

POLES AT THE POLLS: ETHNIC VOTING IN SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

A Thesis

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by

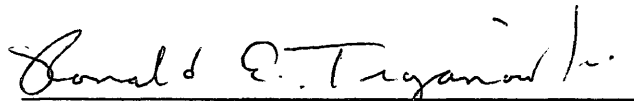
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APPROVAL SHEET

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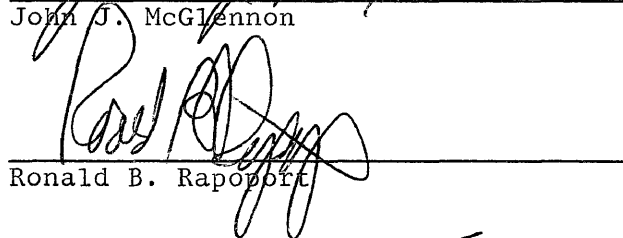


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the brave people who sought a better life in a new land.

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ABSTRACT

This study uses South Bend, Indiana, as a case study to examine some aspects of ethnic voting.

Three hypotheses are examined: that Poles voted overwhelmingly for Polish candidates, that Poles became increasingly politicized over time, and that a "first major candidacy" mobilized second and third generation Poles into the political sphere.

The hypotheses are tested with results from South Bend municipal elections for mayor, clerk and judge from 1905 to 1929. The time frame extends before and after Frank Bilinski, the first Pole to do so, ran for mayor in 1921 (as a Democrat).

The study found that Poles voted quite heavily for their fellow ethnics, particularly after 1909, when two Polish candidates split the vote for clerk.

A second finding of the study was that Poles became increasingly politicized over time, but the number of Poles voting from year to year was subject to many short-term variations.

Lastly, the study found that Poles were more likely than non-Poles and at least somewhat more likely than before the first major Polish candidacy to vote for Democratic candidates.

POLES AT THE POLLS: ETHNIC VOTING IN SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

INTRODUCTION

Mass immigration transformed America. During the last half of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century, millions of immigrants traveled to the United States. These "huddled masses" indelibly altered American society. Ethnicity became a salient aspect of society and politics.

Yet more than a half-century has passed since the end of wide-scale immigration to the United States. To what extent are ethnic ties still important in American life, particularly in the political sphere?

To better understand the powerful role of ethnicity in America, this study examines ethnic voting over a period of time that encompasses the peak of immigration to the United States: the first three decades of the twentieth century. By using the city of South Bend, Indiana, as a case study, this inquiry will attempt to illuminate some aspects of ethnic politics on a local level.

The work is in five chapters. Chapter 1 is a review of the literature of ethnic voting. Chapter 2 provides the setting and background of the work, including a historical review of the settling of South Bend. In Chapter 3, there is a discussion of the hypotheses being investigated and the research design of the work. In Chapter 4, the hypotheses are tested and the results are analyzed. Conclusions of the study are offered in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER I
VARIETIES OF ETHNIC VOTING STUDIES

In a work that set the tone for many of the studies of ethnic politics, Robert Dahl in Who Governs dealt with the decline of ethnic voting. His analysis of New Haven, Connecticut, chronicled the transformation of the city and its concomitant political structures by the arrival and emergence of immigrants.

In New Haven, immigrants were a "rarity in 1820; by 1910, a full third of the population was foreign-born, while another third had at least one immigrant parent."¹ While these immigrants characteristically had low power, prestige, and socioeconomic status, they did hold precious political commodities: their numbers and their votes.

Politicians could build support for themselves while increasing the power, prestige, and general well-being of the ethnic group members. The goals of the politician and the immigrant complemented each other. According to Dahl, "The politics of New Haven became a kind of ethnic politics; it was a politics of assimilation rather than a politics of reform, a politics that simultaneously emphasized the divisive rather than the unifying characteristics of voters and yet played upon the yearnings for assimilation and acceptance."²

Because ethnic politics rose in response to incoming immigrants, Dahl described it as "clearly a transitional phenomenon."³ He hypothesized a three-stage process of ethnic group political assimilation. In the first stage, ethnic group members are "almost exclusively proletarian."⁴ They have low status and income, and this social

homogeneity leads to political homogeneity. Ethnicity correlates with low social status and these two attributes together reinforce homogeneous voting behavior.

In the second stage, ethnics begin their ascent into the middle classes: "An increasing and by now significant proportion of the group have white-collar jobs and other social characteristics of the middling strata."⁵ At this stage, group political homogeneity wanes. An ethnic leader, however, may be nominated by a major party for a citywide office, if the ethnic group is significantly large and if local attitudes are not antagonistic to an ethnic candidate. Ethnic candidates who avoid divisive socioeconomic issues may garner significant voting support from their fellow ethnics.

By the third stage, the ethnic group is highly heterogeneous socially. Members are solidly entrenched in the middle and upper classes. Now, "ethnic politics is often embarrassing or meaningless."⁶ At this politically heterogeneous stage, traditional party attachments forged in the first stage of political assimilation are tenuous.

Dahl tentatively outlined when various ethnic groups went through the three stages in New Haven: By 1950, the Germans, Irish, Eastern Europeans and Italians (in that order) had reached the third stage. In Dahl's schema, if ethnicity persisted in politics, it was because insufficient time had passed. While assimilation was not viewed merely as a function of time, time was needed for assimilation to take place.

Response to Dahl

Dahl's analysis, however, did not meet the strong impressionistic (and, in some cases, empirical) evidence that ethnicity persisted in the political sphere in such a way that could hardly be termed "embarrassing

or meaningless." In response, Raymond Wolfinger outlined an alternative theory that he articulated in "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting." Wolfinger, calling Dahl's theory plausible but inconsistent with the case of the Italians in New Haven, advanced a "mobilization" theory of ethnic voting.

The theory related ethnic voting strength to two factors: the intensity of ethnic identification and the level of ethnic relevance in an election. The latter had its most obvious manifestation when an ethnic candidate headed a citywide ticket. The ethnic's name would be apparent to everyone who entered the voting booth. Wolfinger wrote:

Middle-class status is a virtual prerequisite for candidacy for major office; an ethnic group's development of sufficient political skill and influence to secure such a nomination also requires the development of a middle class. Therefore ethnic voting will be greatest when the ethnic group has produced a middle class, i.e., in the second and third generations, not in the first. (7)

He, then, turns the development of a middle class into a supporting, and not a mitigating, condition for ethnic voting.

Wolfinger dealt with the persistence as well as the development of ethnic voting, as the title of his article indicates. Once a middle class had formed, and had produced an ethnic candidate for citywide office, thereby mobilizing ethnic-based voting, in what direction did ethnic voting go? Wolfinger wrote that "the shifts in party identification will persist beyond the election in which they occurred."⁸ Indeed, ethnicity persists as a "major independent variable, although perhaps declining somewhat in importance."⁹

Although the salience of ethnicity is subject to a great deal of short-term variations, its existence is perpetuated by such factors as "family-political identification" and "militant core-city residue."¹⁰

Wolfinger cited evidence that as many as 80 percent of voters identified with the same political party as their parents. This evidence, however, is more than 20 years old. Given general patterns of dealignment and erosion of the existing political parties, it is obvious that the intergenerational transfer of partisanship is nowhere near that high in the 1980s. Similarly, the core city hypothesis that upwardly mobile ethnics who are most likely to be strongly in-group oriented are also most likely to stay in urban ethnic settlements has not been borne out in recent studies.¹¹

Despite this, Wolfinger is convincing in arguing for the persistence of ethnic politics. He asserts: "When national origins are forgotten, the political allegiances formed in the old days of ethnic salience will be reflected in the partisan choices of totally assimilated descendants of the old immigrants."¹² He likened this trend to the results obtained by V. O. Key and Frank Munger in their study of partisanship in Indiana, which found that party affiliations were strongly tied to geographical roots of the state's first settlers.

The persistence of ethnicity in the manner hypothesized by Wolfinger is, of course, speculative. Wolfinger himself acknowledged that the day when "national origins are forgotten" is far off. Whether the day will come at all, however, remains-- and must remain-- to be seen.

Wolfinger, then, provided explanations for the strength of ethnic political salience for the first few generations and succeeding generations as well. But why ethnicity persists in politics in the face of increasing assimilation is a moot question if assimilation is not occurring in the first place.

This is the argument Michael Parenti took up in "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification." Parenti argued that Dahl and Wolfinger did not clearly differentiate between assimilation and acculturation. While the latter is the adoption of American styles and customs by ethnic group members, the former is incorporation into the "structural-identificational-group relations of the dominant society."¹³ In examining evidence on assimilation and ethnicity, Parenti found that:

(1) Educational increases have not necessarily led to diminished ethnic consciousness.

(2) Socioeconomic increases "have not noticeably diminished the viability and frequency of ethnic formal and informal structural association."¹⁴

(3) Geographical mobility among ethnic groups is not as common as it is believed to be.

(4) Inter-group contacts do not necessarily lead to lower levels of ethnic consciousness.

In light of these findings, Parenti argued that acculturation is not as common as is supposed. It will be a long time before acculturation becomes anywhere near complete: assimilation is even further off.

The implications of Parenti's work for the study of ethnic politics are profound. While some of his arguments must be accepted only with reservations (he tends to dismiss evidence that does not fit his thesis, for example), he does alert the reader to the importance of the ethnic dimension in society generally and in politics particularly. By admonishing us that "the unassimilated ethnics should be seen as very much alive and with us today,"¹⁵ Parenti gives us a frame of reference

for ethnicity that depicts it neither as a throwback to old days of political salience nor as a current phenomenon that eventually will recede into the obscurity of the future.

Edgar Litt agreed with Parenti's basic premises. Litt wrote: "The persistence of unassimilated and/or unacculturated ethnic groups provides a dual source of politics tinged with ethnic components."¹⁶ This duality "helps to explain why ethnic politics has so long endured in the American political system."¹⁷ Again, the implication is that the wrong question may be being asked.

