1954 campaign of Senator James E. Murray

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The University of Montana
THE 1954 CAMPAIGN OF
SENATOR JAMES E. MURRAY

by

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The purpose of this thesis will be to examine the factors surroun­
ding the 1954 senatorial race between Senator James E. Murray and
Congressman Wesley A. D'Ewart.

To begin with, this thesis will look into the two candidates' past
lives and summarize their previous political campaigns. The purpose of
the latter will be to uncover certain county and sectional voting
trends which might be compared with the results of the 1954 election.

This study will present the major issues of the campaign, es­
pecially the issue of Murray's alleged softness towards Communism,
considering the fact that it took place during the troubled McCarthy
era.

The financing and organization of the campaign will be approached
primarily through interviews with those who were involved in the cam­
paign.

The role of the Montana newspapers will be studied in an attempt
to reveal the differing editorial policies. The thesis will also
examine some of the reasons for the silence of the "company press." An
adequate balance between Democratic and Republican, eastern and western,
and rural and urban newspapers has been sought.

Finally, this study will analyze the results of the election and
arrive at some conclusions. In this respect, emphasis will be placed
upon the results of agricultural, livestock, lumbering, labor, rural,
and urban counties.

In writing this thesis no attempt will be made to set forth any
broad generalizations in the field of Montana politics. This thesis will simply be a presentation of one political campaign. One could hope that it may be used in part, as a basis for further similar studies in the future.

Primarily, newspapers and interviews comprise the bulk of the sources for this study. In addition, a limited number of secondary sources such as books and periodicals has been used.
Chapter One
INTRODUCTION

In 1954 James E. Murray was a candidate for the United States Senate from Montana for the fifth time. His opponent was the Republican Congressman from Montana's eastern district, Wesley A. D'Ewart. D'Ewart was vacating the congressional seat in which he had served for nine years in an attempt to unseat Murray who had been one of Montana's senators since 1934.

On the national scene in 1954 the Eisenhower administration was attempting to get the country back to "normalcy" after the Korean conflict had ended and the Republican leadership realized they would have their hands full keeping the Democrats from gaining control of Congress. Two years earlier, in 1952, the Republicans were very successful throughout the entire nation. In the 1952 election Eisenhower defeated Adlai E. Stevenson. In doing so he collected 55 per cent of the popular votes and won the electoral votes of 38 states.¹ At the same time the Republican party gained control of Congress. After the 1952 election the United States Senate was comprised of 48 Republicans, 47 Democrats and one Independent, Wayne Morse of Oregon.² The Republicans enjoyed a more substantial majority in the House of Representatives, where there were 221 Republicans and 212 Democrats.³ Of the 30 gubernatorial contests in 1952, the Republicans won 20 and the Demo-

²*Great Falls Tribune*, November 6, 1952, p. 1.
2.

crats 10. As a result there were 30 Republican and 18 Democratic governors in 1953.  

Montana contributed to Eisenhower's success in 1952 by giving him a plurality of 51,181.  

At the same time Eisenhower lost only four of Montana's 56 counties. Within the state there was also an indication of a Republican trend. Republicans in Montana elected a governor, a lieutenant governor, a state treasurer, and a public service commissioner. In addition, they managed to hold one congressional seat and control the state legislature. Democrats filled four elective offices and elected a congressman and a senator. In the senatorial election of that year Mike Mansfield defeated the Republican incumbent, Zales Ecton.  

There were a number of groups that contributed to the success of the Republican party in 1952. They were farmers experiencing a fair amount of prosperity; parents, especially mothers, with sons in Korea; persons fearing the threat of Communism; Catholics, and southerners mildly discouraged with the Democratic party and young voters. Considering the political force of these and other groups it is understandable that the Republicans won landslide victories throughout the nation in 1952.  

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4Time, November 17, 1952, p. 28.

5All official election returns are from the office of the Secretary of State, Helena, Montana.


Economically Montana was less stable in 1954 than it was in 1952 and 1953. A major factor contributing to the mild recession of 1954 was a national decline in demand for copper, lead, and zinc. As a result production of copper, lead, and zinc was down 6, 10, and 8 per cent, respectively, from 1953. In addition, there were three major strikes that were factors in the Montana recession of 1954. They were at five lumber mills in the Missoula area, in Columbia Falls at the Anaconda company's aluminum plant, and at the mining and smelting operations in Butte, Anaconda, and Great Falls. The factors above contributed in turn to a decline in non-agricultural employment. In 1954 employment in this category was down one per cent from 1953. In addition, cash income from farm marketing was down 12 per cent from 1953. There were, however, a few bright spots in the Montana economy to counter the recessive factors of 1954. Crude oil production was up 18 per cent, the number of building permits issued was up 42 per cent, and bank deposits were up four per cent from 1953. These economic factors no doubt aided Democratic candidates, including Senator Murray, in 1954. Republicans, in control of the national administration and Montana's state administration, were blamed by the public for the shape of the economy.

To understand fully the situation surrounding the campaign between Murray and D'Ewart it is necessary to mention the McCarthy hearings.

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This was the period in American history in which some people belatedly discovered what a great threat Communism was to our nation. Persons like Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin intensified this fear of Communism. In the capacity of chairman of the Permanent Investigations Subcommittee McCarthy attempted to rid the executive department of Communists. In particular the Wisconsin senator was fearful of Communists in the armed services and in the nation's defense plants. McCarthy's fellow senators believed that his tactics were not in the tradition of the United States Senate. McCarthy was accused of abusing members of a Senate committee, obstructing a subcommittee which had been investigating him, and abusing a military general who appeared before his committee. As a result, McCarthy's colleagues censured him on the first two counts. 

Therefore, there were three significant factors or conditions in the background of the campaign between Murray and D'Ewart. The first was the promise of a very close race for control of the national congress and the state legislature of Montana. The second was the poor economic climate throughout the nation. The final factor was the issue of Communism which was being raised nationally and which had its effects on the state of Montana.

Wesley Abner D'Ewart was born in Worcester, Massachusetts on

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11 Great Falls Tribune, October 4, 1954, p. 4.
October 1, 1889. He attended grade school and high school in Worcester and went to college at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. In 1910 D'Ewart moved to Wilsall, Montana and worked as a Forest Service ranger for six years. Gradually the D'Ewart family acquired and developed a small grain and stock ranch near Wilsall. D'Ewart was the first president of the Park county Rural Electric System and he organized and served as the first head of the Montana Reclamation Association. In addition, D'Ewart served on the agricultural advisory council at Montana State College in Bozeman.

Mr. D'Ewart had ten years of experience in Montana politics. He served in the Montana House of Representatives for three terms and in the Montana Senate for two terms. In the state legislature he served on committees for natural resources and on the Workmen's Compensation Committee.

D'Ewart was elected to the Seventy-ninth U. S. Congress and served with that body from June 5, 1945 until January 3, 1955. In 1945 he won a special election to fill a vacancy caused by the death of James F. O'Connor. Democrats had captured the second congressional seat for 14 years and O'Connor had won by a margin of 16,000 votes. It was thought therefore, that no Republican could win in this district. At a Republi-

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13 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
15 Ibid.
can convention in Lewistown D'Ewart was nominated on the fifth or sixth ballot. After he won the election in 1945 his constituents sent him back to Washington four more times until he decided to run for the Senate.  

Once in Congress D'Ewart served on the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Congressman Mansfield had abandoned this committee to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee. D'Ewart believed that the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs would be the best possible committee for a Montana congressman because it dealt with public lands, mines and mining, Indian affairs, and irrigation and reclamation.  

In addition, he was a member of the House Banking and Currency Committee.  

D'Ewart's voting record while in the state legislature and in Congress was that of a conservative. On most issues he was against increased federal spending. However, he did vote for the Marshall Plan while in Congress and for adoption of the Social Security program as a state legislator.  

In addition, he consistently voted to raise appropriations for the National Park Service and the Forest Service. Finally, he was the author of many bills on Indian affairs, mining,
and conservation.20

After his unsuccessful Senate race of 1954, D'Ewart served as
Assistant Secretary of Agriculture under Ezra Taft Benson, from January,
1955 to September of the same year.21 As Assistant Secretary of Agri-
culture he worked with the administration of agricultural credits and
disaster relief.22

From October, 1955 to July, 1956 D'Ewart was Assistant Secretary
of Interior and had a number of important bureaus to direct. They in-
cluded the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the
Office of Territories, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wild-
life Service.23 In addition, he was a special representative of the
secretary of agriculture from August, 1956 until October, 1958.24

In 1960 D'Ewart tried and failed to get the Republican nomi-
nation for governor. In this election he lost to Donald G. Nutter
whose plurality was a slim 561 votes.25 As far as running for politi-
cal office was concerned, D'Ewart retired at the age of 69. At the

20Letter from Douglas Mackay, Secretary of Interior, to E. R.
Linn, Secretary of the Great Falls International Association of
Machinists, November 17, 1955.

21Biographical Directory of the American Congress, op. cit., 804.

22Bulletin from the D'Ewart for Governor Committee, Billings,

23Ibid.


25Ibid.
present time he is a lobbyist in Washington, D. C. for the Montana Reclamation Association and in Helena for the Montana Farm Bureau. His last engagement in politics was in 1962 when he managed James Battin's successful congressional campaign in the second district.  

James Edward Murray was born near St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, on May 3, 1876. He attended public schools in Canada and graduated from St. Jerome's College of Berlin, Canada in 1895. In 1900 he completed work toward his L.L.B. at New York University in New York City.  

In 1900 Murray was naturalized a United States citizen and the following year set up a law practice in Butte. At this time Murray had an uncle in Butte who was supposedly a millionaire from mining. Murray worked for his uncle as an attorney and as a result became the owner of mining property himself. At one time Murray was a millionaire but after 25 years in politics his resources had dwindled to a very small amount of money.  

Murray was a banker in Butte and from 1906 until 1908 served as county attorney of Silver Bow county. He was state and national president of the American Association for Recognition of the Irish Republic. Shortly after World War I had ended Murray saw and talked with President

26Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.  
28Ibid.  
29Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.  
30Biographical Directory of the American Congress, op. cit., 1375.
Wilson. Wilson was on his way to Europe for the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and Murray asked that pressure be put on England so that Ireland might be a free nation. Obviously Murray had a great deal of attachment to the people of his own nationality. The relationship must have been a mutual one because it was these same Irish people who persuaded Murray to run for the United States Senate in the first place.³¹

During the 1920's Murray was active in the Democratic party in Butte and in Silver Bow county.³² In 1933 and 1934 he was Chairman of the State Advisory board of the Public Works Administration. He was also a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1920, 1932, 1936, 1940, 1944, 1948, and 1952.³³

James E. Murray began his national political career in 1934 when he was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Thomas J. Walsh.³⁴ Walsh had died in 1933 en route to Washington, D. C. to accept the appointment of attorney general in the cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt.³⁵ Murray was re-elected in 1936, 1942, 1948, and 1954. He served the state of Montana continuously from November 7, 1934 until January 3, 1961.³⁶

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³¹Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.
³²Ibid.
³³Biographical Directory of the American Congress, op. cit., 1375.
³⁴Ibid.
³⁵Ibid., 1771.
³⁶Ibid., 1375.
In the Senate Murray eventually assumed the chairmanship of the Labor Committee. In 1955 he became chairman of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. It was Senator Murray who introduced the Small Business Administration Act. Murray also co-sponsored the Murray-Dingel-Wagner bill. This was a controversial proposal for compulsory health insurance. As a result, the American Medical Association was opposed to him throughout the remainder of his political life.  

While he was first in the Senate Murray joined a group of liberal senators who called themselves the "Young Turks." These men were adamant supporters of President Roosevelt and later President Truman. Murray's belief in a liberal philosophy of government never changed. In his later years in the Senate Murray was a member of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee. Concerning Murray's actions while on this committee, one writer said that "To hear Senator Murray's response when his name is reached on a roll-call is to know at once what the New-Fair Deal position on an issue is." Continuing, the writer said that Murray ".... is a classic prototype of the New Deal," and he is "as nearly pro-labor on all questions as it is possible to be."  

At one time Senator Murray was the Democratic whip in the Senate and he was also chairman of a group of western senators devoted to bettering the status of western states.

