ( ) Grade school
   ( ) Some high school
   ( ) High school graduate
   ( ) Some college
   ( ) College graduate—Specify course of study__________
   ( ) Graduate degree—Specify type________________________

H. Please indicate your occupation___________________________

I. For how long have you been politically active?
   ( ) Under 4 years
   ( ) 5-9 years
   ( ) 10-14 years
   ( ) 15-19 years
   ( ) More than 20 years

J. Check the items which have been a part of your political experience.
   ( ) Precinct worker  ( ) Delegate
   ( ) Financial contributor  ( ) County
   ( ) County committee member  ( ) State
   ( ) County chairman  ( ) National
   ( ) Precinct chairman  ( ) Other. Please specify.
   ( ) Township or city chairman
   ( ) State central committee member
QUESTIONNAIRE TO CHAIRMEN OF WAYNE COUNTY DISTRICT COMMITTEES

I. Operation and Procedures

A. Meetings

1. How often does the district committee meet?
   (1) Every six months; (2) Bi-monthly; (3) Monthly;
   ( ) Other. Please specify.

2. What is the approximate average attendance of committee members at meetings?
   (2) Above 75%; (1) 50-74%; ( ) 25-49%; ( ) Below 25%.

3. Is proxy voting allowed: Yes ☑; No ______.

4. Does the meeting agenda include a speaker: Yes ☑; No ______. If yes, give examples

5. Does the executive committee hold meetings in addition to those of the entire committee? Yes ☑; No ______. If yes, how often

B. Ex-Officio Members

1. Does your district committee have ex-officio members.
   Yes ; No
   If yes, please answer below:

   A. How many are there: __________

   B. Do they include ( ) County Chairman

      ( ) State Central Committee Members

      ( ) Congressional Candidate

      ( ) Other. Please specify.

   C. Do ex-officio members have a vote? Yes ☑; No ______.

   D. Are ex-officio members considered a part of

      ( ) Executive committee of the district committee

      ( ) District Committee

C. General

1. Has the district committee adopted by-laws?
   Yes ☑; No ______
   If yes, when____________________________
2. Does the district committee have a budget: Yes____; No____
   If yes, what are the sources of income?
   (4) Assessment of individual members
   (3) Money raising function
   (4) Direct solicitation
   (7) Other. Please specify________________________

3. Does the district organization maintain a headquarters?
   Yes____; No____
   If Yes, a. Is the headquarters separate from that of the congressman?
      Yes____; No____; No incumbent______
   b. How many persons are employed?
      Secretarial or clerical____
      Executive____
   c. When is the headquarters open?
      Days per week__________
      Hours per day__________
      Full time – 2
      Part time – 1

4. How many of the fifteen committee members are men____; women______

5. How many of the fifteen committee members are an elected office holder.

6. To what extent is geographical distribution of residence a factor in electing members of the committee?
   ( ) Of no importance
   ( ) Considered desirable
   ( ) Prearranged
   ( ) Required in by-laws

D. Elections

1. Internal district elections
   a. Elections to party positions—i.e. state central committee members—are conducted by delegates in district conventions. Check below the column which best describes how your district uses the suggested procedures for determining the nominees for these elections.

   Never   Sometimes   Usually
   ______   _______    _______
The district officers and/or committee recommend a slate-at-large to the convention delegates.

A nominating committee presents a slate to the convention delegates.

Candidates are individually nominated and elected on an at-large basis.

Other. Please describe.

b. How often do contests occur for

District Chairman
District Committee Members
Other District Officers
State Central Committee Members
National Convention Delegates
STATISTICAL FORMULAS

Lambda $a$

$$a = \frac{\sum f_i - F_d}{N - F_d}$$

$f_i$ = the maximum frequency found within each subclass of the independent variable

$F_d$ = the maximum frequency found among the totals of the dependent variable

$N$ = number of cases

Yule's $Q$

$$Q = \frac{ad - bc}{ad + bc}$$

Cell designation = $\begin{array}{cc} a & b \\ c & d \end{array}$

$G = \frac{fa - f_i}{fa + f_i}$

$fa$ = frequency of agreements

$f_i$ = frequency of insertions

Spearman's Rho

$$R_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{n^3 - n}$$

$d$ = difference between ranks

$n$ = number of ranks
## DISTRICT PROFILE

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Urbanization</th>
<th>Opportunity To Elect</th>
<th>Political Activity</th>
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Michigan Congressional Districts

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State map is from Congressional District Data Book, Supplement No. 1, Division of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, January, 1965 which also has extensive census data by congressional district. Detroit, Wayne, and Oakland maps are from the Division of Elections.