Litt finds Dahl's "accommodation thesis" to be insufficient in explaining the conditions under which ethnicity declines in importance in the political sphere.¹⁸ Litt echoes part of Wolfinger's mobilization thesis. According to Litt, "Ethnic politics is most salient when it involves major group goals including the initial election of a co-ethnic to high public office."¹⁹ Litt does not agree, however, that ethnic voting behavior persists in the manner hypothesized by Wolfinger. Rather, he believes that ethnic voting salience will decline markedly from these peak times. Ethnicity, furthermore, is seen as more likely to be important to politicians than to ethnic group members themselves.²⁰

Turnout in Municipal Elections

Daniel N. Gordon also found Parenti's discussion to be suggestive, but lacking a large sample base and historical data.²¹ Gordon attempts to provide these elements in a survey of 198 cities examining the relationship between proportions of immigrant population and municipal electoral turnout from 1934 to 1960. By focusing his attention on turnout, Gordon operates from the premise that "people vote in local elections if they conceive of voting as relevant to themselves."²²

Gordon controls for governmental, regional and demographic factors, and finds ethnicity to be a significant factor influencing municipal turnouts in nonpartisan cities. He does not, however, find ethnicity to be a significant factor in partisan cities. Given the loosening of ethnic ties by declining numbers and occupational mobility (as he found in his own study), Gordon speculates that "the ethnic impact on urban politics should, a priori, be on the decline. With respect to voting turnout, this appears to be the case in partisan but not in nonpartisan cities."²³ Gordon's study is valuable because of its national sample, but is limited by its reliance on voting turnout, which is not necessarily the best indicator of ethnic salience in an election.

Andrew Greeley lamented the fact that "for all the wild assertions about ethnic voting (based usually on the foreign-born percentages of the census tract data), national samples of political behavior rarely break the American religious groups up into ethnic components."²⁴ This brings up another shortcoming of Gordon's analysis: He makes no attempt to differentiate between the types of ethnic groups with which he deals. One may only speculate as to how Gordon's findings would have been altered if he had delved into differences between ethnic groups, which Greeley found to be marked. Greeley's conclusions, however, are drawn from small (and seemingly insufficient) samples.²⁵

Two Schools

To return to the theories of Dahl and Wolfinger, Richard A. Gabriel summarized in The Ethnic Factor and the Urban Polity that all political science research on ethnic voting broke down into the assimilationist and mobilizationist schools. Gabriel found neither school adequate to explain ethnic voting. He cited that, "A major difficulty is that

both theories fail to state the specific conditions under which ethnicity will or will not affect voting behavior."²⁶ This is true because of the general natures of the theories.

Gabriel finds each theory flawed in other ways. The assimilation theory defines ethnicity and socioeconomic position in such a way that they define each other, Gabriel said. Furthermore, the theory relies on overt behavior to determine the strength of ethnic identification. Again, these drawbacks seem to be inherent within the nature of the theory rather than problems with the theory itself. According to Gabriel, the mobilization theory relies too much on an unexplained notion of "ethnic identification" that cannot be operationalized.

Gabriel used empirical data to test both theories. He found that "The major conclusion which emerges from the . . . analysis of the assimilationist and the mobilizationist theories of ethnic voting behavior is that neither position is totally correct."²⁷ Which is to say that neither position is totally incorrect, either. Gabriel found that "each theory is partially correct in its affirmation of certain facts, but is incorrect in its explanations of why those facts occur as they do."²⁸ To correct this, Gabriel advanced his own theory, which distinguished three types of ethnic voting that occur at different points in the assimilation of ethnic groups.

The first type is "instrumental" voting. This takes place as the ethnic group is preparing to enter the middle class. Ethnic identifications at this point are likely to be intense, and it is at this stage that ethnic voting reaches its peak.

The second type occurs when an ethnic group has generally achieved

middle class status. Ethnic voting of this type is "coincidental": It occurs when such voting coincides with the protection of the ascended ethnics' new interests. It may also occur when such voting does not adversely affect these interests.

The third type of voting that Gabriel described is what he terms "hubristic." Hubristic voting occurs when ethnics have reached the upper strata of the middle classes. While the ethnic group's physical presence has virtually disappeared, group members may romanticize and take pride in their ethnicity. As a result, there is a resurgence in ethnic voting. The level of ethnic voting at this stage is only slightly below that of the instrumental type.

Gabriel's schema is illuminating but problematic. His key distinction of the ethnic group "as it prepares to enter the middle class" is difficult to pinpoint. Further, this level is not clearly one that an ethnic group arrives at collectively. There is a strong individualistic sense to the phenomenon. Nevertheless, Gabriel's study is important, if for no other reason than his data "support the . . . premise that both ethnic identification and ethnic voting continue to be evident. This suggests that those who have predicted the demise of ethnicity and concomitant (sic) political behavior were, at least, premature."²⁹

Conclusion

Gabriel's seemingly simple assertion that "both ethnic identification and ethnic voting continue to be evident" provides a unifying theme for the literature of ethnic voting. The writers presented here differed in significant ways, yet all provided evidence that ethnicity is a vital force in American society and politics. This argument is stated most

directly by Michael Parenti, but ran through the entire body of work.

Yet although there is a consensus that ethnic voting exists, the writers differed on just how and when it manifested itself. Dahl, viewing ethnic voting as a "transitional phenomenon," anticipated its eventual disappearance. The other writers viewed ethnics as, to use Parenti's phrase, "very much alive and with us today." Wolfinger hypothesized long-lasting political allegiances passed from second and third generations of immigrants down to virtually totally assimilated ethnics.

Although Litt disagreed with Wolfinger's view of the persistence of ethnic voting (believing ethnic voting salience declined markedly from peak times), he did view ethnic politics as a continuing phenomenon. Gordon found strong evidence that ethnic voting persists, at least in nonpartisan cities. Gabriel found ethnic voting to be greatest when an ethnic group is about to achieve middle class status, but also found hubristic ethnic voting among later generations.

Taken together, these writers alert us to the central role that ethnicity plays in American politics, and encourage us to further define that role.

Notes for Chapter I

1. Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1961), 32.
2. Ibid., 33.
3. Ibid., 24.
4. Ibid., 34.
5. Ibid., 35.
6. Ibid., 35.
7. Raymond E. Wolfinger, "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting," American Political Science Review 54 (December 1965): 117.
8. Ibid., 118.
9. Ibid., 118.
10. Michael Parenti, "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification," American Political Science Review 60 (September 1967): 64.
11. Ibid., 65.
12. Wolfinger, 123.
13. Parenti, 65.
14. Parenti, 75-76.
15. Parenti, 78.
16. Edgar Litt, Ethnic Politics in America. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1970), 15.
17. Ibid., 18.
18. Ibid., 60.
19. Ibid., 18.
20. Ibid., 17.

21. Daniel N. Goron, "Immigrants and Municipal Voting Turnout: Implications for the Changing Ethnic Impact on Urban Politics," American Sociological Review 35 (1970): 167.

22. Ibid., 168.

23. Ibid., 168.

24. Andrew M. Greeley, "Political Participation among Ethnic Groups in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance," American Journal of Sociology 80 (July 1974): 3.

25. Greeley's "Political Participation among Ethnic Groups . . .", for example, bases its conclusions on Polish-Americans from only 56 Polish respondents.

26. Richard A. Gabriel, The Ethnic Factor in the Urban Polity. (New York: MSS Information Corporation, 1973), 23.

27. Ibid., 68.

28. Ibid., 69.

29. Ibid., 87.

CHAPTER II

SETTING AND BACKGROUND

The questions raised by the literature of ethnic voting are many. What forms does ethnic voting take: traditional allegiance to a party, support for fellow ethnic candidates, or other forms? Under what circumstances do ethnic voting blocs persist, and when do they diminish? Clearly, ethnic voting presents more questions than once could ever hope to definitively answer. This uncertainty is only compounded by the lack of systematic, broad-based inquiry into ethnic voting, and the fact that "ward-by-ward voting data are exceedingly hard to find."¹

By focusing on a particular city and a particular ethnic group, this study will attempt to illuminate some aspects of ethnic politics. The Poles² of South Bend, Indiana, will be studied. It is deliberate that this inquiry will be performed on a local level. As Robert Lane pointed out, the local level is the best unit of analysis for ethnic voting studies.³ A local approach is especially suitable in this case because, as Donald Pienkos said, "The Polish ethnic impact in politics has always been greatest in local rather than national affairs."⁴

South Bend: A City of Immigrants

South Bend is a suitable site for this research for a number of reasons. Not least among these is that South Bend is truly a city of immigrants, just as the United States has been called a nation of immigrants.⁵ The city rose in population and prominence in the early twentieth century to become an industrial power, and in its midst the twin forces of industrialism and immigration fueled each other. The

large number of immigrants who flocked to the city produced a multiethnic environment. Although it attracted more immigrants from Poland than from any other country, South Bend is not merely a "one ethnic group" city, which would make the development of its Polish community atypical. There are viable Hungarian and German (and, to a lesser extent, Italian and Irish) groups in the city as well.

The Polish community itself is in many ways an ideal one to study. It is quite sizable, yet is manageable by research standards. By focusing on a medium-sized city, furthermore, this study will expand the boundaries of inquiry into Polish political behavior. In one of the few works to deal specifically with Polish voting patterns in an urban setting, only large cities are examined: Buffalo, Milwaukee, Chicago and Detroit. This book, Ethnic Politics in Urban America, edited by Angela Pienkos, uses the case study approach to compare Polish political efficacy in large cities with substantial Polish communities.

Although the authors find varying degrees of Polish political successes from city to city, nowhere did Poles achieve total success in electing Polish mayors, achieving proportional representation in appointed offices, and holding positions of leadership in political party machinery.⁶

While the Pienkos work is valuable, the complex workings of ethnic voting may well be more discernible in a moderately sized city than in a large metropolitan area.⁷

To clarify the history and background of South Bend, and to show how Polish immigrants fitted into that history, we will begin with a review of the settling of the city.

The city of South Bend was founded as a fur trading post at the

southernmost bend of the St. Joseph River in northcentral Indiana. Although the town was founded in 1823, local government was not established until 1845. The town's first form of government, which lasted two decades, was a variation of the council-manager system. Townsmen from five wards elected city council representatives who served under a city "president." In 1865, the city elected its first mayor and inaugurated a mayor-council government. South Bend officials decreased the number of wards to three, but added a fourth ward the next year.⁸ More wards were added later.

Arrival of Poles

Shortly thereafter, in 1868, the first permanent Polish settlers⁹ arrived. From the beginning, the growth of a Polish-American community in South Bend was linked to the city's industrial development. The city's large industrial concerns attracted large numbers of Polish immigrants. South Bend's largest industrial employer for many years was the Studebaker Brothers Wagon Company, incorporated as the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company in 1868. Studebaker's employed 240 workers in 1870, and 650 more workers 10 years later. By 1900, the company boasted that it was the world's largest vehicle manufacturer, producing 75,000 vehicles each year.¹⁰ Two other South Bend manufacturers played especially significant roles in the city's industrial development: the Oliver Chilled Plow Works and the Singer Sewing Machine Company.