37 Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.
38 Ibid.
40 Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.
It was in the Senate that the animosity developed between Murray and Montana's senior Senator, Burton K. Wheeler. Many explanations have been given for this awkward relationship, one of which is the difference of opinion over President Roosevelt's "court packing plan." Murray's son, Judge W. D. Murray is of the opinion that the reason for their disagreements was because Wheeler tried to dictate to Senator Murray and the latter refused to go along with the senior Senator. Joseph P. Kelly, co-ordinator for Democratic activities in Montana, believes that the split began when Wheeler labeled Murray a "political accident." Another partial explanation, according to Kelly, is that Wheeler feared having two senators from the same city, which was Butte. In an article in Harper's Magazine Joseph K. Howard listed two possible reasons for the split between Murray and Wheeler. One is that Wheeler preferred John E. Erickson, an old friend, as a replacement for Senator Thomas Walsh. The second reason is that Murray and Wheeler often took opposing stands with respect to certain issues in the Senate. Howard maintained that Murray was a strong supporter of President Roosevelt and the New Deal, while Wheeler often aligned himself with Republicans and southern Democrats. Whatever the reasons, this relationship reached a peak in 1946 when Senator Murray was instrumental in the de-

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41 Ibid.
42 Interview with Joseph P. Kelly, September 11, 1963.
feat of Wheeler in the Democratic primary of that year. In 1952 Senator Murray headed the Montana delegation to the presidential nominating convention. Out of respect for the already aging Senator, the Montana delegates gave all twelve of their votes to Murray. This was, of course, a token vote because Murray was ineligible for the presidency as a foreign born American citizen.

Senator James E. Murray retired from politics in 1961 at the age of 85. He was the second oldest senator in Washington at the time and chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. In 1960 he had planned to run for the Senate one more time but decided to drop out of the Democratic primary when Lee Metcalf and LeRoy Anderson filed against him.

Senator Murray has been described as one of the five men who stand out in Montana politics during the last 20 years. He was a Montana senator longer than anyone in the state's history. He died in Butte on March 23, 1961.

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46 U. S. News and World Report, May 9, 1960, p. 22.

47 New Republic, May 9, 1960, p. 6.


49 Biographical Directory of the American Congress, op. cit., 1375.
In order that the reader may fully understand the implications of the 1954 campaign between Murray and D'Ewart, the following capsule of the candidates in their previous elections is presented.50

**Murray's Previous Elections**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Murray's vote</th>
<th>Republican opponent's vote</th>
<th>Number of counties won by Murray</th>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>116,965</td>
<td>77,307</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>121,769</td>
<td>60,038</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>83,673</td>
<td>82,461</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>125,193</td>
<td>94,458</td>
<td>42</td>
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**D'Ewart's Previous Elections**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>D'Ewart's vote</th>
<th>Democratic opponent's vote</th>
<th>Number of counties won by D'Ewart*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>26,158</td>
<td>22,126</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>58,307</td>
<td>48,564</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>61,124</td>
<td>58,711</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>65,003</td>
<td>53,854</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>90,210</td>
<td>55,203</td>
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50 All official election returns are from the office of the Secretary of State, Helena, Montana.

* There are 39 counties in Montana's eastern congressional district.
The overall pattern of Senator Murray's election history indicates that he had consistent support from the highline counties, most of which border Canada. In fact, in four previous elections a total of only four counties bordering Canada failed to give Murray a plurality. Murray also had great support from Silver Bow county. With the exception of the 1942 election Murray gained a wide margin from Silver Bow county in each of his previous election contests. In part, Murray's lack of success in Silver Bow county in 1942 is explained by Judge W. D. Murray. Prior to the 1942 election Senator Murray had voted for Lend Lease for Great Britain and the Irish, who were dominant in the mining county, resented this. In addition, Wellington D. Rankin, Murray's opponent in 1942, had taken a stand against the Anaconda company. This action made Rankin immensely popular with the miners of Silver Bow county.

There were 21 counties in Montana which went for Murray in each of his elections prior to 1954. Only three of these counties abandoned Murray in 1954 and they were Rosebud, Fergus, and Wibaux. Murray was always supported by the Farmer's Union, the A. F. of L., and the C. I. O. The Farmer's Union helps explain his popularity on the highline and in the "triangle" area and the labor unions obviously aided him in Montana's western counties.

Eastern and southern Montana were the sections of the state most consistently opposed to the liberal Senator from Butte. There were no counties that voted against Murray in each of his previous elections.

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51 Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.
but Big Horn and Stillwater gave Murray's Republican opponents a plurality in three of his four previous elections. The dominance of the Montana Stockgrower's Association and the Montana Farm Bureau explains in part, Murray's lack of success in these sections of the state.

Senator Murray's most successful electoral year was 1936 when he carried all but two of Montana's 56 counties. That year he also collected his greatest plurality, which was 61,731.

Congressman Wesley D'Ewart's greatest electoral support came from the southern and eastern counties in the second congressional district. Prior to 1954 there were 22 counties in the district which gave D'Ewart a plurality in each of his elections. Only two of these 22 counties gave Murray a plurality in 1954. They were Daniels and Phillips. To a great extent the conservative Congressman's success in previous elections can be attributed to two special interest groups, the Montana Stockgrower's Association and the Montana Farm Bureau.

The bulwark of D'Ewart's opposition, quite naturally, came from the same areas in which Senator Murray had great strength. These areas were the highline and the counties within the "triangle." In both of these areas the Farmer's Union is dominant as a special interest group of farmers. There were no counties in the eastern district which opposed D'Ewart in each of his previous congressional campaigns. There were, however, five counties which voted against him in four of his previous elections and they were Sheridan, Blaine, Musselshell, Hill, and Pondera.

D'Ewart's most successful year at the polls was 1952 when he won every county in his district. He collected a total of 90,210 votes.
This represented a plurality of 35,007.

Senator Murray announced his candidacy for re-election on April 23, 1954. Shortly thereafter, on May 5, 1954, Murray became the first Montana Democrat to file for the office of United States Senator. The Senator's reasons for seeking to continue in office were obvious. He was ranking minority member of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and with the election of a Democratic Senate he would become chairman of this committee, which dealt with many areas of interest to the people of Montana.

Wesley A. D'Ewart announced on Saturday, February 13, 1954, that he would be a candidate for the Republican nomination for the United States Senate. On June 5, 1954, D'Ewart filed his petition to enter the Republican primary as a candidate for the Senate. In so doing he gave up his position as second senior Republican of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Since the passage of the Seventeenth Amendment only one Republican senator has been elected from Montana and that person was Zales Ecton, who served only one term. Yet D'Ewart was still determined to unseat Senator Murray. He had two reasons for entering the Senate race. First,

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52 Great Falls Tribune, April 24, 1954, p. 1.
53 Great Falls Tribune, May 6, 1954, p. 5.
he had a perfect political record in that he had never lost an election for the state legislature or for the United States Congress. The second reason was that the national leadership of the Republican party had asked him to run against Senator Murray.\(^{57}\)

In addition to Murray and D'Ewart, three other persons announced that they would enter the primary as candidates for the Senate. One was a Republican, Robert Yellowtail, who filed on the Republican ticket shortly after Murray had filed his petition.\(^{58}\) On the Democratic slate there were two persons opposed to Senator Murray. One was Ray E. Gulick, a Joplin farmer\(^{59}\) and the other was Sam G. Feezell.\(^{60}\)

In the primary election which was held on July 20, 1954, Murray won with a comfortable margin. His total vote was 65,896 and this represented a plurality of 60,935 over his nearest opponent. Together Feezell and Gulick collected nearly 10,000 votes, which was less than one sixth of Murray's total. In the Republican primary D'Ewart easily defeated Robert Yellowtail. D'Ewart's total was 49,963 and this was a plurality of 39,258 over Yellowtail's total of 10,705. This meant that D'Ewart had almost five times as many votes as did his opponent. A cursory examination might lead one to conclude that Murray was more successful than D'Ewart in the primary. However, it must be remembered that more persons voted in the Democratic primary and that success in a Montana primary does

\(^{57}\) Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
\(^{58}\) Great Falls Tribune, May 12, 1954, p. 5.
\(^{60}\) Great Falls Tribune, May 16, 1954, p. 4.
not necessarily lead to success in the general election. Therefore, it can only be said that both Murray and D'Ewart scored impressive victories in the primary election of 1954 and that both were extremely popular candidates.
Chapter Two

THE ISSUES OF THE CAMPAIGN

A candidate's platform reflects, in some measure, his philosophy of government. Senator Murray's platform for re-election in 1954 indicated a liberal outlook on the problems facing government. On the other hand, Congressman D'Ewart's platform denoted a different approach toward the same problems. There were many contrasting planks in the platforms of Murray and D'Ewart. One of those which is readily discernible involved government expenditures. D'Ewart promised to help "stop unnecessary expenditures,"\(^1\) while Murray called for an expansion of public power and Social Security and "more liberal old age assistance,"\(^2\) all of which would increase government expenditures. In the field of foreign affairs Murray followed the course set by a majority of Democrats when he pledged to support "a foreign policy based upon international co-operation," and "international control of atomic and hydrogen weapons."\(^3\) On the other hand, D'Ewart sought to "pursue international policies which preserve liberty and peace for the United States."\(^4\) Still another difference was in the approach to the complex farm problem. Murray said he would support "100 per cent parity price supports for all agricultural products" and also aid in

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\(^1\) *Great Falls Tribune*, June 9, 1954, p. 6.

\(^2\) *Great Falls Tribune*, May 6, 1954, p. 5.

\(^3\) *Great Falls Tribune*, May 6, 1954, p. 5.

\(^4\) *Great Falls Tribune*, June 9, 1954, p. 6.
abolishing discriminatory freight rates. D'Ewart's promise to the farmers was less optimistic as he said he would "promote progress for agriculture which give producers a fair share of national income."

Finally, D'Ewart joined fellow Republicans in what seemed to be the foremost goal of their party in 1954, when he promised to help "Eliminate subversives from government."

It is fairly evident that the voters of Montana were presented with the platforms or political programs of an extreme liberal and a conservative. While D'Ewart was not an extreme conservative, he represented a point on the political spectrum considerably to the right of Senator Murray. The campaign which followed and the issues involved clarified for the electorate the distinctions between the two contestants.

The most heated issue of the 1954 campaign was the charge that Murray was soft on Communism. This issue was not restricted to Montana. A Gallup poll revealed that the biggest issue of the Republican party throughout the nation was the menace of Communist infiltration in government. In Montana it was alleged that Murray was a sympathizer of the Communist movement. Leo C. Graybill, Sr., Democratic National Committeeman in 1954, attested that "I am sure at least two other states were involved, namely Colorado and Wyoming, with similar attacks on the senators who were running for re-election in those states, both

5Great Falls Tribune, May 6, 1954, p. 5.
of whom, like Senator Murray, were liberals."

The focal point of the Communism issue in Montana was a document entitled "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress." Though the document did not directly state that Murray was a Communist, its cover and title implied as much. This tactic was not a new one to Montana politicians. According to Joseph J. McCaffery, secretary of the Murray for Senator Club in 1954, the tactic was, in part, borrowed from a 1952 attack leveled against Senator Mike Mansfield. Mansfield had made a trip to China to investigate a Communist reform movement. As a result of the trip Vice-President Nixon, in a speech in Missoula, accused Mansfield of covering up the Communist movement. This then was used as a model for the attack on Murray in 1954.

The document, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress" was not written or printed directly by the Republican party. Wesley D'Ewart admitted that he had knowledge of the fact that the article was being prepared but he himself did not order anyone to print it. D'Ewart said the article was fashioned after a book put out by the Democratic party of Florida. The book attempted to connect Senator Pepper with the Communist party and in the process helped defeat him in a Democratic primary of 1950.

While D'Ewart did not direct the preparation of the article, he did insist that "everything be accurate." D'Ewart also said that he did not accuse Murray of being a Communist. He said he "used the words

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8 Letter from Leo C. Graybill, Sr., August 26, 1963.
9 Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.
10 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
socialist and communist very carefully," and added, "I know he wasn't a Communist." Nonetheless, D'Ewart still believed the people should be exposed to the truth about political candidates, Murray included. For this reason D'Ewart implied that he had the pamphlet prepared by others, by saying "in situations like these the man wants a good name so he gets others to do things for him."¹¹ Two years after the 1954 election, in 1956, D'Ewart had been nominated as Assistant Secretary of Interior. As a result, D'Ewart was questioned by the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, of which Murray was chairman. During this hearing D'Ewart said that he did not help finance or support the soft-on-Communism campaign against Murray in 1954. He did say, however, that there were many things he could not control which occurred "in the heat of the campaign."¹²

The pamphlet itself, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress," was compiled and published by the Montana for D'Ewart Committee. Ralph Studer of Billings was chairman of this group and H. T. Porter of Bozeman was its secretary-treasurer. In capsule form the pamphlet made the following allegations:

"Nine persons formerly employed on Congressional committee staffs have been questioned concerning affiliations with the Communist party and rather than reply, have claimed their privilege against self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. Six of the nine were employed on committees of which Senator James E. Murray was chairman or ranking Democrat member. Several were members of organizations with

¹¹ Ibid.

which Senator Murray has been identified and which have been designated as Communist or Communist front organizations by the Attorney General and Congressional or legislative committees."^{13}

The pamphlet continues by saying:

"The official files, records and publications of the Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives in Washington, D. C., show that Senator James E. Murray has been identified by membership, sponsorship or association with thirteen (13) Communist front organizations, all of which have been designated or cited as Communist or Communist front organizations by the Attorney General of the United States, Congressional or legislative committees, or both."^{14}

The article also said that Murray opposed the Internal Security Act,^{15} and was the only senator who "regularly receives a Communist newspaper from overseas."^{16} Finally, the pamphlet presents a "Tribute To Lenin," by Senator Murray which was printed in a 1945 issue of Soviet Russia Today.^{17}

Any attempt to prove that the Republican party was responsible for the pamphlet in question is extremely difficult. However, A. A. Schlaht did admit that "some of us on our own did assist in its distribution on a limited basis." Schlaht, who was D'Ewart's campaign manager in 1954, added that "The pamphlet was developed in Washington, D. C."^{18} Ralph

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^{13}"Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress." Compiled and Published by the Montana for D'Ewart Committee, Ralph Studer, Chairman, Billings, Montana, 1954, 2.

^{14}Ibid., 13.

^{15}Ibid., 24.

^{16}Ibid., 21.

^{17}Ibid., 23.

^{18}Letter from A. A. Schlaht, August 28, 1963.
Bricker, Cascade county chairman of the D'Ewart for Senator Club, also attested that the pamphlet was prepared by someone in Washington, D. C. He also said that D'Ewart's old organization had very little to do with the campaign for the Senate. There seems little doubt that this inaction on the part of Bricker and D'Ewart's old organization contributed to the Congressman's defeat in 1954. This was not the primary factor in D'Ewart's unsuccessful bid for the Senate but it seems certain that his old organization could have served him better. Another person who was instrumental in the D'Ewart organization, Hugh Galusha, Jr., treasurer of the D'Ewart for Senator Club, said that Frank Kluckhohn was primarily responsible for the preparation of the article. Kluckhohn was sent to Montana by the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee. On the basis of the statements above it seems safe to conclude that some degree of responsibility rests with the Republican party.

There have been many estimates as to the number of pamphlets, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress," which were printed and distributed to the public. William S. White, writing for the New York Times in 1954, said that the pamphlets were being distributed by the thousands and conservatively added that about 50,000 copies were printed. A. A. Schlaht stated that the pamphlets were only dis-

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19 Letter from Ralph Bricker, August 12, 1963.
20 Interview with Hugh Galusha, Jr., September 3, 1963.
21 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
tributed in four counties, so the estimate of 50,000 is probably a fairly accurate one. At a printer's estimate of 35 cents per copy, the same number of pamphlets cost someone a figure in the neighborhood of $17,500.00. Exactly who financed the pamphlet, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress," is a question which may have to be ultimately answered by historians of the future. However, some insight into this matter is given by Lloyd Skedd, Democrat and Helena attorney. Skedd contended that oil interests financed, to a great extent, this pamphlet. He added that the Texas oil baron, Mr. Hunt, possibly contributed to this fund. Finally, he said that Dan Whetstone, editor of the Cut Bank Pioneer Press and Vic Overcash, present head of the John Birch Society in Montana and Wyoming, collected money to finance the pamphlet which was used against Senator Murray. Skedd based his contentions on an investigation by the Democratic party after the 1954 campaign.

In addition to the scurrilous attacks on Murray which were in printed form, the Senator was also blasted over the air on a Billings radio station, by a man named Littleton. According to Mrs. LeRoy Anderson, Littleton was purportedly a New York attorney brought into Montana specifically to label Murray as a 'fellow traveler.'

While it is true that D'Ewart did not accuse Murray of being a Communist, a number of national leaders, both Democrats and Republicans,

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24 Interview with Lloyd Skedd, September 11, 1963.
25 Interview with Mrs. LeRoy Anderson, August 6, 1963.
implied as much themselves. Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin said he hoped that Montanans would elect D'Ewart, a strong foe of Communism. McCarthy added that a victory for D'Ewart would represent a step forward for Americanism. 26

Vice-President Nixon praised D'Ewart and said that the Communists were infiltrating the Democratic party and making their "policies the policies of the Democratic party." 27 In a speech at Butte, Nixon verbally attacked Murray in a roundabout manner by saying that the Communists were in accord with the Americans for Democratic Action on a number of counts. He added that only a few Democrats belonged to this left wing group, implying that Senator Murray was one of the few. 28

Former Montana Senator, Burton K. Wheeler, opposed Murray's candidacy and said that he "played the game 1,000 per cent with the left-wing internationalist group that has cost us thousands of lives, billions of dollars and spawned a Communist war machine that is the greatest threat that our country has ever faced." 29

While there were those who did not hesitate to label Murray as a Communist, there were many more who rose to defend the character of the Senator. Senator Gore, Democrat from Tennessee, warned that a "smear campaign" would "soon be unleashed" against Senator Murray and at the

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26 Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954, p. 4.
same time asked that the people of Montana re-elect their senior Senator.\(^{30}\)

In support of Murray, Congressman McCormack of Massachusetts said that the Montana Senator had voted for the Smith Act and the McCormack Foreign Agents Registration Act while his Republican opponents did not support the same measures.\(^{31}\)

Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota sent a lengthy wire to Wesley D'Ewart, in which he defended the cause of Murray and asked that D'Ewart halt the campaign of slander against Murray. Among other things he said that "Senator Murray never stoops to answer smears" and "I want to tell you and the people of Montana that Senator Murray co-sponsored my bill to outlaw the Communist party as part of an international conspiracy."\(^{32}\)

The former mayor of Great Falls and past Chairman of the United States Civil Service Commission, Harry B. Mitchell, said that he knew Murray for 40 years and his loyalty and patriotism were unquestioned.\(^{33}\)

Lyndon B. Johnson, a Democrat in the United States Senate, said that Murray was patriotic and the campaign against him was "incredible."\(^{34}\)

Two other Senators, John Sparkman of Alabama and Earl Clements of Kentucky, issued a joint statement saying that the Communist smear was


\(^{31}\)Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954, p. 5.

\(^{32}\)Great Falls Tribune, October 21, 1954, p. 1.


\(^{34}\)Great Falls Tribune, October 29, 1954, p. 12.
part of a nationwide campaign to discredit Democrats.\(^{35}\)

In 1960 Senator Dirksen joined the chorus in defense of Murray. It was upon the occasion of Murray's retirement from the Senate that Dirksen criticized his fellow Republicans. Dirksen said it was a terrible thing that smear literature, of the sort used against Senator Murray, should come from his own political party. He added that this literature indicated "certain things that were in derogation of both his character and the duty he had performed here." Finally, the Illinois Senator said, "I eschewed it at once, and did so both publicly and privately.\(^{36}\)

In Billings, on one of the few occasions in which Murray answered the charges of Communism, he said, "False and vicious propaganda has been imported into the state to brand some candidates for high office as Reds, left-wingers, Communist sympathizers and fellow travelers." He also said that a hard fought campaign was all right in his estimation, but he could not go along with the mud-slinging tactics of some of his opponents.\(^{37}\)

With respect to charges of Communism in this campaign, Montana newspapers, for the most part, maintained a silent editorial policy. However, there were a few weeklies that stood out and voiced their opinions. An editorial in the Hungry Horse News of Columbia Falls stated that "The low of the present Montana campaign is the attempt to

\(^{35}\)Great Falls Tribune, October 26, 1954, p. 1.

\(^{36}\)Congressional Record, United States Senate, April 28, 1960, p. 8224.

\(^{37}\)Great Falls Tribune, October 29, 1954, p. 5.
picture Murray as a Communist sympathizer." Commenting on Murray's praise of Lenin which was printed in the pamphlet, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress," the editorial said that "The piece was written back in the days when Russia was an American ally in the war against Germany. Murray's article on Lenin today seems ill advised. It was written nearly 10 years ago about a dead man, and obviously was an appeal in the direction of Russian-American friendship."\textsuperscript{38}

The Glacier Reporter of Browning criticized statements of Vic Overcash, president of the 'Pro-American Research Foundation,' which questioned Murray's patriotism. According to the editor of the Browning newspaper, the remarks of Overcash were "completely out of focus in regards to the true picture." Continuing, the editorial asked that candidates who fail to campaign on the issues be weeded out at the polls.\textsuperscript{39}

An editorial in the People's Voice, a solidly liberal Democratic newspaper of Helena, claimed that "Because his (Murray's) record is so good, Republicans have been hard put to attack him on the issues. Therein lies the reason why he is being subjected to so much calumny in the closing days of the campaign."\textsuperscript{40}

The Western News of Hamilton, in an editorial, asked "When will elections be decided upon facts? Are some folks afraid to face the people upon a basis of a fair accounting?" The editorial also claimed

\textsuperscript{38}Hungry Horse News (Columbia Falls, Montana), October 29, 1954, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{39}Glacier Reporter (Browning, Montana), October 8, 1954, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{40}People's Voice (Helena, Montana), October 29, 1954, p. 4.
that the Republicans were evading issues because of the poor record of
the Eisenhower administration.\textsuperscript{41}

The only Republican newspaper to object to the smear campaign was
the Townsend Star. However, its editorial came after the election was
over and the harm had been done. The editorial stated, "There isn't a
man or woman in Broadwater county that believes for one moment that
James E. Murray (a Roman Catholic) is a Communist....." The same
editorial also said that the state of Montana would be better off if
campaigns were waged on issues and not on the basis of personal
accusations.\textsuperscript{42}

Possibly more objective than the editorials listed above, was a
post-election article from United Press International which stated that
"Murray's election was a direct repudiation by the voters, of Republican
charges that he was soft with Reds during the three full terms he has
served in the Senate. But, on the other hand, it showed that the charges
had some effect because the final tabulation was so close."\textsuperscript{43}

As it is seemingly not the policy of the Montana press to examine
the meaning and significance of elections in the Treasure state, persons
who were active in the 1954 campaign were interviewed to provide evi­
dence of the influence which the issue of Communism had on the results

\textsuperscript{41}Western News (Hamilton, Montana), October 7, 1954, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{42}Townsend Star, November 4, 1954, p. 4.
of the election between Murray and D'Ewart. Interviews conducted revealed a divided opinion as to the effect of this issue. Judge Murray, son of the late Senator Murray, believes that the issue of Communism and more specifically, the article, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress" hurt the Senator in this election. He said that Murray gave the people of Montana too much credit and the article was the reason for the narrowness of his father's victory.44

Harry Billings, editor of the People's Voice, sided with Judge Murray and said that the article did not help Murray because the voters were unreasonably hysterical and afraid of Communism in 1954.45 Another Democrat, former Montana governor, John Bonner, reasoned that the article cost Murray votes because the voters like to hear filth about candidates, especially if it concerns Communism. Bonner said that if the article had not been distributed to the Montana electorate Murray would have won by a greater margin.46

A Republican who believes the article aided D'Ewart and not Murray is A. A. Schlaht, D'Ewart's campaign manager in 1954. Schlaht said, the article "proved to be quite effective."47

This issue crossed political lines completely, as there were Democrats who believed the article harmed D'Ewart's candidacy. 

44 Interview with Judge W. D. Murray, August 9, 1963.
46 Interview with John Bonner, August 16, 1963.
Graybill, Jr. said the article hurt D'Ewart because it was too scandalous.48 Another prominent Democrat, wishing to remain anonymous, agreed with Graybill by saying that the controversial article had little effect on the results of the election, but if anything it aided Murray because the Senator was a Catholic. He reasoned that there are few, if any, Catholics who are Communists and as a result the people would not believe the charges leveled against Murray.

Mel Engles, state chairman of the Republican party, also agreed with Graybill. He said that the article definitely helped Murray because it made him a martyr. He said the Catholic voters of Montana especially resented the contents of the article. According to Engles, D'Ewart would have won the election by five to seven thousand votes had the article not been exposed to the people of Montana, who are reluctant to accept smear campaigns.49

The treasurer of the D'Ewart for Senator Club, Hugh Galusha, Jr., said there was little doubt in his mind that the article was the reason for D'Ewart's loss. He said the article was too shockingly unbelievable for the public to accept.50 Finally, Mrs. Gladys E. Knowles, Republican National Committeewoman, expressed the belief that the article was harmful to D'Ewart. She said the article "backfired in many communities."

48 Interview with Leo Graybill, Jr., August 6, 1963.
49 Interview with Mel Engles, August 20, 1963.
50 Interview with Hugh Galusha, Jr., September 3, 1963.
and added that "It indicates that local people are more aware of the reaction of certain things in their own communities and their judgment should be given consideration, at least."  