From the year of the nation's centennial in 1876 to 1900, the number of adult Polish males employed in South Bend industries increased tenfold, from 150 to 1537.¹¹ The city of South Bend, meanwhile, had not quite tripled in population over the same period. The 1900 census listed the city's population as 35,999.¹² Of that number, 7106 were Polish

immigrants, constituting one-fifth of the population.¹³

The industrial rise of South Bend, fueled by an influx of immigrants, is chronicled well by Dean R. Esslinger in Immigrants and the City. Esslinger studied South Bend from 1850 to 1880, examining the impact of ethnicity on the city. He also explored the residential and occupational mobility of immigrants in South Bend. Esslinger wrote that Polish immigrants who first came to South Bend were predominantly farmers and common laborers from Prussian Poland.¹⁴

Although Esslinger maintained that Poles generally held unskilled and semiskilled occupations, a local writer disagreed. In a clear reference to Immigrants and the City, Bernard Pinkowski wrote: "Contrary to some studies of ethnic mobility . . . in South Bend, 1850-1880, this group of [Polish] pioneers consisted of skilled craftsmen."¹⁵

In fact, national data suggest that the proportion of skilled workers among Polish immigrants was a low six percent.¹⁶ It is difficult to discern whether or not South Bend attracted an unusually high proportion of skilled workers among Polish immigrants. In any event, a high number of unskilled laborers would not be surprising in that Polish immigration to the United States stemmed primarily from an agricultural proletarian overpopulation.¹⁷

Although Poles by 1900 had established themselves as the leading immigrant group in the city, the first decade of the 20th century was the peak of Polish immigration to South Bend. Table 1 summarizes the immigration of Poles and other immigrant groups to South Bend from before 1900 to 1930.

Poles entrenched themselves in the life of their adopted city, and several Poles rose to prominence in South Bend within the first

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF POLISH AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS TO SOUTH BEND, BY YEARS

	1900 or earlier	1901-10	1911-14	1915-19	1920-24	1925-30	Total
Poles	1,643	1,354	726	49	143	21	3,999
All groups	4,279	4,752	2,231	387	1,517	549	14,020

three decades of Polish settlement there. The biographic compendium South Bend and the Men Who Have Made It, published in 1901, included eight men of Polish birth. Among these were two priests, a newspaper editor, an attorney, a grocer, a druggist and two real estate salesmen.¹⁸

Among these, two are of special note. The Rev. Valentine Czyzewski founded the city's first Roman Catholic parish. George W. J. Kalczynski founded a Polish language newspaper, the Goniec Polski (Polish Messenger). Both the Catholic Church and the Goniec Polski were important influences among members of South Bend's Polonia, or Polish community.

Monsignor Aloysius Wycislo generalized that "when we speak of Polish Americans, we can ipso facto speak of Polish Catholics."¹⁹ In the United States, over 500 Polish Catholic parishes were begun by 1900 and 300 more such parishes were founded by the mid-1930s.²⁰

In South Bend, four Catholic parishes were established among the Polish community. The Rev. Valentine Czyzewski founded the first Polish church, St. Hedwig's, in 1877.²¹ Czyzewski also was instrumental in establishing three other Polish parishes: St. Casimir's (1899), St. Stanislas' (1900), and St. Adalbert's (1910). New churches were mandated

by the continued stream of Polish immigrants into the community. One hundred twenty-five families originally joined St. Hedwig's, the mother parish. By 1910, more than 1,600 families belonged to the city's four Polish parishes.

The number of Polish Catholic parishes in the city not only illustrates the size of the Polish community in South Bend, but shows diversity in Polonia as well. As if to proclaim its own identity, each church community assumed a nickname that roughly corresponded to the cities in Poland from which settlers in each area had come. St. Hedwig's was known as Gniezno, St. Casimir's as Warsaw, St. Stanislas' as Poznań,²² and St. Adalbert's as Krakow. These geographic nicknames show that Poles in South Bend were keenly aware of their local origins.

This is consistent with the pattern of ethnic identification noted by historian Victor Greene. Greene wrote that Polish immigrants, if asked for their group identification, "probably would have responded by naming their regional or local origins-- their village or more likely their province."²³

Besides an increasing Polish population, another factor that encouraged the growth of Polish parishes was the physical concentration of immigrants. Poles tended to settle in the western and southwestern sectors of the city.

Originally, as the Rev. Joseph Swastek stated, "Brought together by their jobs in the factories, the Polish settlers sought quarters near the place of their employment."²⁴ In his study of ethnicity and residence in South Bend, Dean Esslinger noted the concentration of Poles in the west and south. Indeed, they were the sole exception to a pattern of even distribution of immigrants throughout the city. Esslinger also pointed out that Polish clustering was largely pragmatic in that it

put Poles near their places of employment. The desire to create an ethnic neighborhood was secondary.²⁵

That Polish population concentration and the establishment of Polish Catholic churches were related can be seen by contrasting another South Bend ethnic group. Italian immigrants, although less numerous than their Polish counterparts, were as staunchly Catholic. Still, not a single identifiable Italian parish emerged in South Bend. One main reason for this is that the Italian community was not physically concentrated. Although three heavily Italian areas existed, they were split between South Bend and its neighboring city, Mishawaka.²⁶

In addition to the Catholic Church, another important influence in South Bend's Polonia was its Polish language newspaper, the Goniec Polski. Founded by George W. J. Kalczynski in 1896, the paper was published regularly until its demise in 1964. As early as 1901, the Goniec was heralded as a "recognized power socially and politically among [South Bend] citizens of Polish nationality."²⁷ While the paper was politically independent, its political power appears to have been significant. One scholar asserted that "The Goniec more than any other agency contributed to the growth of political-mindedness among the Polish settlers, making them aware of the part they might play in local affairs."²⁸ Poles, in fact, grew to play a significant part in the political life of their adopted homeland. This political activity is especially discernible on the local level.

Early Political Activity

If early Polish political activity in South Bend is regarded as a function of socioeconomic conditions, then the proletarian nature of the local Polonia had two effects. One was the tendency to adopt the

Republican leanings of their employers. The other was a natural attraction to the Democratic party, fueled by the belief, true or not, that it was friendlier to immigrants. Taken together, these conflicting trends explain the seeming contradictions made by various writers.

In his study of the development of the Democratic party in South Bend, John T. Million wrote that, "Rarely speaking English, the workers relied upon the 'company man' for nearly everything. It is hardly surprising that they also took his political advice and voted straight Republican."²⁹ On the other hand, Frank A. Renkiewicz noted that Polish voters "leaned so heavily toward the Democratic party from the first"³⁰ that they influenced elections as early as 1878.

Before 1900

Competition between the two major political parties for Polish votes characterized South Bend politics before 1900. Republicans tried to convince workers that their voting interests were the same as those of their companies' owners. Democrats pushed their own claims, often reacting to what they called Republican "bulldozing." Bulldozing was the act of intimidating workers to vote for Republican candidates, lest they suffer recriminations (including job dismissal). Republicans denied these charges but showed limited success in swaying Polish voters. The South Bend Register in 1876 maintained that the city would be a Republican one "but for the Polanders, imported so largely into our city by our manufacturers."³¹

Poles' religious and political affiliations tended to reinforce each other. Donald Pienkos wrote that, "The roots of [Polish voters' attachment to the Democratic party] go back to the nineteenth century, when Polish immigrants were introduced by their pastors to the Democratic party as the representative of Catholics."³²

Another crucial factor in the Democratic hold on the Polish vote in South Bend was the party's nomination of Polish candidates. In 1878, Thomas Pijanowski was defeated for the office of Portage township constable. He was the first local Polish candidate, and a Democrat. Two years later, Nicholas Tanski, another Polish Democrat, was elected as justice of the peace. Tanski has been described as South Bend's first Polish political boss,³³ although there was no real machine for him to control.

The first successful Polish candidate for city council also ran under the Democratic banner. Peter Makielski was elected as third ward councilman in 1881, establishing the pattern of Democratic dominance in electing councilmen from areas with concentrated Polish populations.

The Democratic party also ran a number of Poles for citywide offices. The first such candidate was Charles V. Korpak for water works trustee in 1892. Following his candidacy came those of Leo F. Tomaszewski for city clerk in 1894 and Victor Krzeszewski for water works trustee in 1896.

Korpak, who succeeded Nicholas Tanski as South Bend's Polish political boss, also ran unsuccessfully for city treasurer in 1898. Despite his defeat, Korpak had strong support from his fellow Poles and the Goniec Polski declared that, "The number of Polish voters in our city has reached such proportions that we are able to swing municipal elections."³⁴

Despite the close associations of Poles with the Democratic party, the first Pole elected to citywide office in South Bend was a Republican. Leo Kucharski, a Democratic defector, was elected city clerk in 1905 on the Republican ticket. Ironically, this triumph of Polish Republicanism soon led to a major setback in that party's appeal

to Poles. Kucharski died just after his election, diminishing much of the effect of mobilizing Polish voters into the Republican fold. This was a boon to the Democrats, who seized the opportunity and nominated Frank Bilinski, a Pole, for city clerk in the 1909 election. Bilinski won the election and went on to become the leading Polish politician of his day in South Bend.

Bilinski was the son of Anthony Bilinski, a Polish immigrant who ran a cigar manufacturing plant. The younger Bilinski attended college briefly, then worked at Studebaker's and at his father's cigar factory. Eventually, he began to buy and sell real estate, and from there his interest in politics grew. After serving as city clerk from 1910 to 1913, Bilinski sat out the next election, but was elected to a second term in 1917.

In 1921, the Democratic party nominated him for mayor. His Republican opponent defeated him by a two-to-one margin. The defeat of the only Pole to run for mayor of South Bend in the general election serves as a backdrop for examining Polish voting behavior in South Bend.

Notes for Chapter II

1. Duane Lockard, The Politics of State and Local Government. (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 203.

2. To simplify terminology, the term "Poles" will be used interchangeably in this study with the more correct "Polish Americans."

3. Robert E. Lane, Political Life: Why People Get Involved in Politics. (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1959).

4. Donald Pienkos, "Polish-American Ethnicity in the Political Life of the United States," in America's Ethnic Politics (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 294.

5. This much-used phrase is also the title of a noted book on immigration by historian Oscar Handlin.

6. Angela T. Pienkos, Ethnic Politics in Urban America: The Polish Experience in Four Cities. (Chicago: Polish American Historical Association, 1978).

7. It is significant, for example, that the pioneering research on ethnic voting was conducted by Dahl and Wolfinger in New Haven, Connecticut, another moderately-sized city.

8. The city annexed the town of Lowell, which had sprung up along the east bank of the St. Joseph River, to form the fourth ward. The number of wards was fixed at seven by the end of the nineteenth century.