The question as to whether or not the article, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress" aided D'Ewart is one that could never be answered definitely because of the many variables involved. Complicating matters with respect to this issue is that party affiliations mean very little. As has been evidenced, Democrats sided with Republicans in the belief that the article helped Murray and at least one Republican was of the opinion that the article aided D'Ewart. However, evidence leads one to conclude that this article was harmful to D'Ewart. There are three beliefs enforcing this statement. The first is the fact that the article was prepared surreptitiously. As a result, there were probably many Republicans who would not accept the article for this very reason. Secondly, assuming that Montana's independent voters are fairly well informed, it is probable that many of them cast their votes for Murray because of the article. Finally, in making Senator Murray somewhat of a martyr, the article no doubt mobilized the Democrats of Montana. In addition, there is statistical information to reinforce the belief that the article damaged the candidacy of Wesley D'Ewart. In Cascade, Glacier, and Roosevelt counties, where the article was known to have been distributed, D'Ewart received less

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52 According to Joseph P. Kelly, co-ordinator for Democratic activities in Montana, Mel Engles, state chairman of the Republican party, and Vic Overcash, co-ordinator of the John Birch Society in Montana and Wyoming, the article was distributed in Cascade, Roosevelt and Glacier counties, respectively.
support than did Murray. The following tabulation should clarify this statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Election Vote Won by D'Ewart</th>
<th>Cascade county</th>
<th>Glacier county</th>
<th>Roosevelt county</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All previous elections</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Election Vote Won by Murray</th>
<th>Cascade county</th>
<th>Glacier county</th>
<th>Roosevelt county</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All previous elections</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the article was possibly not of any great significance, it is apparent that it did cost D'Ewart some votes. In Cascade, Glacier, and Roosevelt counties Murray won an average of 60.9 per cent of the total vote in his four previous elections. In 1954 his average in the same three counties was 56.3 or 4.6 per cent less than he had previously received. In the three counties D'Ewart received an average of 49.1 per cent in his five previous elections and only 43.3 per cent in 1954. Therefore, D'Ewart fell 5.8 per cent in the same counties in 1954.

Exactly how many votes D'Ewart lost in 1954 as a result of the article is difficult to assess because one is attempting to weigh the degree of awareness or sophistication of the electorate.

The essential question remaining is the morality of the tactic used against Senator Murray in 1954. On the basis of generally accepted political ethics in the United States today, it seems safe to conclude that the article was not justified. The article was seemingly
a deliberate attempt to deceive the voters of Montana and herein lies the ethical violation on the part of Murray's opponents. The central criticism of the article is its cover which shows the congressional building in Washington, D. C. surrounded by a red spider web. The cover grossly exaggerates the contents of the article. A violation equally flagrant was the assumption that the people of Montana were uninformed politically and not able to discern between a clean, hard fought campaign and a smear campaign.

There were many other issues in this campaign. One of them was summarized by Wesley D'Ewart at the close of the campaign. In a speech at Hardin he said, "The real issues in this campaign are the accomplishments of the Eisenhower administration as against the destructive policies of Trumanism." Throughout the campaign D'Ewart hammered away at the slogan, "Peace and Prosperity" under a Republican administration. He especially emphasized the fact that the Republican party was responsible for keeping the nation out of war. But D'Ewart's greatest argument for election to the Senate was that he could be part of a Republican congress that would co-operate with President Eisenhower and not hamstring him as would a congress whose majority was Democratic.

The Democrats, of course, argued that Murray would co-operate with the Eisenhower administration and that D'Ewart had been opposed to much

53 *Great Falls Tribune*, November 1, 1954, p. 5.
54 *Great Falls Tribune*, October 12, 1954, p. 5.
of Eisenhower's program in the past. Leo C. Graybill, Sr., said during
the campaign that D'Ewart "has voted against President Eisenhower's
program consistently." A political commentator said that D'Ewart was
running as an Eisenhower Republican, but he had been anti-Eisenhower
and an advocate of the Bricker amendment.

The highpoint of this issue was reached when Senator Murray placed
a political advertisement in many of the state's newspapers. The ad­
vertisement included pictures of Presidents Eisenhower, Truman, and
Roosevelt, which had been autographed for Murray. The caption read,
"Three Presidents agree on Montana's 'Big Jim Murray'." The Republi­
cans were outraged as a result of this action on the part of Murray and
claimed that it did not mean Eisenhower was endorsing the Senator. This
necessitated Eisenhower's entrance into the campaign, whereupon the
President insisted that he was not endorsing Murray and added that he
hoped D'Ewart would be elected as Montana's junior senator. It is
probable that this advertisement was carried in an attempt to counter
the effect of the article, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over
Congress." Murray was obviously trying to prove his loyalty as an
American and as a senator. It is true that he did enjoy the respect of
three United States Presidents. Taking this into account and consider­
ing the fact that his own character was being attacked, Murray's action
seems understandable.

57 William G. Carleton, "Glen Taylor Rides Again," Nation, August
58 Great Falls Tribune, October 22, 1954, p. 4.
Nonetheless, Murray's advertisement probably did not give him any additional votes, as some Democrats agreed that it was not a wise political move. The Democratic Hungry Horse News of Columbia Falls, in an editorial, said, "The Murray for Senator Club in Butte was treating the people of Montana like cattle in wanting us to believe that President Eisenhower was endorsing Jim Murray."\(^{59}\)

Eisenhower did endorse Wesley D'Ewart in Montana. The occasion was the dedication of the Forest Service Aerial Fire Depot at Missoula. At this time the President expressed, in his own style, his liking for D'Ewart by referring to him as "my good friend Wes."\(^{60}\) There were many other prominent Republicans who made appearances in Montana on behalf of the Congressman. Some of D'Ewart's supporters included Vice-President Richard Nixon, Senator Everett Dirksen, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson, Joseph Martin, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Senators Frank Carlson of Kansas, Frederick Payne of Maine, and Frank Barrett of Wyoming. Among those who came to Montana in support of Senator Murray were Adlai Stevenson, Lyndon Johnson, Harry B. Mitchell, former Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brannan, and Senators Albert Gore of Tennessee and Wayne Morse of Oregon.

A perennial political issue and one which was not avoided during the 1954 campaign was that of taxes and the state of the economy in general. On the subject of the proposed Republican tax cut Murray said, "only a few select families in the low and middle income groups will

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\(^{59}\) Hungry Horse News (Columbia Falls, Montana), October 29, 1954, p. 2.

realize any savings from the Republican tax bill." He added that "Working mothers and people with big medical bills will receive some tax relief but even the actual savings for these hard-pressed individuals won't amount to a share of General Motors stock."

Mr. D'Ewart answered Murray's charges by saying, "The fact is that every earning American paying taxes had his taxes cut at least 11 percent for this year...." Later D'Ewart said of Murray, "During his 20 years in the Senate there have been about 70 different tax increases. Mr. Murray voted for all of them."

While Republicans were claiming our nation was enjoying prosperity, Murray implied that we were almost in a state of depression. Concerning D'Ewart's statement that things were "generally prosperous," the Senator said, "He must be thinking of General Motors. Certainly our farmers and stockmen are not feeling too prosperous. Certainly America's five million unemployed.....are not feeling too prosperous, and most certainly the small businessmen of America are not happy with their situation."

D'Ewart countered Murray's contentions by saying that savings bond sales in Montana had increased by 91 per cent over the first three months of 1953 when the Democratic party was in control of the national administration.

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63 Great Falls Tribune, October 28, 1954, p. 5.
64 Great Falls Tribune, October 26, 1954, p. 5.
A troublesome area for the Republican party in 1954 was the farm problem. The Department of Agriculture had reduced Montana wheat acreages by 20 per cent and this naturally provided Murray with good political ammunition. D'Ewart said very early in the campaign that he had no complete answer to the "complex" farm problem.

It was Secretary of Agriculture Benson who was the primary target for the Democrats during this campaign. In defense of Benson, D'Ewart said, "Today prices are recovering from the decline, wheat farmers will receive 82 1/2% support instead of 75%, acreage restrictions are eased as much as the law allows..." Later he said, "Wheat farmers in Montana this year are getting about $2.15 per bushel compared with $1.78-$1.92 during the 1951-1952 period. The Eisenhower administration is proving that we can have prosperity and peace - we do not need war to make good prices."

Before the campaign had ended, D'Ewart had arrived at a "real solution to the farm problem." He said the new agricultural trade act permitted "trades with other nations" and opens "new export markets for Montana grain and other commodities." An example would be "the movement of several million bushels of barley from Montana terminals to the Far East, and a trade of three million bushels of wheat for strategic

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67 Great Falls Tribune, April 20, 1954, p. 4.

68 River Press (Fort Benton, Montana), September 29, 1954, p. 4.

In a speech at Glasgow, Murray criticized the Republican farm policy and said he wished Benson would visit the state's "vast wheat areas to learn the facts of agricultural life." At the same time he said "our wheat farmers are in a bad way. They tell me they can't take another year of Benson's flexible parity plus rigid controls." 71

Toward the end of the campaign, at a speech in Bozeman, Senator Murray labeled the Republican farm policies as "bumbling, ruinous to Montana farmers and bad for the nation's future." His answer to the farm problem was that "We should be encouraging rather than discouraging increased farm productivity." He added that millions of persons were dying throughout the world and our own population was growing at a terrific rate. So it would be disastrous to reduce farm production. 72

While the farm problem was not the central factor in D'Ewart's defeat, it certainly contributed to the success of Senator Murray in 1954.

The Republican party made a great issue of Murray's age in the 1954 campaign. The Montana press seemed particularly intrigued with this issue. The Miles City Star and the Daily Inter Lake of Kalispell were greatly worried that Montana might be represented by an 85 year old man in 1961. Many Republicans claimed that Murray was losing his memory, that he was no longer effective as a representative of Montana, and that his son, Charles, was the real senator.

70 Missoulian, October 9, 1954, p. 5.
71 Great Falls Tribune, October 8, 1954, p. 5.
The Hungry Horse News and the People's Voice were among the newspapers answering the attacks made upon Murray and his age. The Columbia Falls weekly commented that "Age has not ordinarily been considered a drawback to a man's effectiveness as a senator. We still believe that age aids a man's wisdom." The editor of the People's Voice in Helena claimed that Montanans should retain Murray, as his election would make him chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and that D'Ewart would be a very old man before he could hope to be in a similar position.

An issue that seemed to deserve more attention from the press in 1954 was that of Congressman D'Ewart's proposed grazing bill, HR 4023. The editor of the Western News of Hamilton said that the bill "would have given preffered (sic) stockmen vested salable rights to grazing permits in our national forests" and at the same time "would have interfered with the use of the national forests by the public. 'Big' Jim Murray and Congressman Lee Metcalf opposed this giveaway of the public domain."

D'Ewart issued a statement concerning this resolution in which he said that HR 4023 was not intended to create a "vested interest" in public lands and in fact would not do so if enacted into law. Even

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73 Hungry Horse News (Columbia Falls, Montana), October 29, 1954, p. 2.
74 People's Voice (Helena, Montana), October 22, 1954, p. 4.
75 Western News (Hamilton, Montana), October 21, 1954, p. 4.
though the bill itself was killed it served to enliven the campaign between Murray and D'Ewart.

The question of veteran's legislation was introduced into the campaign by Senator Murray. Citing the *Congressional Record*, Murray listed three pieces of veteran's legislation which D'Ewart had voted against. The Senator said D'Ewart voted against the following bills; a $10 million appropriation to the Veteran's Administration in February, 1953, for veteran's medical and hospital services; a June, 1953 motion to give medical care in Veteran's Administration hospitals "to veterans who could not afford other care;" and a bill of March, 1949 to provide "$90.00 monthly pensions to veterans over 65."\(^7\)

In Butte, D'Ewart said that Murray was "distorting and misrepresenting my record on veteran's legislation."\(^8\) At the same time he said, "The 83rd congress appropriated money to operate more beds for veterans than ever before, in both fiscal 1954 and the current fiscal year. I voted for this program."\(^9\) The significance of this issue was that D'Ewart did not endear himself to a least one veteran's group. Willis McKeon of Malta, state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said of D'Ewart's voting record, his "votes on veteran's legislation are out of accord with the legislative program of the V F W."\(^10\)

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\(^7\) *Great Falls Tribune*, October 17, 1954, p. 4.

\(^8\) *Great Falls Tribune*, October 16, 1954, p. 9.


\(^10\) *Great Falls Tribune*, October 23, 1954, p. 4.
Foreign aid developed into an issue in this campaign. Both parties and both candidates accused the other of participating in a "giveaway" program. D'Ewart presented statistics concerning the foreign aid programs of Presidents Roosevelt and Truman. He said, "No less than 66 foreign nations and nine international organizations passed through the give away shop Mr. Murray and his fellow New and Fair Dealers set up." Murray countered this argument by saying, "apparently in this campaign Wes D'Ewart thinks Truman is still president, doesn't know Roosevelt is dead and isn't aware the programs he's attacking are those now sponsored by Republican President, Eisenhower." Murray suggested that D'Ewart "refresh his apparently failing memory" and added that it was Eisenhower who endorsed the Marshall Plan and asked Congress to increase payments for the Mutual Security Program.

There were many lesser issues in this campaign, some of which were obviously introduced to win the favor of special interest groups. This seemed to be the case with respect to the rights of Montana's Indians. Referring to the transfer of Indian hospitals from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the Public Health Service, Murray said, if the Democrats win on November 2, "there'll be no more second class citizenship for anyone in the State of Montana. Indian rights will be upheld and federal obligations to the Indian will be enforced." Concerning these

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81 Montana Standard (Butte, Montana), October 13, 1954, p. 3.
82 Great Falls Tribune, October 15, 1954, p. 16.
83 Independent Record (Helena, Montana), October 14, 1954, p. 7.
statements which were made in Hardin, the editor of the Forsyth Independent said, we wonder why "he hasn't put action into some of this high-fired talk during his 18 years in Washington. Many Indians woke up to the fact long ago that the Queer Deal appropriated additional millions of dollars for them, but the bulk of it went to a Whiteman payroll." 

Former Senator Burton K. Wheeler played somewhat of a special role in the 1954 campaign. As a Democrat he was strongly opposed to his old colleague, Senator Murray. This opposition in itself created an issue. In an interview with the editor of the Cut Bank Pioneer Press he said, "I propose to turn the spotlight on Murray's record, if such it may be termed." It was obvious that Wheeler was true to his word, as he joined with Republicans and denounced Murray on almost every issue of the campaign. He said at the close of the campaign, "I know of no man in the United States Senate today who is less capable of representing our great state than Sen. Murray." This opposition no doubt had some effect on the election results but it was probably anticipated by the Murray camp because of the Senator's conflict with Wheeler in the Democratic primary of 1946.

The 1954 campaign between Senator James E. Murray and Congressman Wesley A. D'Ewart was one which was not always waged on the highest

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84 Forsyth Independent, October 21, 1954, p. 6.
possible level. Certainly it could have been more issue-oriented than was the case. But the fact of the matter is that both candidates were concerned with projecting a favorable image, that is, an image of a representative who would give his constituents everything in the way of desirable legislation without taxing them to death. Nonetheless, the campaign did reveal the past records of the two candidates. The electorate was given ample cause to discern a basic difference between the philosophies of Murray, a liberal Democrat, and D'Ewart, a somewhat conservative Republican.

This was a campaign that was promisingly lively and was made even more so by the existence of the Communism issue. So, while the campaign could have been waged on a higher level, it did provide the election itself with an essential element, that is, a distinct choice for the electorate.
After Senator Murray ran for the United States Senate in 1934 he was able to depend upon a smoothly co-ordinated organization in each of his following campaigns, including the 1954 campaign. By 1954 he had a large following within his organization and the organization re-activated itself. Most of the members of this organization knew what was expected of them and proceeded to accept their responsibilities. Murray's campaign "machine" was extremely well organized on a state-wide basis as a result of 20 years experience and this in itself represented an advantage over Mr. D'Ewart, whose organization was within the confines of the eastern congressional district.\footnote{Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.}

The campaign began in the spring of the year with a kickoff dinner which was presided over by Leo C. Graybill, Sr., Democratic National Committeeman.\footnote{Letter from Leo C. Graybill, Sr., August 26, 1963.} The Senator had three campaign headquarters. Originally he simply had offices in Helena and Great Falls, but later in the campaign a third headquarters was opened in Butte for "the center of an aggressive door to door campaign."\footnote{Great Falls Tribune, October 8, 1954, p. 9.}

Charles Murray, the Senator's son, was in effect the manager of this campaign. As general overseer he delegated work to all subordinate members of the organization, including Joseph J. McCaffery, secre-
tary of the Murray for Senator Club. Charles Murray, who was an administrative assistant to his father in Washington, D.C., was in Montana personally three weeks before the election to direct the affairs of the campaign. The organization itself was divided into congressional districts and further subdivided into certain areas within a district. In this particular campaign there were small organizations along the highline, highway ten, and the Yellowstone river. In addition, the campaign was conducted on a circular basis. That is, the Senator or members of his organization would establish a temporary central base and proceed to take part in speaking engagements around this area. Normally the best men in the organization were sent to areas such as Yellowstone county, which was believed to be mild in its support of the Senator. 4

The organization was based on the theory that it would be largely conducted on the basis of advertising, through newspapers, radio, and television. At the time the Senator was vice-chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and as a result could not afford to spend a great deal of time conducting a vigorous personal campaign. 5

In order to win the election it was necessary to preserve the desirable image of the Senator which had previously existed in the minds of the electorate. In the main this was done through the ordinary advertising media. It was also managed by advertising in the special issues of newspapers, such as the farm section of the Great Falls

4 Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.
5 Ibid.
Tribune. Finally, it was necessary to advertise in the newspapers and magazines of special interest groups, such as labor and religion.  

It is apparent that the Murray organization did preserve a favorable image in the minds of many Montanans, as many special interest groups endorsed the Senator. There were four labor groups that supported Murray. One was the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen. Another was the Railroad Brotherhoods of Montana. Montana Labor's League for Political Education, the political adjunct of the A. F. of L., endorsed the Senator. Finally, Labor's Non-Partisan League, the political adjunct of the United Mine Workers, endorsed senatorial candidates, including James E. Murray. Other groups to support Murray were the Farmer's Union, which had always aided him, and as if in answer to some of his critics, the Montana Old Age Pension Association.

As a result of five successful congressional campaigns Wesley D'Ewart had a fine organization in Montana's eastern district. This district was broken down into two areas, one along the Yellowstone river and the other following the course of the Missouri river.

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6 Ibid.
7 Great Falls Tribune, June 13, 1954, p. 5.
11 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
D'Ewart had separate chairmen for the eastern and western congressional districts and a state-wide chairman, Matt Himsl of Kalispell, who worked in the western district. The major impediment in D'Ewart's campaign was the fact that he had no organization in the western district prior to 1954. It was for this reason that Himsl was appointed chairman of the D'Ewart for Senator Club. D'Ewart believed that Himsl had both friends and influence in western Montana. As the results were to indicate, D'Ewart's reasoning was correct, as Flathead county, at least, proved to be an unexpected source of strength for the Republican Congressman.

In addition to Himsl, other ranking members of D'Ewart's organization were A. A. Schlaht, campaign manager, who worked in Helena with publicity and finances, Mrs. Fred Sanborn of Great Falls, secretary of the D'Ewart for Senator Club, and Hugh Galusha, Jr. of Helena, treasurer of the D'Ewart campaign organization. Besides the central personnel, three persons served as vice-chairmen for separate areas of the state. They were: H. H. Koessler of Missoula, western Montana, Ralph Bricker of Great Falls, northern Montana, and C. W. Dell, a Billings man, southern Montana. Finally, D'Ewart had a separate organization of farmers and ranchers which was led by Tom Ross of Chinook.

Like Murray, D'Ewart used the normal means of promoting a politi-

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13 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
14 Interview with Matt Himsl, August 2, 1963.
15 Ibid.
16 Letter from A. A. Schlaht, August 16, 1963.
cal campaign. D'Ewart also wrote a weekly newsletter on current issues which was sent to some 5,000 of his constituents, read over radio stations, and printed in many of the state's weekly newspapers.

Other techniques used were phone calls to the voters and the issuing of bulletins to the party faithful in the hopes that they might spread the news of D'Ewart's qualifications and accomplishments to the general public.

The Republican National Committeewoman, Mrs. Gladys E. Knowles, was helpful during the campaign. Her role was to distribute literature, secure workers for the Republican party, inform the candidates about possible weak spots, and work with fund raising campaigns.

D'Ewart was also successful in courting special interest groups. The Montana Farm Bureau and the Montana Stockgrowers Association supported D'Ewart in 1954 as they had done in his previous campaigns. The Grange, a farmers organization, aided D'Ewart in western Montana and the Montana State Chamber of Commerce, among others, endorsed the Congressman in this campaign.

Something of an issue in the 1954 campaign was the amount of money

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17 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
18 Interview with Matt Himsl, August 2, 1963.
20 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 2, 1963.
21 Interview with Matt Himsl, August 2, 1963.
22 Interview with Leo Graybill, Jr., August 6, 1963.
spent by Murray and D'Ewart. A repeated claim of the Republicans was that eastern, left wing organizations were financing Murray's campaign. William Mackay, state chairman of the Republican party in 1954, estimated "that Mr. Murray is spending between $100,000 - $125,000 on his campaign." He added that "I am quite willing to disclose that the Republican party has thus far collected $42,000.00 in Montana for its total effort. Most of this money has come in small contributions from Montana ranchers and farmers. There have been scarcely any large contributions from outside the state." But the Democrats argued through John Woodcock, Jr., chairman of the Cascade county Democratic central committee, that the Republicans had a budget of $180,000.00, compared to $25,000.00 for the Democratic party.  

Later in the campaign Mr. Mackay listed some of the "left wing organizations outside Montana" that were financially aiding Murray. They were, "The CIO Political Action Committee; the Amalgamated Political Action Fund; the AFL Labors League for Political Education; the United Automobile Workers and the Machinist's Non-Partisan Political League."  

From Butte Senator Murray answered Republican critics by saying that he did receive "a $5,000.00 contribution from the 70 year old, thoroughly American, anti-Communistic American Federation of Labor." Continuing, Murray charged that D'Ewart's campaign fund was being filled with "money from the notorious labor hater, Weir of the Weirton

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23 Independent Record (Helena, Montana), October 8, 1954, p. 6.

24 Great Falls Tribune, October 21, 1954, p. 4.
Steel Co.; money from at least four of the Pittsburgh Mellons, notorious possessors of the Mellon millions made at the expense of the people during the discredited Republican Harding regime; money from no less than seven Rockefellers, and money from several of the Delaware DuPonts, renowned amongst the 'Merchants of Death.'

Speaking for D'Ewart, William Mackay said, "Sen. Murray is using 5 times as much radio time as Mr. D'Ewart; 3 times as many advertisements and 20 times as many billboards. He is trying to buy the election with outside money."  

The only records which are still available indicate that D'Ewart enjoyed more financial support than did Murray. In 1954 the D'Ewart for Senator Club spent $51,816.53, while $37,714.04 was handled by the Murray for Senator Club. In the category of personal expenditures, D'Ewart spent $1,789.60 compared to Murray's $537.50. Finally, the records show that the D'Ewart for Senator Club released $4,443.58 and the Murray for Senator Club $3,875.77 for the primary election.

It was learned that no records are kept as to the amount of money spent by the candidates for radio and television in 1954. However, an interview with an anonymous former associate of the XL Radio and Television Network revealed that Murray and D'Ewart spent approximately the same amount of money for radio and television advertising through the XL Network. At the time this network consisted of stations in Helena,

25 Great Falls Tribune, October 18, 1954, p. 4.
27 All financial records are from the office of the Secretary of State, Helena, Montana.
Butte, Bozeman, Missoula, and Great Falls, which represents a fairly
good cross-section of the state.

An examination of the contents of the Montana Standard of Butte shows that D'Ewart advertised a great deal more in this paper than did Murray. During the week of October 26, to November 1, 1954, the Montana Standard carried 8,500 square inches of political advertising for D'Ewart, as compared to 1,840 square inches for Murray. Newspaper advertising then, could explain the reason for greater campaign expenditures on the part of Wesley D'Ewart.

With respect to the Murray organization, it was Charles Murray and Joseph J. McCaffery who collaborated on all decisions relating to expenditures. They decided how much would be spent on radio, television, and in the newspapers. The D'Ewart organization had a separate finance chairman, Henry J. Sawtell, but it was D'Ewart and his campaign manager, A. A. Schlaht who made almost all significant financial decisions.