9. The Rev. Joseph Swastek, "The Poles in South Bend to 1914," Polish American Studies 2: 80. Swastek reports that a few scattered Poles came to the area before the Civil War. By 1868, according to Swastek, 15 Polish families lived in South Bend.

10. Michael Beatty, Studebaker: Less Than They Promised. (South Bend, Ind: and books, 1984), 10.

11. Swastek, 80.

12. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Population, Part I.

13. Ibid.

14. As is discussed elsewhere, Poland was partitioned between Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary during the years of peak immigration.

15. Bernard Pinkowski, "The Polish American Community," in From Council Oak to Shopping Malls: The Ethnic Background of St. Joseph County, Indiana (South Bend, Ind.: Forever Learning Institute, 1982), 5.
16. Stephen Steinberg, The Ethnic Myth. (New York: Atheneum, 1981), 98.
17. Paul Fox, The Poles in America. (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1970), 58; John J. Bukowczyk, And My Children Did Not Know Me. (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1987), 11.
18. South Bend and the Men Who Have Made It. (South Bend, Ind: Tribune Printing Company, 1901).
19. Monsignor Aloysius J. Wycislo, "The Polish Catholic Immigrant," in Roman Catholicism and the American Way of Life (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 1960), 179.
20. Bukowczyk, 40; D. Pienkos, 280.
21. Swastek, 85. St. Hedwig's (also written Hedwige's, using the traditional Polish spelling) was originally founded as St. Joseph's parish, but was rebuilt and renamed 2 years later.
22. Swastek, 86. St. Stanislas' was also known by the nickname Złoty ch Górnych, or Golden Hills, a reference to the geography of Poznań.
23. Victor Greene, For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Consciousness in America. (Madison, Wis.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1975), 3.
24. Swastek, 80.
25. Dean R. Esslinger, Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth-Century Midwestern Community. (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1975), 56-57.
26. Elizabeth R. Fotia, The Italian-Americans of the South Bend-Mishawaka Area. (South Bend, Ind.: Indiana University at South Bend, 1975).
27. South Bend and the Men . . ., 26.
28. Swastek, 87.
29. John T. Million, The Democratic Party of South Bend, Indiana. (South Bend, Ind.: By the author, 1965), 22.
30. Frank A. Renkiewicz, The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana. (Ann Arbor, Mich: University Microfilms, 1971), 50.

31. Renkiewicz, 59.
32. D. Pienkos, 287.
33. Esslinger, 106-107.
34. Swastek, 88.

CHAPTER III
HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Using South Bend as a setting, this study will examine three hypotheses regarding ethnic voting behavior. The first hypothesis is that Poles voted overwhelmingly for Polish candidates when given the chance to do so. The second hypothesis is that Polish immigrants and their descendants became increasingly politicized as time passed. The third hypothesis is that these two phenomena contributed to an important "first major candidacy" that mobilized second and third generation Poles into the political sphere. These hypotheses are all drawn from the literature of ethnic voting.

The first hypothesis, that Poles voted for Polish candidates, is based on the principle that, all things being equal, ethnics will support fellow ethnics at the polls. This principle is implied by much of the literature of the field, and is sometimes stated directly. Dahl wrote that ethnic candidates (in the second stage of political assimilation) could garner significant voting support from their fellow ethnics, if they avoided divisive socioeconomic issues.¹ Wolfinger implies the "voting for one's own" tendency, since it would have to occur to mobilize ethnic voters behind a candidate and a party. Litt similarly implies that ethnics are drawn to co-ethnic candidates, and calls the initial election of a fellow ethnic to a high public office a "major group goal."²

The second hypothesis, that Poles became increasingly politicized over time, is based similarly on notions implicitly or explicitly

stated in the literature. In Dahl's analysis, the passage of time meant a movement from political homogeneity to political heterogeneity. This certainly can be perceived as "politicization." Wolfinger's mobilization thesis relies on another sort of politicization-- the development of sufficient political skill to field an ethnic candidate for major office. This development occurred gradually, and coincided with the growth of an ethnic middle class.

The third hypothesis, that a first major candidacy mobilized Poles to vote, is based on a central feature of the literature. In Dahl's model, such a candidacy could occur when social and political homogeneity of the ethnic group had begun to wane. Dahl places two conditions on the nomination of an ethnic group member: the group must be sufficiently large, and local attitudes must not be antagonistic to such a candidacy.³ While Dahl acknowledges the possibility of a citywide ethnic candidate, he does not attach much importance to such a candidacy.

Wolfinger, on the other hand, attached great significance to a citywide ethnic candidate in mobilizing ethnic voters. Wolfinger's theory has two basic parts. First, ethnic voting will be greatest in the second and third generations (not in the first). Second, shifts in party identification will persist beyond the "first major candidacy" elections in which they occur.⁴ Because of the time frame required to judge the persistence of ethnic voting, we cannot deal with that aspect of Wolfinger's model. Our attention will instead be on whether or not we find increasing evidence of ethnic voting in the second and third generations of South Bend Poles.

To test all three hypotheses, this study will rely on precinct returns from South Bend mayoral elections. This method is suitable in

that it is a direct and accessible means of investigation. The use of precinct data, however, has a number of shortcomings.

The method leads us to run the risk of committing the "ecological fallacy." A high percentage of Poles in a precinct does not ensure that every Pole is voting a particular way. Earl Babbie pointed out that the problem with this type of analysis is that we use precincts as our units of analysis, while we wish to draw conclusions about voters.⁵

A second difficulty is isolating a distinctly Polish vote. One of the problems in isolating predominantly Polish areas in South Bend is the partition of Poland before World War I. Poland, with its citizens, was divided between Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary from the late 18th century. Census data before 1920 listed only the country of birth of immigrants. Therefore, Poles were grouped with their partitioners, especially Germans and Russians, in census data. Consider, for example, the census category of "country of birth of foreign born whites." Table 2 shows the differences in the reporting of the country of birth statistic between 1910 and 1920.

TABLE 2

COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF FOREIGN BORN WHITES IN SOUTH BEND

	1910	1920
<u>Germany</u>		
Sixth ward	2023	74
City	5347	1741
<u>Russia</u>		
Sixth ward	589	75
City	1125	642
<u>Poland</u>		
Sixth ward	--	2663
City	--	4229

We must assume that the numbers of Germans, Russians and Poles in the city remained relatively the same from 1910 to 1920. This is reasonable, as there is no evidence of a mass exodus of Germans and Russians and a large influx of Poles during the period. Table 2 shows that the overwhelming number of Germans and Russians reported in the sixth ward in 1910 were, in fact, Poles.

We may gauge Polish dominance in an area by other measures as well. Table 3 uses the important measure of Polish-born population as a percentage of the total population in each ward in 1920, the year before the Bilinski election. It should be noted that the figures only take into account residents who were born in Poland.

TABLE 3
POLISH-BORN POPULATION OF SOUTH BEND, 1920

	Ward							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Polish population	48	1098	226	27	14	2663	153	4229
Total ward population	11928	10281	5149	10779	6100	11015	15731	70983
Percentage Polish	0.4	10.7	4.4	0.3	0.2	24.2	0.9	6.0

Table 3 makes clear that Poles were physically concentrated in South Bend. While the city's wards were not unusually large, however, neither were they sufficiently small enough to produce a number of ethnically homogeneous districts.⁶ Rather, Poles predominated in only one ward: the sixth.

There were substantial numbers of Poles in the second district as well, but they shared this ward with other ethnics. Therefore, returns from the sixth ward will be used to measure the "Polish vote." Some conclusions we draw from the data must remain tenuous because of the risk of committing the ecological fallacy. The

homogeneity of the sixth ward, however, helps to obviate this risk. The measure used is an imprecise one, to be sure, but its use will reflect the voting preferences of the Polish community in a general way.

Since this research centers on the mayoral candidacy of Frank Bilinski in 1921, we need to view data over an extended period-- before and after the election. A convenient starting year for the study would be 1900, but since 1905 was the first year in which mayors and other city officials were elected to four-year terms, that year will be used as a starting point. Unfortunately, the availability of data limits the extension of the study to only two elections beyond the critical one.⁷ So, we will examine precinct returns of mayoral elections from 1905 to 1929.

Besides examining the race for mayor, this study will take into account two other offices: city clerk and city judge. These offices were selected for study because they were elected at the same time as the mayor, were subject to a citywide vote, and provide a strong basis of comparison to mayoral elections.

Although the data, as defined here, will be used to test all three hypotheses, there will be a different emphasis in each case. The first hypothesis, that Poles voted for "one of their own," can be examined readily. We will look at all Polish candidates in the period and compare their electoral performances to non-Poles, among both Polish and non-Polish voters.

The second hypothesis, that Poles became increasingly politicized, can be measured by the total number of votes cast by Poles in each election. This is not strictly a "turnout" figure, but provides a similar measure.

The third hypothesis is that a first major candidacy mobilized Polish voters. Here we need to consider voting patterns in the sixth ward for mayor, clerk and judge to determine if a significant shift to the Democratic party occurred after 1921.

The data analysis will be complemented, where appropriate, by contextual information. Political behavior in South Bend can best be understood in the context of changes in the city. South Bend underwent great growth and change from 1905 to 1929; the politics of the city operated in that dynamic environment.

We now turn to the investigation of the hypotheses.

Notes for Chapter III

1. Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961), 35.
2. Edgar Litt, Ethnic Politics in America. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1970), 18.
3. Dahl, 35.
4. Raymond E. Wolfinger, "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting," American Political Science Review 54 (December 1965): 118.
5. Earl Babbie, The Practice of Social Research, 3d ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1983), 80.
6. New Haven, on the other hand, did have small precincts and homogeneous districts.
7. Official precinct returns are not available until after 1945. Voting returns are drawn from the South Bend Tribune, which stopped publishing this information after 1929.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

We will begin examining the hypotheses by turning to the first one, that Poles tended to vote for Polish candidates in city elections. If this is true, we will find two patterns. First, Poles will be more likely than non-Poles to vote for Polish candidates. Second, Poles will be more likely to vote for Polish than for non-Polish candidates. This will be true even when voters must cross party lines to vote for selected ethnic candidates.¹

We turn first to the proposition that Poles were more likely than non-Poles to vote for Polish candidates. We will test this notion by using precinct returns from South Bend city elections from 1905 to 1929. Over these seven elections, Poles were candidates for mayor, clerk or judge in five of them (two Poles ran for clerk in 1909). Three of the six Polish candidacies were by the same man: Frank Bilinski, who ran for clerk twice and for mayor once.

To compare Polish to non-Polish voters, we will break up the electorate into two components: the sixth ward and the rest of the city. If Poles were more likely than others to vote for Polish candidates, we will find a large gap between the percentage of the two-party vote for these candidates in the sixth ward than in the rest of the city. Table 4 displays these figures.

Clearly, Poles voted quite heavily for their fellow ethnics, particularly after 1909, when two Polish candidates split the vote for clerk. In each case, except for 1909, they were substantially more

TABLE 4
 VOTES CAST FOR POLISH CANDIDATES
 IN THE SIXTH WARD AND IN THE REST OF THE CITY

Candidate	Year	Sixth Ward	Percentage*	Rest of City	Percentage§
Leo Kucharski	1905	895	59.5	4,498	48.9
Frank Bilinski	1909	1,040	56.4	3,883	56.8
Casimir Woltman	1909	803	43.6	2,948	43.2
Frank Bilinski	1917	1,153	82.5	3,462	44.5
Frank Bilinski	1921	1,955	95.0	3,089	23.6
Al Hosinski	1929	3,259	89.2	14,126	47.9

*. Percentage of the two-party vote cast for the Polish candidate in the sixth ward.

§. Percentage of the two-party vote cast for the Polish candidate in the rest of the city.

likely than non-Poles to vote for "-ski" candidates. When Poles faced each other in 1909, the voting percentages in the sixth ward and in the rest of the city were nearly identical.

Ironically, the zenith of Polish voting came with Bilinski's mayoral candidacy in 1921, an election that marked the nadir of support for Polish candidates from the rest of the city. The city at large did not match the sixth ward's enthusiasm for Polish candidates, although four of the six Polish candidates were indeed elected.

The support for Polish candidates that did exist in non-Polish wards suggests that South Bend voting patterns may reflect a variety of ethnic influences. As noted earlier, the city had a myriad of other ethnic groups. Support for Polish candidates may well be more than a Polish phenomenon, but a broader Catholic or European phenomenon.

Given the relatively even distribution of other ethnic groups across the city,² however, it is impossible to separate other distinctly ethnic

wards. This shortcoming precludes a detailed analysis of voting trends among other significant ethnic groups in South Bend.

We have compared Poles to non-Poles in their voting preferences for Polish candidates. We may make another comparison: Did Poles favor Polish over non-Polish candidates? If they did, we could expect to find Polish candidates in the sixth ward to be the leading vote-getters on their ticket in each election. Table 5 summarizes the information needed to make this determination.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGES OF THE TWO-PARTY VOTE CAST IN THE SIXTH WARD
FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE IN YEARS WITH POLISH CANDIDATES
FOR AT LEAST ONE OF THE OFFICES

Year	Party	Mayor	Clerk	Judge
1905	Republican	31.6	59.5*	33.0
1909	Democratic	61.4	56.5*	63.7
1909	Republican	38.6	43.5*	36.3
1917	Democratic	66.7	82.5*	79.9
1921	Democratic	95.0*	88.7	92.7
1929	Democratic	87.8	85.5	89.2*

*. A Polish candidate.

Table 5 reveals that, with the exception of 1909, Polish candidates led their tickets in every election, although not by much. This held true whether the Polish candidates ran for mayor, clerk or judge.

It is significant to note that sixth ward voters showed a willingness to cross party lines in 1905 to vote for Leo Kucharski for clerk. Polish voters strongly supported Democratic candidates for mayor and judge in 1905, giving them 68.4 and 67.0 percent of the ward vote, respectively. They turned around, then, and voted 59.5 percent for the Republican Kucharski.

This was only slightly less support than sixth ward voters gave

to the Democratic standard bearers. Unfortunately, the only other Polish Republican candidate in the era ran in 1909 against another Pole, and we cannot extend the analysis of the willingness of normally Democratic Poles to cross party lines to vote for fellow ethnics.

Special note must be made of the 1909 election, where two Polish candidates for clerk faced each other. Bilinski, in his first run for the office, ran behind the mayoral and judicial Democratic candidates. He did defeat Casimir Woltman in the sixth ward, as well as in the city at large.

Precinct results within the sixth ward reveal that Bilinski beat his opponent in five out of six precincts.³ Woltman prevailed only in the fifth precinct, his home territory. Table 6 shows the precinct-by-precinct breakdown.

TABLE 6
PRECINCT RETURNS IN THE SIXTH WARD, 1909

Precinct	For mayor		For clerk		For judge	
	Goetz DEMOCRAT	Schafer REPUBLICAN	Bilinski DEMOCRAT	Woltman REPUBLICAN	Farsbaugh DEMOCRAT	Bergan REPUBLICAN
1	166	97	167	82	166	83
2	132	64	117	79	117	76
3	360	189	316	219	234	197
4	145	123	143	122	145	120
5	207	79	119	170	194	88
6	249	59	178	131	243	61
Totals	1,259	601	1,040	803	1,099	625

These figures indicate limited support within the sixth ward for the Republican candidate Woltman. Bilinski ran at or near the top of the ticket in precincts 1 through 4. In the sixth precinct, which Democratic mayoral candidate Charles Goetz had won, 249 to 59, Bilinski also defeated his opponent, but by a much narrower margin-- 178 to 131.

So, although many Poles did cross party lines to vote for Woltman, sixth ward voters showed a strong tendency to vote for Democrats in 1909.

Polish Politicization

We turn now to the second hypothesis, that Poles became more politicized over the span of the study. To measure this politicization, we would ideally have access to turnout figures, which would reflect the total number of registered voters who were moved to register and vote in an election. Lacking turnout figures, however, we shall approximate this measure by using another device: the total votes cast in the sixth ward. Table 7 summarizes these data.

TABLE 7

TOTAL VOTES CAST FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE OF SOUTH BEND IN THE SIXTH WARD, 1905-1929

Year	Votes cast for mayor	Votes cast for clerk	Votes cast for judge	Average
1905	1,516	1,505	1,449	1,490
1909	1,860	1,843	1,724	1,809
1913*	1,635	1,175	1,174	1,328
1917	1,414	1,397	1,334	1,382
1921	2,065	1,979	2,072	2,039
1925	2,292	2,182	2,283	2,252
1929	3,660	3,619	3,654	3,644

*. Figures listed are the combined vote totals of Democratic and Republican candidates except for 1913, when Citizen's Party figures are included.

The general pattern shown by Table 7 is one of steady growth eclipsed by a significant decline in 1913, the year independent Frederick Keller was elected mayor. Yet, if we examine the percentage of change

in the total number of votes from year to year, we find not even but sometimes highly volatile change. Table 8 shows these changes and compares changes in the sixth ward to variations in the rest of the city.

TABLE 8

AVERAGE TOTAL VOTES CAST FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE
IN THE SIXTH WARD AND IN THE REST OF THE CITY,
1905-1929, WITH PERCENTAGES OF CHANGE

Year	Sixth ward	Percentage of change	Rest of city	Percentage of change
1905	1,490	--	4,445	--
1909	1,809	+17.6	9,014	+50.7
1913	1,328	-36.2	8,498	- 6.1
1917	1,382	+ 3.9	7,818	- 8.7
1921	2,039	+32.2	13,999	+44.1
1925	2,252	+ 9.5	19,058	+26.5
1929	3,644	+38.1	29,534	+54.9

Table 8 shows seemingly erratic patterns in both the sixth ward and in the city at large. This suggests that the "total number of votes cast" statistic is subject to many short-term variations. An examination of events occurring in the city illuminates the causes of some of those variations.

The election of 1905, the baseline year used for this comparison, came just one year after another mayoral election.⁴ Mayor Edward Fogarty, who was re-elected in 1905, was regarded as a "safe" candidate. Perhaps, then, the 1905 figures are artificially low, making the large increase in the number of votes cast in 1909 artificially high. It is interesting to note that the number of votes cast in the sixth ward

did not increase as much as the number of votes cast in the rest of South Bend although two Polish candidates squared off in the election for clerk. Votes cast outside the sixth ward increased 50.7 percent; the sixth ward vote total increased 17.6 percent.

The decrease in the number of sixth ward voters in 1913 by over one-third is significant. The absence of a Polish candidate that year undoubtedly lowered Poles' political interest. The slight decline in the city at large may be merely due to the disruption of two-party politics in South Bend.

Fewer voters in the city at large in 1917 can be traced to the impact of World War I. The slight increase in the number of sixth ward voters that year could be linked to the re-emergence of a Polish candidate.

The substantial increase in the number of voters in both the sixth ward and in the rest of the city in the next election, in 1921, can be attributed to several factors. First, there was a return to post-war "normalcy." Second, women could vote for the first time. Third, the population of the city had increased substantially since the last pre-war election in 1913.

An added encouragement to sixth ward voters was Bilinski's mayoral candidacy that year. According to the South Bend Tribune, however, the sixth ward vote fell over 1,000 short of the number of registered voters in the district. The Tribune reported: "The blanket challenges by which the republicans (sic) called attention of the boards to 800 alleged illegally registered voters in the Second and Sixth wards evidently had their effect."⁵

In the 1925 and 1929 elections, the number of votes in both the

sixth ward and in the rest of the city rose. These increases were higher in the second election than in the first, and were also higher in the rest of the city than in the sixth ward. The higher number of votes cast in the city outside of the sixth ward is probably due to greater population increases in the city at large.

In 1925, the Tribune stated that voting in the sixth ward, along with the first and second wards, was among the heaviest in the city in relation to ward population. These wards averaged about two-thirds turnout, while the remaining four wards averaged about 50 percent turnout. The overall turnout in the city was about 60 percent.⁶

Despite the short-term variations in the "number of votes cast" statistic from 1905 to 1929, the hypothesis that Poles became increasingly politicized and voted more over the years is borne out. After all, the average number of votes cast for mayor, clerk and judge in the sixth ward increased from 1,490 in 1905 to 3,644 in 1929, a rise of 244 percent.

Yet to what extent were increases in voting merely a function of population increases? To answer this question, we must determine population patterns in the sixth ward. Table 9 summarizes the pertinent census data.

TABLE 9

POPULATION OF SOUTH BEND'S SIXTH WARD AND THE CITY, 1900-1930

Year	Sixth ward population	City population
1900	5,707	35,999
1910	9,212	53,684
1920	11,015	70,983
1930	12,170	104,193

Table 9 reveals steady growth in the sixth ward community, greatest

in the first decade of the century. We may compare this growth to the increase of voters in the sixth ward by examining the number of votes cast (the average number of votes for mayor, clerk and judge) in elections held near the years in which censuses were taken. For each census from 1910 to 1930, an election was held one year before or after the census: in 1909, 1921 and 1929. We will use these elections as reference points to determine to what extent the increase in Polish voters was simply a function of increased population.