The essential question remaining is where the candidates collected the necessary funds to finance their campaigns. In compliance with state law, both candidates submitted a list of contributors to their campaigns to the office of the Secretary of State in Helena. However, these records are kept for only six months and thereafter destroyed. It can be said with respect to the Murray campaign that most of the

28 Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.
29 Letter from A. A. Schlaht, August 16, 1963.
30 Interview with Hugh Galusha, Jr., September 3, 1963.
contributors were prominent Democrats and personal friends of the Senator. In addition, most of the contributions were small amounts, ranging from $10.00 to $25.00. The largest contributions were from $100.00 to $500.00 and there were very few that large.\footnote{Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.}

In a preliminary report, through October 16, 1954, D'Ewart reported contributions totaling $5,266.00. He said $5,000.00 of this amount came from the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee and the remaining $266.00 came from others.\footnote{Missoulian, October 29, 1954, p. 15.} In an interview, D'Ewart added that there were no large contributors in particular who gave money for his campaign expenses. He said that most of the money came in small amounts from friends in Great Falls, Billings, and other Montana cities.\footnote{Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.}

To aid D'Ewart with publicity, the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee sent Frank Kluckhohn to Montana. This is the same person who was supposedly responsible for preparing the document, "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress." Prior to his entry into the Montana political scene, Kluckhohn was a noted journalist and after the 1954 campaign he became a ranking official in the United States State Department.\footnote{Ibid.}

In conclusion, both campaigns were well organized and well financed for the year 1954. This was the year in which television first
came to most Montana cities. While television did make its political debut in Montana in 1954, it was not used as extensively as it is in present day political campaigns. One result is that the Murray-D'Ewart campaign was probably not as costly as are present day senatorial campaigns. There is a second and possibly more significant resulting factor from the advent of television in Montana politics. That factor is namely a decline in personal campaigning. Whether or not this is beneficial for political campaigns remains to be seen. In a state so expansive as Montana the advantage is obvious, that is, more persons are able to see the candidates through television. On the other hand, it is apparent that television campaigning lacks a certain luster which can only be created through personal appearances.
Chapter Four
THE ROLE OF THE PRESS

In 1954 Montana's newspapers expressed mild interest in the events concerning the senatorial campaign between James E. Murray and Wesley A. D'Ewart. There were no newspapers, weekly or daily, that had a full time reporter following the campaign or the candidates. With few exceptions, the only occasions upon which a reporter was sent to cover a story was when a candidate or member of his organization happened to be speaking in the same city in which the newspaper itself was located. For the most part then, newspapers relied upon the wire services for coverage of the campaign. Many of the stories which appeared in the newspapers came from press releases issued by a candidate's campaign headquarters. There are three possible explanations for the uniform and relatively small coverage of this campaign by the Montana press. One is a lack of resources which are available to larger newspapers in other, more populous states. Another possibility is that in 1954 Montana's newspapers did not deviate from their tradition of remaining aloof from politics. The third possibility is the fact that this was an off-year election and therefore, not as interesting to the general public as an election highlighted by a presidential contest.

The purpose of this chapter will be to examine the editorial policies of newspapers throughout the state with respect to this particular campaign. To begin with, this study revealed only 17 newspapers in the entire state that endorsed either Murray or D'Ewart. Of these 17 only six favored the candidacy of Senator Murray. The remaining 11 indicated a preference for Wesley D'Ewart. Although somewhat
mild in its support, the Great Falls Tribune was the only major daily newspaper in the state favoring Senator Murray. This newspaper said, "...the whole field of Montana interests will be best served by the election of our Democratic candidates for Congress," and Senator Murray should be returned "to a Democratic Senate, where his seniority would entitle him to the chairmanship of the important Interior committee."¹ Later the same newspaper said that in the last 20 years "Sen. Jim Murray played an active part in obtaining for Montana and Montana people the kind of recognition we need in Washington. We believe it is a wise idea to keep the Democrats we have in Congress from Montana and to add a fourth Democrat on Tuesday."²

The Dillon Daily Tribune was the only other daily newspaper in Montana which supported Senator Murray. In an open letter to Murray, Edwin S. Townsend, editor of the Dillon newspaper, said a factor in favor of the Senator was "the failure of the Republican party to keep its promises made in the 1952 election." In particular the editor criticized the failure of the Republicans to rid the government of Communists.³

There were four weekly newspapers in Montana which promoted the candidacy of Senator Murray. One was the Glacier Reporter of Browning. The editor of this newspaper commented that insofar as the community of Browning was concerned there was an essential difference between the

¹Great Falls Tribune, October 29, 1954, p. 6.
²Great Falls Tribune, October 31, 1954, p. 6.
Democratic and Republican parties. The editorial stated that the Republican candidates spent as little time in Browning as was absolutely necessary while the Democrats, including Murray, always made arrangements to talk with the local people.\(^4\)

The \textit{People's Voice} of Helena stoutly defended Murray, especially when his opponents contended that he was too old or that he was a 'fellow traveler.' An editorial in this newspaper declared that the reason for the smear campaign against the Senator was that the Republicans were afraid to campaign on the issues. The editor said that the Republicans had no recourse but to smear Murray's character, as his record was almost flawless.\(^5\)

The dedication of the Forest Service Aerial Fire Depot at Missoula served as an opportunity for the \textit{Western News} of Hamilton to denounce the Republican party. President Eisenhower, Wesley D'Ewart, Governor Aronson, and other Republican dignitaries were present for this dedication. Of the Republican showing, the editor of the \textit{Western News} said, "Mansfield wangled the bill through the House of Representatives and Senator Murray was responsible for getting it through the Senate. President Truman signed it into law and then the work of construction began." The editor also alleged that the dedication was used to "help wipe Senator Murray and Representative Metcalf off the political blackboard."\(^6\) Furthering the cause of Senator Murray, the \textit{Western News}, in

\(^4\) \textit{Glacier Reporter} (Browning, Montana), October 1, 1954, p. 2.

\(^5\) \textit{People's Voice} (Helena, Montana), October 29, 1954, p. 4.

\(^6\) \textit{Western News} (Hamilton, Montana), September 23, 1954, p. 4.
an editorial, corrected a number of allegations that had been made by the Young Republicans concerning grazing legislation, government spending, parity for farmers, and the judgship of W. D. Murray, the Senator's son. In concluding his remarks the editor stated, "In more than 30 years of experience observing politics I do not recall any such flimsy efforts made in an effort to pull a big man down. Usually some sort of case can be made against any candidate without resorting to transparent emasculations of the sacred truth."

Mel Ruder, editor of the Hungry Horse News of Columbia Falls, made it clear early in the campaign that he favored Murray over D'Ewart. Of Murray, the editor said, "...he has considerable seniority in the senate which counts. He also qualifies as a friend of western Montana. Specifically he was on the spot and helpful during the time Hungry Horse Dam appropriations were in jeopardy. More recently he was helpful again in getting the aluminum plant and its necessary power and other commitments for the Flathead." Shortly before the campaign had ended the same editor expressed the belief that "There is a liberal Democrat opposing a conservative Republican. Our thought is that a liberal Democrat looks out for the interests of the many. The conservative Republican is more concerned with interests of the few. There has been nothing presented in this campaign to prove otherwise. The Republican federal tax reduction for example can be described in terms of pennies for the poor and millions for the millionaries.(sic) We believe Murray will

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7 Western News (Hamilton, Montana), October 21, 1954, p. 4.
8 Hungry Horse News (Columbia Falls, Montana), September 24, 1954, p. 2.
defeat D'Ewart."  

Of the 11 newspapers that supported D'Ewart in 1954, three were dailies and eight were weeklies. One of the dailies was the *Daily Inter Lake* of Kalispell. In one of its editorials this newspaper contended that returning Murray to the Senate would be a "set-back for the Eisenhower administration."  

In a lengthy editorial the same newspaper strongly attacked Murray's character and his previous actions as a United States Senator by saying that he had been associated with Communist front organizations, that he was a very old man, that his son Charles was the real senator, and that he had consistently opposed the Eisenhower administration. The editorial added that "On the other hand, Wesley D'Ewart has congressional experience and is still a youthful man. He supports most of the Eisenhower policies and would be helpful in helping Eisenhower achieve the goals of adjustment to peacetime prosperity from wartime prosperity without serious economic displacement."  

Of the 11 newspapers supporting D'Ewart, the *Miles City Star* was probably most determined to see a new senator for Montana in 1955. In one editorial the paper commented, "Against the do-nothing record of Murray in the Senate is the record of accomplishment and hard work in the House of his Republican opponent, Wes D'Ewart."  

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10 *Daily Inter Lake* (Kalispell, Montana), October 17, 1954, p. 16.  
torial, comparing Senator Mansfield with Murray, the paper stated, "Ah, the contrast between Montana's junior and senior senators: One a statesman, a man of whom Montana can truly be proud; the other a threadbare windbag. But after next Tuesday, Montana may have TWO U. S. senators."

The Havre Daily News carried a number of editorials in support of Congressman D'Ewart. One concerned the mocking of Orvin B. Fjare's name by Senator Murray. Fjare was the Republican candidate for Congress from Montana's second district. In a speech Murray made fun of Fjare's name by saying, "Now what is that fellow's name, Jerry! That's it, Jerry. He should change that name and get an American name." As a result of these remarks the editor of the Havre paper pleaded with the voters, especially those of Scandinavian descent, to oppose Murray at the polls on election day. Commenting on the same subject was the Phillips County News of Malta. It said that Murray "sank to a new low which will not endear him to thousands of Montana folks who are of Scandinavian blood and proud of it." The Malta paper added that many voters "might select D'Ewart, who does not care what anyone's name is as long as it belongs to a loyal American."

In an editorial the Missoula Times took issue with Senator Murray's voting record. The editorial declared, "One is led to wonder just how

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13 Miles City Star, October 29, 1954, p. 4.
16 Phillips County News (Malta, Montana), October 21, 1954, p. 4.
dumb the political hacks think the voting public is. The most recent cause for such wonderment is campaign literature published by Sen. Murray supporters showing his voting record on 27 bills between 1947 and 1954. Of the 27 bills, the 78 year-old Murray voted with the majority just eight times in seven years. This indicates that the Senator is a do nothing senator. He fails to go along even when his own party favors a measure." 17

Another weekly newspaper that backed D'Ewart was the Forsyth Independent. One of its editorials contended that "Murray stands for everything that Montanans and the American people as a whole voted against." Continuing, it said that "He is an advocate of the ridiculous and morally incorrect philosophy that the government owes the citizens a living." 18

The River Press of Fort Benton commented that D'Ewart confined his campaign to "facts, figures and opinion stated as such." The same editorial contended that Murray violated fair practices in his campaign and that he had an unlimited supply of money from outside sources. 19 Later the River Press suggested that "It would seem most logical for Montanans to send Wes D'Ewart to the senate; to replace a subservient member of that discredited group that fumbled America into two wars." 20

The Western News of Libby did not carry any editorials evidencing

19 River Press (Fort Benton, Montana), October 13, 1954, p. 4.
20 River Press (Fort Benton, Montana), October 20, 1954, p. 4.
favoritism of either Murray or D'Ewart. It did, however, have a weekly column which was not a paid political advertisement, entitled the "Republican News," written by George J. Niedeman. One of these columns maintained that "On the side of Mr. Eisenhower, we have Congressman Wesley A. D'Ewart, who has been with the administration straight down the road ever since it started. On the other side of the picture we have Senator James Murray, an avowed New Dealer who has consistently tried to stop any and all legislation put forth by the administration."21

The Glasgow Courier urged the election of Republicans in general by saying, "One of the silliest arguments being used now is that urging the election of a Democratic congress to 'help Ike.' It stands to reason that a Democratic congress will do everything in its power to work for his defeat in 1956. The Republicans still have a job ahead, and they need more time in which to do it."22

In reference to praise of D'Ewart by his fellow congressmen in Washington, the editor of the Shelby Promoter said that most Montanans feel the same way about their congressman from the eastern district. The editorial stated that "The ideals he (D'Ewart) stands for and the high type legislation he has sponsored must appeal to thinking voters."23

Finally, the Cut Bank Pioneer Press joined in the chorus of those who believed that Murray was indeed a very old man. One of its

21Western News (Libby, Montana), September 23, 1954, p. 2.
22Glasgow Courier, October 14, 1954, p. 20.
editorials commented that "He is now edging on eighty and should take a rest and see the world."24

A cursory examination obviously reveals that D'Ewart enjoyed the support of more editors and hence more editorials than did Murray in 1954. There is little doubt that D'Ewart did not lose any votes as a result of this situation. Just how many, if any, votes he gained is problematical.

In addition to the newspapers listed above, which took definite stands during the election, there were eight others that voiced their opinions after the election had ended. Those newspapers commenting on the results of the election were as follows: Sidney Herald, Whitefish Pilot, Townsend Star, Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Missoulian, Glendive Daily Ranger, Billings Gazette, and Lewistown Daily News.

Finally, this study discovered 12 newspapers in Montana that remained editorially indifferent to the election of 1954, both before and after November 2. They were as follows: Livingston Enterprise, Anaconda Standard, Montana Standard of Butte, Independent Record of Helena, Ravalli Republican of Hamilton, Independent Observer of Conrad, Gallatin County Tribune of Bozeman, Chinook Opinion, Silver State Post of Deer Lodge, Jefferson Valley News of Whitehall, Billings Times, and Bridger Times.

Many of the newspapers which were indifferent or which simply commented on the results of the 1954 election were, at the time, controlled

by the Anaconda company. In an editorial, the Cut Bank Pioneer Press contended that the Anaconda newspapers opposed Murray in 1948 when the Senator ran against Tom Davis, but in 1954 the same newspapers had softened in their attitude toward him. The editorial said that the warfare between Murray and the 'company' had apparently ended because...