In 1909, there were 1,809 voters in the sixth ward, which showed an overall population of 9,212 a year later. By 1920, the population had risen to 11,015, with 2,029 voting in the next year's election. In 1929, 3,644 sixth warders cast ballots, while the 1930 census showed 12,170 sixth ward residents. The 1909 and 1921 elections show roughly the same percentage of voters in relation to the corresponding census: 19.6 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively. In 1929, meanwhile, 29.9 percent of the ward residents (as measured by the 1930 figures) voted.

These data show a distinct increase in Poles' politicization, as measured by the number of sixth ward voters, during the 1920s. Ironically, this was the period immediately following the halt of mass immigration from Poland.⁷ Indeed, much of 1000-person increase from 1920 to 1930 in the sixth ward undoubtedly came from the birth of children to earlier residents and not from new immigrants, making the increase in the number of Poles voting all the more significant.

The hypothesis that Poles became increasingly politicized over the years of the course of the study is therefore proved true. This increase, however, was not a steady, gradual one. Rather, the number of Poles voting moved jerkily ahead. In any event, Polish politicization

increased significantly, especially in the latter years of the study.

The First Major Candidacy

We may now examine the third hypothesis, that a first major candidacy was instrumental in uniting Poles in Democratic allegiance. To determine the effect of any such candidacy, we must first accurately fix when the first major candidacy occurred. As stated earlier, the first Pole to win a citywide office in South Bend was Leo Kucharski in 1905. Kucharski was elected as city clerk, but did not serve any of his term before he died. Winning the office of city clerk was an important breakthrough for Polonia because it represented breaking out of narrow ethnic boundaries and electing a Pole on a citywide ticket.

Yet the office of clerk lacks the visibility and prestige of the mayoralty. Furthermore, the clerk ranks lower on the city ticket. Since we think of the mobilization of voters as coming "from the top down," Kucharski does not qualify as the first major Polish political candidate. It should be noted that Kucharski was a former Democrat who switched parties just prior to the 1905 election.⁸ It is hardly surprising that many Poles came over to vote for their countryman at a time when party allegiances were relatively immature. Although Kucharski's candidacy obviously had an impact on the South Bend vote, it is the mayoral candidacy of Frank Bilinski that we will examine as the first significant Polish candidacy.⁹

Before turning to a test of the mobilization hypothesis, it is instructive to consider developments in South Bend that influenced the electoral politics of the first three decades of the century.

South Bend Electoral Politics, 1905-1929: An Overview

From 1905 to 1929, mayoral elections showed a great deal of flux.

The era began with strong Democratic control of the mayoralty, which was eclipsed by the election of independent Fred Keller in 1913. The next two elections went to Republicans, while the following two elections returned Democrats to city hall. Interestingly, no mayor in the period was elected to a second term, although Mayor Fogarty's victory in 1905 was, in fact, his third.

Fogarty was elected mayor in 1902 and re-elected in 1904. When city law changed the election cycle for the office of mayor, Fogarty, a Democrat, was re-elected in 1905. Fogarty was regarded as a machine politician who put together an effective organization.¹⁰

In 1905, the incumbent city judge, Democrat George Feldman, was also re-elected, but city clerk Nelson Kyser was defeated by Republican Leo Kucharski.

The Tribune reported that Kyser had not been supported by the city hall "clique," which "refused to stand . . . loyal by Mr. Kyser and he was cut and traded freely."¹¹ The newspaper depicted Kyser as a "fatted calf."¹² In any event, Kucharski scored a narrow 89-vote win over the incumbent clerk.

In the 1909 election, Charles Goetz, a cigar manufacturer, carried the Democratic banner and was elected as mayor with the greatest margin of victory in South Bend history to that point.¹³ He defeated David Schafer, a former mayor of the city.

Goetz attributed his victory to "multipartisan support." In his victory statement, Goetz said: "I fully realize that while the nominee of the democratic (sic) party, my victory was not due solely to the votes of my party but to the favor accorded me by voters of the other parties throughout the city."¹⁴

Goetz led the Democrats to victory in the clerk and judge races as well. Judge-elect G.A. Farsbaugh scored 58.3 percent of the two-party vote, just behind Goetz's ticket-leading total of 61.4 percent. Frank Bilinski, in his first run for citywide office, was elected clerk, but ran well behind Goetz and Farsbaugh. Bilinski beat Casimir Woltman, a fellow Pole, with 49.6 percent of the vote.¹⁵

Bilinski had been a "dark horse" candidate when he was selected as the candidate for clerk by a convention of precinct committeemen at Turner Hall. "Surprising things happened at the Turner hall convention," the Tribune reported. "Bilinski had the votes and that was all there was to it."¹⁶

Republican committeemen countered Bilinski's nomination by naming Woltman as their candidate for clerk. Woltman, a former city councilman, was chosen over five other candidates,¹⁷ but lost to Bilinski in the general election.

In 1913, Fred Keller was elected mayor of South Bend. He was the first independent candidate ever to win the office, although he had GOP ties and had earlier been the St. Joseph County Republican party chairman. Keller stood for clean government and reform, an offshoot of the national Progressive movement.¹⁸

What became a recurring theme of South Bend electoral politics emerged in the 1913 election: vice. Bootlegging, gambling and prostitution aroused considerable controversy in South Bend. While Keller was the first mayor of the city to be elected on an anti-vice platform, the issue of vice raged throughout the era.

The Citizen's Party, under whose flag he ran, had one other electoral success in 1913. The Citizen's candidate for judge, Warner, was elected

along with Keller. Democrats, however, held the office of city clerk with a victory by their candidate, Rostiser. Polish candidates were conspicuously absent from the 1913 election.

Two Successive Republicans

The first of two successive Republican mayors was elected in 1917. Franklin Carson defeated Rudolph Ackermann, his Democratic opponent, by just 52 votes. Carson's victory was heralded by the Republican South Bend Tribune as a victory for Republicans as well as "those in the democratic (sic) party who appreciate that the best elements should rule."¹⁹

Carson's coattails were threadbare, however, as Democrats won election as both clerk and judge. Frank Bilinski won a second, though non-consecutive, term as city clerk over Republican challenger Arthur Studebaker. Democrat Frank Gilmer, meanwhile, defeated Andrew Hildebrand for city judge. The Polish vote obviously helped to elect Bilinski, who won by just 57 votes. Gilmer's victory was more substantial: 760 votes.

In 1921, Mayor Carson chose not to run for re-election, and Eli Seebirt ran as the Republican candidate for mayor. He handily defeated Democrat Frank Bilinski, the incumbent city clerk. The Tribune reported that the "foreign wards" (the second and the sixth) "went almost solid for the democratic (sic) nominee, but "the effect of their strength was soon lost in the great quantities of votes polled by Mr. Seebirt in other sections of the city."²⁰

Bilinski ran well behind the rest of the Democratic ticket. Where Bilinski attracted but one-third of the citywide vote, judgeship challenger J. Elmer Peak received nearly 46 percent of the vote, although

he lost to GOP candidate Chester DuComb. Gladys Monroe, the Democratic candidate for clerk, beat Republican Phil Nicar with about 52 percent of the vote.²¹

Significantly, 1921 was the first year in which women could vote in a South Bend municipal election. Observers linked Monroe's victory to the women's vote. The Tribune reflected that, "The election of Miss Monroe was a big surprise to some of the supposedly most astute politicians of the city. Entry of women into the race introduced an entirely new factor into city politics."²²

Chester Montgomery was elected mayor as 1925. He defeated Republican Samuel Leeper and became the first Democrat to be elected mayor since Charles Goetz in 1909. "The democratic (sic) victory indicated the great vote-getting power of Mr. Montgomery," the Tribune reported, "but it was also a triumph of organization."²³ Democrats conducted an extensive poll of city voters before the election, the newspaper reported.

In a strong showing for incumbents, both city clerk Gladys Monroe and city judge Chester DuComb were re-elected in 1925. Monroe, a Democrat, ran somewhat behind mayor-elect Montgomery. Montgomery won with about 56 percent of the vote; Monroe had 52 percent support. Judge DuComb, a Republican, won by a much narrower margin, defeating Otis Romine by 69 votes.

The 1925 election was the only one in the period except for 1913 that no Polish candidate ran for mayor, clerk or judge in South Bend. In 1929, a Polish candidate re-emerged. Democrat Al Hosinski was elected as city judge over Republican Frank Coughlin. Hosinski's victory was part of a sweep by Democrats of the leading three city offices, the

first time the party had accomplished the feat since 1909.²⁴

William Hinkle led the Democratic ticket, and was elected as mayor with the greatest majority of votes in the city's history to that time.²⁵ He defeated two-term city judge Chester DuComb. Gladys Monroe won her third term as city clerk in the election.

A Test of the "First Major Candidacy" Hypothesis

Against the backdrop of political developments in the city, we are now able to test whether Bilinski's mayoral candidacy in 1921 mobilized Polish voters. We will operationalize our hypothesis in this way. If Bilinski's candidacy mobilized Polish voters, we should find a significant shift to the Democratic party in the sixth ward from 1921 on. This shift will be measureable by increased numbers of Poles voting for Democratic candidates for clerk, judge and, especially, mayor. We shall examine the three offices separately, beginning with that of mayor.

The Vote for Mayor

We will begin by examining the vote totals for mayor in South Bend and in the sixth ward, and comparing these vote percentages. Table 10 summarizes the relevant data.

Some basic trends are evident from Table 10. First, except for the anomalous year 1913, Poles had been staunchly in the Democratic camp from 1905. Sixth ward percentages of 68.4 (1905), 67.7 (1909), and 66.7 (1917) are very high, as well as very stable. This stability was achieved in spite of shifts in city political preferences, as South Bend moved from Democratic to independent and then to Republican leanings, before returning city hall to the Democrats.

Sixth warders gave nearly the same support to Edward Fogarty in 1905 as they did to Charles Goetz in 1909, while they increased the

TABLE 10

VOTES CAST FOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR OF SOUTH BEND, 1905-1929

Year	Democratic votes in city	Percentage*	Democratic votes in sixth ward	Percentage§
1905	5,646	53.5	1,037	68.4
1909	7,009	61.4	1,259	67.7
1913	4,345	43.1	768	47.0
1917	4,668	49.7	943	66.7
1921	5,044	33.3	1,955	95.0
1925	12,051	56.3	1,707	74.5
1929	18,485	55.6	3,212	87.8

*. Percentage of two-party vote in South Bend. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

§. Percentage of two-party vote in the sixth ward. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

number of votes cast by 344 votes.²⁶ While the Democratic candidate still carried the sixth ward in 1913, he faced a stiff challenge from Citizen's Party candidate Fred Keller, who won the election. The Democratic candidate, Patrick Joyce, outdistanced Keller 768 votes to 752.

Given the Poles' strong partisan vote in earlier elections, though, the 1913 figures would seem to bear out Jack J. Detzler's claim that Keller appealed to both management and labor.²⁷ The most telling statistic, however, could be the number of votes cast, which declined by several hundred from 1909.²⁸

Although the sixth ward turnout did not return to pre-1913 levels with the 1917 election (as mentioned earlier), the percentage of votes for Democrat Rudolph Ackermann returned to just slightly below the high

levels racked up early in the century. Polish voters were cross-pressured in 1917. On the one hand, Ackermann, whose father was a German immigrant, may have aroused support because of his ethnic ties.

On the other hand, Ackermann drew fire from Father Kubacki, the pastor of St. Adalbert's Church, who then openly supported Republican Franklin Carson. Kubacki supported Carson after various religious groups posed three questions about the control of vice in the city to each candidate, promising to support the one who gave the more "acceptable" answers. Ackermann refused to answer the questions, making him seem to favor weak enforcement of laws against vice. Carson did answer the questions, predictably coming out strongly against vice.

On election day, the Tribune stated that, "The contemptible treatment of Father Kubacki [by Ackermann] is rankling in the hearts of decent people, and it is pointed out that someone may have to answer for it in the end."²⁹ That "someone," presumably, was Ackermann himself.

A second trend shown by the data is that the Bilinski candidacy in 1921 produced overwhelming sixth ward support.³⁰ A full 95 percent of voters there supported their fellow Pole. Meanwhile, Democratic support in the city at large reached its nadir, 33 percent. The uneven support for Bilinski is borne out by the fact that 38.8 percent of Bilinski's total votes came from the sixth ward, although the ward's residents constituted only about 15 percent of the city's population.

The more surprising aspect of Bilinski's defeat is not that he did well in the sixth ward, but that he did so poorly in the rest of the city. Bilinski, after all, had won two citywide elections before.

Bilinski's downfall was due largely to the "good government" issues-- which had also featured prominently in 1913 and 1917-- that

dominated the election. As Frank Renkiewicz wrote, "The campaign [of 1921] had every mark of being a classic late Progressive political event with law enforcement, liquor, and the influence of foreigners as the chief issues."³¹ The Tribune heralded Seebirt's victory as one "by the better elements of the city against vice and liquor violations."³²

These issues worked against Bilinski. Evidently, Bilinski's inability to marshall the issues of the day to work for him was apparent even during the campaign, for the Tribune wrote: "It became known during the campaign that pressure was being exerted upon Mr. Bilinski to induce him to resign his nomination in favor of some other democrat (sic) who might be considered a strong contestant."³³

A third trend of the mayoral voting is that no clear picture of new Polish-Democratic alliances emerges after 1921. In these two elections, the Democratic vote remained high-- higher, in fact, than in any pre-1921 election. The jump of 13 percentage points from 1925 to 1929 was substantial, and perhaps is partially attributable to the Al Smith presidential candidacy in 1928. In any event, the limited data available to us preclude strong generalizations about the years after 1921.

Still, it is clear that Poles were in the Democratic camp. Frank Renkiewicz wrote that the Democrats held Polish support in 1925 simply because after the debacle of 1921, Poles were left with "nowhere to go."³⁴ Vice continued to play a role in the 1925 election, but this time the Democrat, Montgomery, was deemed as the "anti-vice" candidate, because he had a good record as a lawyer, a judge and prosecutor. Conversely, Republican Samuel Leeper was "handicapped by the recorded failure of previous Republican administrations to eliminate gambling,

prostitution, and liquor law violations."³⁵

In the 1929 election, the number of voters in the sixth ward as well as the rest of the city increased dramatically. But while the Democratic percentage in the city dipped slightly, the sixth ward vote increased by a healthy 13.3 percent.³⁶

Hinkle's vote-getting success for mayor in 1929 is due partially to the civic improvements that had occurred in the Montgomery administration, during which Hinkle served as chairman of the Board of Works. The most notable of these was railroad track elevation, which directly affected the sixth ward because most of the tracks were on the city's west side. "The obvious civic progress made by the Montgomery administration was a basic Democratic vote-getting factor" in 1929, according to Jack J. Detzler.³⁷

The Vote for Clerk

We now turn from the office of mayor to that of city clerk. Table 11 summarizes the percentage of the two-party vote for clerk that was Democratic in the sixth ward and in the city at large. It should be noted that Polish candidates for clerk ran in 1905 (Kucharski, a Republican), 1909 (Woltman, a Republican, against Bilinski, a Democrat), and 1917 (Bilinski).

Interestingly, on a citywide level, the office of clerk drew more Democratic votes than that of mayor. Democrats were elected clerk in all but the 1905 election, while Democratic mayors were elected in only four of seven elections. Sixth warders matched this strong preference for Democratic candidates for clerk. From 1905 to 1929, the Democratic percentage of the vote for clerk averaged 70.1. The only year a Republican was given the nod in the sixth ward (or, for that matter,

TABLE 11

VOTES CAST FOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR CLERK OF SOUTH BEND, 1905-1929

Year	Democratic votes		Democratic votes	
	in city	Percentage *	in sixth ward	Percentage §
1905	5,104	49.6	610	40.5
1909	4,923	49.6	1,040	56.5
1913	5,142	39.4	752	65.0
1917	4,615	50.3	1,153	82.5
1921	8,416	51.5	1,756	88.7
1925	11,111	52.3	1,573	72.1
1929	17,706	53.4	3,539	85.5

*. Percentage of two-party vote in South Bend. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

§. Percentage of two-party vote in the sixth ward. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

in the city) was 1905, when a Pole ran as a Republican for the office. The election of Leo Kucharski as clerk is discussed earlier.

In 1909, Frank Bilinski ran 6.9 percentage points over the South Bend total in the sixth ward against another Pole. In the next election, in which he did not run, the Democratic edge in the sixth ward jumped to 25.6 percent. This apparent incongruity may be explained by the reunification of Polish voters and by a lower voting turnout in 1913. While 1,035 sixth ward residents voted for the two Polish candidates for city clerk in 1909, only 752 voted for clerk candidates four years later. The high deviation from the city vote may be partly explained by the much lower appeal of the Citizen's Party in the sixth ward in 1913; the Democratic vote in the sixth ward does not seem as high as the citywide Democratic vote seems low.

In 1917, Poles gave impressive support to Bilinski. Bilinski's margins of victory in the city were narrow in both 1909 and 1917-- 49.6 and 50.3 percent, respectively-- but his sixth ward support jumped 26 percentage points to 82.5 percent in 1917. The rise in Bilinski's support among his fellow Poles is due in part, of course, to facing a non-Polish candidate. But another factor explaining the dramatic rise in Bilinski's support in the sixth ward is the rise of ethnic consciousness, a phenomenon described by Victor Greene.

"When [Poles] first entered the United States," according to Greene, "they had no strong ethnic feelings or interest in politics; they made a decided shift in sentiment within a few decades."³⁸

It is not unlikely that Poles, scattered in their homeland among villages dominated by more powerful neighbors, did not immediately feel as compelled to vote for "one of their own" as they would as a strong sense of ethnic identification developed. After being denied a major office nomination in 1913, and having a strong previously-elected ethnic candidate for whom to vote, by 1917 voting for a fellow Pole could take on significance beyond merely choosing one candidate over another; voting became an important act of self-affirmation.

Poles topped even the 1917 figure when Bilinski led the ticket in the next election. In 1921, Gladys Monroe kept 88.7 percent of the Polish voters, and won the election despite the two-to-one defeat of Bilinski as mayor.

The post-1921 elections follow the same pattern in the sixth district as that of the mayoral race: somewhat of a decline in 1925, followed by a rise in 1929, although not to as high levels as 1921.

Since Gladys Monroe remained the candidate in the 1921, 1925 and

1929 elections, and her percentage of support in the city at large remained extraordinarily stable,³⁹ the dip in her support in 1925 must be due to influences in the sixth ward outside the clerk election. The most obvious and likely explanation is that 1925 was the only one of the three years that no Polish candidate ran on the Democratic ticket with her. In 1921, Bilinski ran for mayor; in 1929, Hosinski ran for judge.

The Vote for Judge

The third office we will examine is that of city judge. The judgeship was a significant office because it was a prominent one, with higher prestige and status involved than that of city clerk. Table 12 gives the Democratic vote for judge in the sixth ward and in the city.

TABLE 12

VOTES CAST FOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR JUDGE OF SOUTH BEND, 1905-1929

Year	Democratic votes in city	Percentage [*]	Democratic votes in sixth ward	Percentage [§]
1905	5,331	52.0	971	67.0
1909	6,487	58.3	1,099	63.7
1913	4,144	43.9	765	65.2
1917	4,908	54.2	1,066	79.9
1921	7,494	45.5	1,920	92.7
1925	10,593	49.9	1,659	72.7
1929	17,385	52.5	3,259	89.2

*. Percentage of two-party vote in South Bend. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

§. Percentage of two-party vote in the sixth ward. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

The city vote for judge more nearly resembled that of mayor than that of clerk. Four Democrats were elected as judge, the same number of party members elected as mayor.

Although a Polish candidate did not run for judge until 1929, Polish voters went solidly Democratic all along. They helped to elect Democratic judges Feldman in 1905 and Farsbaugh in 1909, although they gave their lowest Democratic percentage of the vote in 1909, when 63.7 percent voted for Farsbaugh. The Democratic percentage in the ward in 1909, incidentally, was higher for Farsbaugh than for Frank Bilinski, the candidate for clerk.

Amidst the reforming zeal of the 1913 election, South Bend voters elected the Citizen's Party candidate for judge (Warner) to serve with independent Mayor Keller. Sixth ward voters, however, supported Democratic candidate Patrick Houlihan. For the second election in a row, the candidate for judge received the highest Democratic percentage of any of the three leading candidates.

The Polish Democratic vote for judge grew sizably with Bilinski's second candidacy for clerk in 1917. When Bilinski ran for mayor, judge candidate J. Elmer Peak ran only slightly behind him. Where Bilinski got 95 percent of the vote, Peak garnered 92.7 percent of that same vote.

Still, Chester DuComb, the Republican candidate, was elected to the first of two consecutive terms in 1921 despite strong opposition by Polish voters.

The pattern of post-1921 elections is the same as that noted for both mayor and clerk. There was a decline in 1925 to slightly less than three-quarters of the votes cast. In 1929, the figures rose again, although not to quite as high levels as 1921. The Polish candidate,

Hosinski, outpolled his mayoral and clerk counterparts and greatly contributed to huge Democratic majorities in the sixth ward and a citywide sweep of the "big three" offices.