"One day early last week the Helena Record front paged a statement out of Washington by Senator Jim Murray that criticized some administration action. It didn't seem to me to merit front page, dressed in attractive headlines." Continuing, the editorial explained the reason for the end of the disagreement. "He (Murray) helped mightily in the Truman days to realize a firm power commitment to Anaconda in relation to operations of the aluminum plant now under construction at Columbia Falls, and more recently used his influence in behalf of duty-free shipments of copper from the rich Chilean mines, far more profitable than the Butte operations for reasons familiar to all." Wesley D'Ewart reinforced the belief that the 'company newspapers' had softened in their attitude toward Murray in 1954 by saying that the 'company' always wished to remain on good terms with the 'powers that be.' This then explains in part the reason for the silence of many of the state's newspapers in 1954.

Had the 'company press' voiced its opinion in 1954, the results of the election between Murray and D'Ewart may have been altered. Certainly

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26 Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
it was a significant aspect of the Montana press. Concerning circulation of Montana's daily newspapers, one writer asserted that the Anaconda newspapers had "a total of 89,934 against 69,552 for the independents, or 56% of the circulation." The same person added that "area-wise, company papers cover about 2/3 of the state."²⁷ It is possible that the 'company press' could have had an effect on the outcome of this election. Its very absence from the political scene in 1954 is significant in itself. Although the Montana press was only mildly interested in the 1954 political campaign and at the same time many of the state's newspapers remained completely neutral, it can still be said that a numerical majority of the same newspapers did keep the electorate informed of political happenings in 1954.

Chapter Five
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Before election day, 1954, there were a number of predictions made as to the outcome of the Murray-D'Ewart campaign. In general, it can be said that most of the political prognosticators believed Murray would win the election. Fortune and Look magazines, along with William G. Carleton of Nation, and the Associated Press, predicted a Murray victory. The Babson Poll of Washington, D. C. gave D'Ewart a slight edge in this electoral contest. Finally, Raymond Moley of Newsweek magazine said that Murray's "re-election is in doubt," but added that the election would be very close. Indeed, all pollsters who hedged on the results of this election agreed that it would be very close.

As the results indicated, the election was decided by a comparatively small number of votes. Murray won narrowly with a margin of 1,728 votes. In effect, Montana had simply substituted Orvin Fjare for Wesley D'Ewart as congressman from the second district. Fjare obtained D'Ewart's

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2Great Falls Tribune, October 19, 1954, p. 4.
4Great Falls Tribune, October 29, 1954, p. 23.
vacated position by defeating LeRoy H. Anderson.

The results of this election will be examined from a number of viewpoints, including congressional districts, labor counties, and rural counties.

Murray's total vote was 114,591, while D'Ewart's was 112,863. At the same time D'Ewart won 33 of Montana's 56 counties. In the state's first congressional district, Murray took only six of the 17 counties. Those counties were traditionally sources of strength for the Senator. They included, Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, Powell, Mineral, Sanders, and Lincoln. Even though he won only six counties Murray gained a plurality of nearly 3,000 votes in this district. Murray's total in the first district was 49,195 and D'Ewart's was 46,343.

As was anticipated, D'Ewart was stronger than Murray in the second congressional district. It must be remembered that in 1952 D'Ewart swept every county in this district. However, in this election he was only successful in 22 of the district's 39 counties. Most of these 22 counties were in southern and eastern Montana, where he was a consistent favorite with the electorate. In the same district, Murray was more popular on the highline and in the "triangle" counties. As a matter of fact, Murray carried every county in the district bordering Canada. D'Ewart's total vote in this district was 66,520, compared with 65,396 for Murray.

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7All official election returns are from the office of the Secretary of State, Helena, Montana. Statistical information is from the 1957 Montana Almanac, published by Montana State University, Missoula, Montana.
D'Ewart did what was expected of him by remaining a strong candidate in eastern and southern Montana. At the same time Murray was successful on the highline, in the "triangle" counties, and in the mining centers of western Montana. In part, the narrowness of Murray's victory may be attributed to his poor showing in the non-mining counties of western Montana where D'Ewart picked up a number of unexpected votes.

In 1954 Montana had 23 counties with cities of 2,500 persons or more. Of these 23 counties with urban places, Murray carried ten and D'Ewart 13. However, Murray's total vote in these counties was nearly 3,000 more than D'Ewart's. Counties in Montana with the ten largest cities in the state leaned toward D'Ewart in 1954. Of these counties, D'Ewart won seven and gained a plurality of more than 3,500 votes over his opponent. While D'Ewart was more successful in Montana's ten largest cities, Murray received the greatest number of votes from the state's smaller urban areas. It was the support from these smaller cities that made Murray the overall favorite in Montana's urban places. On the other hand, D'Ewart was more popular in the state's rural counties. D'Ewart won 20 of Montana's rural counties and Murray gained a plurality in the remaining 13. In the same counties D'Ewart received an edge of 1,212 votes.

In 1954 there were ten counties in the state that could be classified as labor counties. Since statistics concerning the number of persons belonging to organized labor in 1954 are not available it may be assumed that workers engaged in mining, manufacturing, construction, transportation, and utilities would, for the most part, belong to unions
and at the same time would comprise a sound majority of union members in Montana. Using this as a basis it was learned that Murray won only four of the ten counties in Montana with the largest labor forces. While D'Ewart was successful in six of these "labor counties," it might appear that he wrested the labor vote from Murray. This is deceiving, as Murray's total in these counties exceeded D'Ewart's by more than 2,500 votes. As a result then, Murray did receive greater support from the centers of organized labor in Montana.

A solid majority of the ten counties with the highest median incomes voted for Senator Murray in the 1954 election. Murray was victorious in eight of these ten counties while collecting a plurality of more than 7,000 votes over D'Ewart. These figures may be misleading as most of the counties with the highest median incomes were in the rich farming areas along the highline and in the "triangle" and also in the fairly prosperous mining centers of western Montana. Of course these areas always favored the liberal Senator Murray. As a result it would be difficult to make any conclusions with respect to this particular category of counties.

Murray carried all of Montana's ten counties with the greatest amount of cash receipts from farm crops. In the same counties he collected nearly 6,000 more votes than D'Ewart. The explanation for this situation is simple. These ten counties represent the heart of the prosperous farming communities on the highline and in the "triangle." The Farmer's Union is unquestionably the dominant organization of farmers in these sections of the state and Senator Murray was always
one of their favorite candidates. Needless to say, Montana's dry land farmers led by the Farmer's Union did not fail the Senator in 1954. Winning all of these counties undoubtedly contributed greatly to Murray's success in this election.

Concerning the state's livestock counties, Congressman D'Ewart was definitely more successful than Murray. D'Ewart swept eight of the ten counties in Montana with the highest cash receipts from Livestock. Most of the eight counties are situated in the southern and southwestern sections of the state. The Montana Stockgrower's Association is generally conceded to be the leader of this particular income group and this organization normally promoted the candidacy of Wesley D'Ewart.

Of the nine principal logging and lumbering counties in Montana, Murray won four and D'Ewart five. Part of the explanation for this is the fact that Murray was never extremely popular in some of these logging and lumbering counties. Another explanation is that the Grange, a more conservative farmer's organization, was quite influential in many of the same counties and it endorsed D'Ewart in 1954. Confusing matters is the fact that most of these counties have mixed economies. That is, logging, lumbering, farming, and mining are almost equal in importance. As a result, no definite conclusion could be made as to the reason for either candidates' success, or lack of it, in these counties.

In conclusion, Senator Murray's greatest support came from the highline and the "triangle" counties which are dominated by dry land farming and the Farmer's Union, along with parts of western Montana where organized labor must be reckoned with. On the other hand, the bulk of
D'Ewart's votes came from Montana's eastern and southern counties, where the Montana Stockgrower's Association and Montana Farm Bureau are the primary economic organizations. In addition, it should be repeated that the Grange was partially successful for D'Ewart's surprising popularity in western Montana.

In order to clarify this election in terms of the roles played by certain economic groups and population centers, the following tabulation is presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of counties</th>
<th>Number of counties for Murray</th>
<th>Number of counties for D'Ewart</th>
<th>Murray's vote</th>
<th>D'Ewart's vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those with cities of 2,500 or more</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>85,185</td>
<td>82,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those with the ten largest cities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50,956</td>
<td>54,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29,406</td>
<td>30,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>61,363</td>
<td>58,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High median incomes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49,020</td>
<td>41,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26,578</td>
<td>20,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34,508</td>
<td>40,545</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logging and lumbering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20,920</td>
<td>22,315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is apparent that all major economic groups in Montana were significant in this election. But an attempt to lay cause for victory or defeat in the hands of any one group, be it labor, business or
whatever, would be misleading. Considering the number involved, no one economic group could truthfully say that they were responsible for Murray's victory or D'Ewart's defeat. It must also be remembered that the significance of economics and economic groups can be exaggerated with respect to a political election. Economic factors are not the only ones to be considered in the study of a political campaign. Social, religious, and ethnic factors, among others, must be considered in any election by a political scientist. The only religious question mark in this election would have been Murray's Catholicism. However, this was no doubt of little significance since Montana has established something of a tradition in electing many Catholics to Congress and to the Senate. The role of corporate interests is usually another factor taken into consideration by a student of politics. However, in Montana there are only two business corporations of any great historical significance. They are the Anaconda company and the Montana Power company. Suffice it to say that neither took an active interest in this campaign since they were not greatly concerned over who would actually hold political office. Both were more concerned with influencing the legislative actions of the "powers that be."

One of the curious aspects of Montana politics is the great interest in questions of a personal nature. This was evidenced in the 1954 campaign. The personal issues of Murray's age and his alleged softness toward Communism created a considerable amount of interest and no doubt influenced the results of the election. Therefore, while economic factors are of high import it would be politically naive to disregard other possible influences upon an election.
If any one area could claim that its vote was especially significant, it would have to be Silver Bow county. For Murray nearly doubled D'Ewart's vote in this county. His margin of victory in the mining county was almost 6,000 votes. In 1942 the voters of this county proved they had minds of their own as they gave their support to Wellington D. Rankin, who came closer to unseating Murray than D'Ewart did in 1954. In the 1942 senatorial contest, Murray won by only 1,212 votes and lost Silver Bow county by more than 700 votes. On the other hand, evidence leads one to conclude that it was D'Ewart's success in the non-mining areas of western Montana that nearly cost Murray the 1954 election.

It has been established that no single economic group could claim sole responsibility for Murray's victory and that if any one area was particularly significant it would have to be Silver Bow county. At the same time it is necessary to set forth the professional opinions of those who were intimately involved in the election or who could comment with some degree of knowledge. The significance of the Communism issue has already been presented in an earlier chapter. Therefore, the purpose in listing the comments below will be to discover the significant areas, counties or cities in the state, with respect to their particular contributions.

Wesley D'Ewart said the Missoula area let him down a great deal. He implied that had he done better in the Missoula area he may have won the election. The Congressman added that he did not anticipate any more support from the highline because of opposition from the
D'Ewart's campaign manager, A. A. Schlaht, contended that "350 hard wheat farm families brought about our defeat." Schlaht said the reason these families did not vote for D'Ewart was because they were greatly disappointed with Benson's farm program. Schlaht maintained that "The curtailed acreage in the face of shortage of high protein wheat caused the Montana wheat farmer to view the Republican party with suspicion and of course, Mr. D'Ewart was the victim of this unfriendly feeling." To reinforce his belief, Mr. Schlaht cited statistics from the 1952 and 1954 campaigns which D'Ewart was involved in. In 1952, running for Congress, D'Ewart had a plurality of approximately 35,000 in the eastern district. In the 1954 senatorial contest his plurality in the same district was around 2,000.\(^9\)

Matt Himsl, chairman of the D'Ewart for Senator Club, agreed with Schlaht and said that the highline was the section of the state which caused D'Ewart's defeat. Previously D'Ewart had done very well on the highline but in 1954 he lost every county in this area.\(^10\)

On the other side of the political spectrum came the opinion of Joseph J. McCaffery, secretary of the Murray for Senator Club. He maintained that Murray would have won by a much greater margin had the Great Falls area not let him down. He said that Murray did not receive as many votes from Cascade county as was expected by his political aides.

\(^8\)Interview with Wesley D'Ewart, August 1, 1963.
\(^9\)Letter from A. A. Schlaht, August 16, 1963.
\(^10\)Interview with Matt Himsl, August 2, 1963.
McCaffery said that the Great Falls area was changing from a Democratic city and county to one which was politically neutralized, because of Republican inroads.\textsuperscript{11}

After the results were in, the Montana newspapers attempted to analyze the 1954 election. Few newspapers in Montana commented directly on the senatorial contest. Most editorials simply discussed the two political parties in general. The \textit{Great Falls Tribune} stated that "The trend was Democratic...." But at the same time this newspaper added that the election represented no great sweep for either party.\textsuperscript{12}

The \textit{Western News} of Hamilton maintained that "the Nov. 2 election results proved a gigantic Democrat victory," especially considering the following factors. In the first place, the Republicans spent much more money for radio, newspapers, and television. Secondly, no other president campaigned as hard for his party in an off-year election as did President Eisenhower. Thirdly, almost all Republican cabinet members campaigned for Republican candidates. Finally, Democratic candidates were handicapped because of smear tactics on the part of many Republicans, especially Vice-President Nixon.\textsuperscript{13}

The \textit{People's Voice} of Helena commented that "Certainly it was

\textsuperscript{11}Interview with Joseph J. McCaffery, August 9, 1963.
\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Great Falls Tribune}, November 5, 1954, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Western News} (Hamilton, Montana), November 11, 1954, p. 6.
gratifying that the voters of Montana should re-elect Senator Jim Murray in the face of one of the worst campaigns of personal vil-
ification in recent Montana political history." Along the same lines was an editorial in the Cut Bank Pioneer Press contending "that personal rancor in large degree took the place of great debates on the necessities of popular government to meet what the times de-
mand."15

The only newspapers which actually expressed regret at D'Ewart's loss were the Havre Daily News and the Miles City Star. Most newspapers which commented editorially on the results of the 1954 election simply maintained that there had been no great trend or mandate for either party. The Missoulian voiced the opinion of many newspapers by saying, "The independent voter is still in the saddle, and riding strong."16 Ernest Immel, in his column, "Montana This Week," summed up a belief that is becoming more popular year by year when he said, "Last week's election in Montana demonstrated again that in the face of even a mild Democratic trend a Republican has little chance of being elected to the U.S. Senate. Even when the political situation is sub-
stantially normal, the odds are definitely against the Republican."17

14 People's Voice (Helena, Montana), November 5, 1954, p. 2.
16 Missoulian, November 5, 1954, p. 4.
17 Liberty County Times (Chester, Montana), November 11, 1954, p. 4.
Although there were a number of factors that contributed to Murray's victory of 1954, such as tremendous support from Silver Bow county and the failure of Republicans to solve the farm problem, his membership in the Democratic party was probably the most significant. In 1954 Murray received an average of 55.0 per cent of the total vote in the 21 counties which he had won in each previous election. In the previous contests his average was 59.3 per cent. D'Ewart's average of the total vote in the 22 counties which he had never lost was 55.2 per cent, whereas his previous average was 61.6 per cent. The significance of these statistics is that there were no marked irregularities in the 1954 contest. One could only conclude that a solid majority of the electorate voted on the basis of party preference, and with more Democrats than Republicans in Montana the chief factor favoring Murray was his political affiliation.

While it may be true that a Republican is at a disadvantage against a Democrat in a race for the United States Senate in Montana, the 1954 election between Murray and D'Ewart was a very close one. This election was certainly no landslide for Murray and the importance of the independent voter was clearly evidenced. While losing the election, D'Ewart was given 49.6 per cent of the votes. This election was also a very interesting one, insofar as the electorate was concerned. Considering American voting standards and also taking into account the fact that this was an off-year election, voting interest was fairly high in 1954. Of the 296,237 persons registered, 227,454 voted in the senatorial election. This represented 77 per cent of the eligible Montana electorate.
Apparantly many Montana voters wanted a change in the United States Senate in 1954. But more of them, if only a small percentage, preferred the status quo which existed in the person of James E. Murray.
In 1954 the two candidates for the United States Senate were seasoned politicians. Murray was first elected to the Senate in 1934 to fill the unexpired term of Senator Thomas Walsh and thereafter was re-elected for three successive terms. D'Ewart had spent ten years in the Montana legislature and was undefeated in five campaigns for the United States Congress from Montana's eastern district. In their most recent campaigns prior to 1954 both were highly successful. In 1948 Murray easily defeated his Republican opponent, with a plurality of over 30,000 while winning 42 of the state's 56 counties. In the 1952 congressional campaign, D'Ewart won each of the 39 counties in the eastern district while collecting a plurality of more than 35,000 votes over Democrat, Willard Fraser.

In perspective it can be seen that many of the issues presented in this campaign were of great significance. At the same time there were some issues that were meaningless and seemingly introduced to be used as a tactic against the opponent. While the Communism issue may have been introduced as a weapon against Senator Murray it was nonetheless, a very significant issue in its own right. At the time the Cold War was being waged on a full scale and throughout the nation there was a great fear of international Communism. Therefore, this was an issue that should have been debated by candidates for high public office. The very manner in which this issue was introduced represents the focal point of the entire campaign. The issue began when Murray's opponents surreptitiously prepared and distributed the pamphlet, "Senator
Murray and the Red Web over Congress." This tactic was seemingly a deliberate attempt to deceive the Montana voters and therefore, not in accord with the ethical norms of American political campaigns. One reason why this was an attempt to deceive the public is that Murray's article praising Lenin was written during World War Two, when the United States and the Soviet Union were allies. Secondly, the pamphlet neglected to add that Murray did vote for the Smith Act and the McCormack Foreign Agents Registration Act.\(^1\) Thirdly, the pamphlet expressed unjustified concern over the fact that Murray received a Communist newspaper from overseas. Perhaps the most glaring criticism of the article is its very cover, which shows a spider's red web embracing the congressional building. The cover implied that Murray was a Communist but the contents of the article did not prove this to be a fact. Evidence leads one to conclude that the issue would have been more valid and meaningful had it been debated openly by the two candidates.

In all probability the Communism issue had a negligible effect on the results of this election. There is little doubt that some Montanans cast their votes for D'Ewart after having been exposed to the document. However, their votes were probably more than counterbalanced by a shocked and zealous Democratic party, by Republicans who were angered over the surreptitious preparation and distribution of the document, and by independent voters who believed such an attack on Murray was not justified. In addition, the statistical evidence presented in an earlier chapter seems to verify the belief that the docu-

\(^1\)Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954, p. 5.
ment was harmful to D'Ewart.

There were many other issues which deserve attention. One such issue concerned the state of the national economy. D'Ewart and Republicans across the nation constantly claimed that the Republican party would maintain peace and prosperity. Democrats, including Murray, attacked this claim by noting that we were not enjoying prosperity and that the economy of the nation was, in fact, slipping toward a state of decline. In connection with this issue was the farm problem. Republicans said that farm prices were higher than at any previous point in United States history. Democrats argued that price supports and acre-age allotments had been reduced by the Republican administration and that if the farmers were prosperous it was due to previous Democratic administrations and not the present Republican regime. Both parties and both candidates had good arguments with respect to this issue. Nonetheless, the farm problem did contribute to the defeat of Wesley D'Ewart since Republicans were blamed for the state of the economy. With the benefit of hindsight it can be seen that no administration, Democratic or Republican, has been able to solve the farm problem completely. In recent years this is a problem that has plagued every administration. It is also a problem that to the present day has not been solved completely.

There were many other important issues that were debated hotly in this campaign. Senator Murray questioned D'Ewart's voting record on veteran's legislation and claimed that the Congressman had voted contrary to the interests of veterans on a number of occasions. The Murray camp also took issue with a grazing bill that had been introduced into Congress by D'Ewart. Murray's cohorts claimed that the proposed
legislation would have created a "vested interest" in the public domain for stockmen. This bill was killed and for all practical purposes the issue became meaningless after the election. Nonetheless the issue was not without its effect, as it no doubt won some votes for Murray. In the first place, Montana sportsmen probably did not appreciate D'Ewart's bill. In addition, it is not likely that the Montana Chamber of Commerce, which promotes Montana's scenic outdoors in an effort to lure tourists, favored such legislation.

The issues presented above were all given a great deal of attention by the candidates and by the Montana press. At the same time, however, there were some questions of public policy that were not introduced into the campaign at all or that were simply given passing consideration. While foreign aid was somewhat of an issue, foreign affairs in general could have been discussed to a greater extent by both candidates. In 1954 Murray and D'Ewart seemed to forget that Montana was not isolated from the rest of the country and for that matter from the entire world. An issue that could have been introduced by Murray was D'Ewart's allegiance to the Eisenhower administration and his favoritism toward the Bricker amendment which Eisenhower was, of course, opposed to. One political commentator stated that D'Ewart was in fact an anti-Eisenhower Republican. If this were true it would have provided Murray with fine political ammunition.

While most of the issues injected into this campaign were legitimate, there were two in particular that seemed to deserve less attention. One was the issue of Murray's age. Senator Murray was an elderly man
but seniority is extremely important in the Senate and Murray served with that body for many years. It was his seniority in fact, which enabled him to assume the chairmanship of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. As a result, the Senator was able to focus attention on many of the problems which beset the state of Montana. Another issue which should have been disregarded by the public was the series of attacks upon Murray for his advertisement picturing three of America's presidents. It is understandable that Murray would advertise in such a manner because he did enjoy the respect of Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower. It is obvious that at the same time he was attempting to answer charges that he was pro-Communist. In showing that Eisenhower was not endorsing Murray, the Republican party was hoping to preserve the image of D'Ewart as an Eisenhower Republican.

One could conclude that while some issues deserved more or less emphasis and some questions did not become issues at all, the campaign and the issues which were discussed did enable the public to discern the basic programs and platforms of both candidates.

Both candidates waged vigorous campaigns. Senator Murray was an elderly man and therefore, could not personally campaign to the extent which D'Ewart was able. Still in all, the Senator was able to speak in almost every city of any size in the state. Both Murray and D'Ewart relied greatly upon newspaper advertising and to a lesser extent upon radio and television broadcasts. Insofar as organization is concerned, D'Ewart was at a disadvantage. Prior to the campaign he had no organization in the western district as did Murray. This represented a formidable obstacle for the Congressman. Considering this factor,
D'Ewart did very well in the western district. Financially both candidates were in good condition in 1954. Many of the financial records of this campaign have been destroyed. However, from the records which are available it can be seen that D'Ewart received more financial support than Murray. This difference in expenditures was not great and as a result it is improbable that this factor had any major effect on the outcome of the election.

The Montana press could have played a more active part in this campaign than was the case. There was little in the way of actual reporting of events relating to the campaign. Most newspapers relied upon the wire services for stories concerning the November election. At the same time most of the newspapers in Montana, including all of the "company newspapers," remained editorially silent during the campaign. One could only conclude that while the electorate was informed of happenings during the campaign, the press could have aroused a greater awareness on the part of Montana's voters.

After the returns of the November 2 election were in it was apparent that a majority of the prognosticators were correct. Murray defeated D'Ewart in a very close contest. Murray and D'Ewart both received support from areas of traditional strength. As in previous elections, the highline, the "triangle" area, and the mining centers of western Montana were strongly in favor of Murray. While the support Murray received from Silver Bow county was not the deciding factor in the election, it was certainly of great significance. On the other hand, most of the counties in eastern and southern Montana backed D'Ewart as they had done in his previous campaigns. To a great extent
it was D'Ewart's success in the northwestern section of the state that made Murray's margin of victory so narrow.

Special interest groups played a role in the 1954 campaign. Murray and D'Ewart received support from a number of groups, most of which were organizations of farmers, businessmen, and laboring men. The part these groups played in the campaign should, however, not be overestimated. While these organizations performed services for both candidates, it seems that they are more concerned with determining the actions of the "powers that be" than they are with influencing who shall actually be in political power.

This then was a very close election and at the same time a very interesting one. Many prominent politicians, both Democratic and Republican, spoke in Montana and this heightened interest. On election day a significant portion of the Montana electorate gathered at the polls to cast their votes.

The electoral contest of 1954 between James E. Murray and Wesley A. D'Ewart did not deviate from the mainstream of Montana politics. This election saw an extreme liberal opposed by a somewhat extreme conservative. A great many, if not a majority, of Montana elections for United States Congressmen and United States Senators include on the ballot an extreme liberal and an extreme conservative. This was certainly the case in 1954. Another tradition of Montana politics has been that of sending Democrats to the United States Congress and to the Senate. This tradition, more than any other factor, explains Murray's triumph over D'Ewart. Although both candidates had political assets and liabilities, in most respects Murray and D'Ewart were on an equal foot-
ing. Financially there was no major difference in the amount of money spent on behalf of either Murray or D'Ewart. Both candidates had fine organizations. Murray and D'Ewart were both supported by special interest groups and prominent Americans in politics. Neither candidate embarrassed the other on the issues and both received support from traditional areas of strength. Therefore, in the final analysis, Murray's re-election in 1954 can in all likelihood be attributed to his record and image as a liberal Democrat.
## APPENDIX

### Official Montana election returns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Murray</th>
<th>D'Ewart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaverhead</td>
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<td>1,597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Horn</td>
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<td>1,509</td>
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Election returns continued

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<th>D'Ewart</th>
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<td>Wheatland</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wibaux</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowstone</td>
<td>9,337</td>
<td>13,533</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Counties won by Murray in each of his four previous elections.
Counties won by D'Ewart in his five previous elections.
Results of the 1954 election.

Legend:

- Murray-  
- D'ewart-
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