The pattern is unmistakable: The Polish vote was strongest when a Pole led the ticket (1921); second highest when a Pole was lower on the ticket (1929); and lowest when there was no Pole on the ticket. This pattern holds true for the mayor, clerk and judge elections.

The Polish Vote in Context

Was allegiance to the Democratic party a uniquely Polish phenomenon, or part of a broader Catholic or European phenomenon? Since our analysis has been limited to the sixth ward and the rest of the city grouped together, it is instructive to examine Democratic allegiances in each ward. Table 13 presents the combined percentages of the two-party vote Democratic candidates for mayor, clerk and judge received in each ward between 1905 and 1929.

Table 13 clearly shows that voters in the Polish sixth ward voted Democratic more regularly than voters in any other ward-- more than 10 percentage points more than the second ward, the second most Democratic-leaning ward. Significantly, the second ward had the second greatest number of Poles.

The figures in Table 13 do not support the conclusion that Polish Democratic voting in South Bend was part of a more general Catholic or European trend, but neither do they negate this conclusion. Democratic support is fairly evenly spread in the city.

Residents of four of the seven (or eight, in 1929) wards cast more votes for Democratic candidates than for Republicans. But nowhere is Democratic strength more concentrated than in the sixth ward.

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY VOTE CAST*
FOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE
IN SOUTH BEND, BY WARD, 1905-1919

Ward	1905	1909	1913	1917	1921	1925	1929	Average
1	51.7	59.2	40.7	40.0	28.9	48.3	44.4	43.6
2	53.8	61.6	53.2	66.3	72.0	60.7	71.9	64.9
3	61.1	59.7	55.2	57.2	48.6	53.7	61.3	57.1
4	62.5	61.8	55.3	49.3	40.6	50.9	52.7	51.9
5	43.7	56.0	40.5	38.9	32.9	43.4	44.6	42.7
6	58.6	57.0	57.4	76.3	92.1	73.1	87.5	74.6
7	42.3	51.4	30.7	37.3	31.6	44.7	46.7	41.9
8	--	--	--	--	--	--	35.1	35.1

*. Percentage of three-party vote in 1913.

The First Major Candidacy: Conclusion

We have now examined the elections for mayor, clerk and judge to determine the effects of Bilinski's breakthrough candidacy. Table 14 summarizes the percentage of the two-party vote that Democratic candidates for each office received in the sixth ward.

Table 14, combined with the foregoing discussion, shows that Poles were more likely than other voters and at least somewhat more likely than before the first Polish candidacy to vote Democratic. As a result, the mobilization hypothesis has been proven to be at least partially true in South Bend. This conclusion must remain tenuous because of the paucity of post-1921 data.

Another mitigating factor in the mobilization of Polish voters

TABLE 14

PERCENTAGE OF THE TWO-PARTY* VOTE FOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES
FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE IN THE SIXTH WARD, 1905-1929

Year	Mayor	Clerk	Judge
1905	68.4	40.5	67.0
1909	61.4	56.5	63.7
1913	47.0	65.0	65.2
1917	66.7	82.5	79.9
1921	95.0	88.7	92.7
1925	74.5	72.1	72.7
1929	87.8	85.5	89.2

*. Percentage of the three-party vote in 1913.

is that Poles by 1921 were already solidly entrenched in the Democratic party. In 1917, for example, the percentage of the vote that was Democratic averaged 76.4 percent for the three offices. Voters who gave more than three-quarters support to Democratic candidates hardly needed to be "brought into" the party. Nevertheless, Bilinski's candidacy did push the already Democratic-leaning Poles further into the Democrats' fold.

Notes for Chapter IV

1. Wolfinger suggests two manifestations of ethnic voting: affinity for a party that cannot be explained by other demographic characteristics, and the tendency for ethnic group members to cross party lines to vote for or against ethnic candidates.

2. As noted earlier, Esslinger found Poles to be the only exception to a pattern of even distribution in the city.

3. Significant differences among sixth ward precinct results are not apparent in any other election in the 1905-1929 span.

4. Municipal elections were held every two years in South Bend up to and including 1904. In 1905, the term of office was extended to four years and a new election cycle was begun.

5. "Avalanche of Votes Makes Seebirt Victor," South Bend Tribune, 9 November 1921, p. 2.

6. "Democrats Win Election," South Bend Tribune, 4 November 1925, p. 2.

7. Restrictive immigration acts passed by the U.S. Congress-- the Immigration Act of 1921 and the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924-- limited the number of Polish as well as other immigrants.

8. "Fogarty Re-elected and Clique Reigns Supreme," South Bend Tribune, 8 November 1905, p. 1.

9. Kucharski's death soon after his election also limits his claim to being the first major Polish candidate because he never served in the position to which he was elected.

10. Jack J. Detzler, South Bend 1900-1910: The Awakening of a Small Town. (South Bend, Ind.: Northern Indiana Historical Society, 1959), 66.

11. "Fogarty Re-elected and Clique Reigns Supreme," 1.

12. Ibid., 1.

13. "City Hall is Held by Democrats," South Bend Tribune, 3 November 1909, p. 1.

14. Ibid., 1.

15. Because of a Prohibition Party candidacy for clerk in 1909, Bilinski was able to win election with less than 50 (49.6) percent of the vote.

16. "Democrats Name Goetz for Mayor," South Bend Tribune, 4 October 1909, p. 3.

17. "Nominate Schafer for Mayor of City," South Bend Tribune, 13 October 1909, p. 1.

18. Jack J. Detzler, South Bend 1910-1920: A Decade Dedicated to Reform. (South Bend, Ind.: Northern Indiana Historical Society, 1960), 81.

19. "Dr. F.R. Carson Sworn in as Mayor of City," South Bend Tribune, 7 November 1917, p. 1.

20. "Avalanche of Votes Makes Seebirt Victor," 2.

21. In 1921, Gladys Monroe was elected for the first time as city clerk. She was re-elected in 1925 and in 1929.

22. "Avalanche of Votes Makes Seebirt Victor," 2.

23. "Democrats Win Election," 1.

24. Republicans never achieved the feat of sweeping all three leading offices. Their best showing was in 1921, when they won both the mayor's and judge's offices.

25. Jack J. Detzler, The Emergence of a City: South Bend 1920-1930. (South Bend, Ind.: Northern Indiana Historical Society, 1985), 102.

26. This "number of votes cast" statistic is based only on votes cast for mayor.

27. Detzler (1960), 81.

28. These figures are based on the two-party vote in 1909, but include the Citizen's Party vote totals in 1913.

29. "City Campaign is Now Near its Closing," South Bend Tribune, 5 November 1917, p. 2.

30. The finding is documented earlier with the testing of the first hypothesis.

31. Frank A. Renkiewicz, The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1971), 298.

32. "Avalanche of Votes Makes Seebirt Victor," 1.

33. Ibid., 2.

34. Renkiewicz, 300.
35. Detzler (1985), 101.
36. This figure is all the more significant because the "lower figure" for 1925 was nearly 75 percent of the vote.
37. Detzler (1985), 102.
38. Victor Greene, For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Consciousness in America 1860-1910. (Madison, Wis.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1975), 5.
39. The percentages, respectively, were 51.5, 52.3 and 53.4.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The record of Polish politics in South Bend from 1905 to 1929 is ultimately a mixed one. Poles became increasingly politicized and used the political arena to further their own interests by voting for fellow Poles when given the chance to do so, especially after Frank Bilinski ran for mayor in 1921.

In four of the seven elections of the period, a Pole was elected to citywide office (three times to city clerk and once as judge). In a fifth election, a Pole ran for mayor. This candidacy, which could have signaled Poles' political arrival, ironically underscored Polish political limitations.

There are two main factors that underlay the failure to elect a Polish mayor, one tied to developments in South Bend and another typical of other cities as well.

The factor related to the city was that of timing. The first major candidacy came early in relation to Polish immigration to South Bend. This precocity undercut Polish political strength in South Bend because Poles had an insufficient chance to develop a middle class, thereby obviating one of the key aspects of Wolfinger's mobilization thesis. Bilinski's 1921 candidacy for mayor did mobilize South Bend Poles, but probably not as strongly as it would have if it had been supported by a well-developed middle class.

A second aspect of the timing problem is that Bilinski ran for office at a time when nativist sentiment-- which was anti-foreign and

anti-Catholic-- was on the rise.¹ The "foreign question" became inextricably tied to the "vice problem," a perennial campaign issue in South Bend in the first quarter of the 20th century. In an era where control of public gambling, prostitution and drinking loomed as major campaign issues, Bilinski seemed to virtually personify those evils.

The second factor in Bilinski's defeat, one typical of Polish urban politics, was the failure of Poles to reach out beyond their own ethnic boundaries and elect an ethnic to the most visible and prestigious citywide office. Edward Kantowicz called this the inability to move from "solidarity" to "broker" politics.²

A strong in-group orientation both led to and was caused by a network of Polish institutions. As Helena Znaniecki Lopata pointed out, Polish immigrant culture was heterogeneous and divergent from dominant American culture.³ This led to the development of a complex ethnic community. The network of Polish churches, banks, schools and businesses in the city fostered the development of a distinct Polish identity and served to separate Poles, both literally and figuratively, from dominant American society.

The sheer number of Poles in South Bend also presented the illusory notion that a Pole could win the mayoralty if the candidate received the solid support of the sixth ward. As the largest immigrant group in the city, Poles could well believe that they did not need to appeal to voters outside the Polish community; this was not true because Poles constituted only about one-fifth of the city's population.

Poles failed to expand their boundaries in another important way. Early on, they allied themselves with the Democratic party and did not

bargain with both parties to obtain an acceptable election ticket (i.e. one prominently featuring Poles) from year to year. When a Pole ran as a Republican for clerk in 1905, Poles voted for their fellow ethnic but stayed with Democrats for the other two major citywide offices. Republicans nominated a Pole for clerk in 1909, but their man lost to a Polish Democrat. It is not surprising that Republicans did not nominate another Pole in the era.

In ways, Poles were well served by their allegiance to the Democratic Party. They received party nominations to major citywide offices in four of the seven elections from 1905 to 1929. But could the lesson of Bilinski's defeat be lost on the Poles? The lesson was: stay within your boundaries, elect Poles from your district to the city council, occasionally to a higher office such as clerk or judge, but do not pretend to the mayoralty.

Part of the legacy of the Bilinski debacle in 1921 was the failure of any Pole to be nominated by either party for mayor, through to the 1987 election. Frank Renkiewicz wrote that, "The problems of the 1920s over, the Poles came down to accept representation based on their proportion in the population."⁴

In fact, Poles came to settle for underrepresentation, at least in the mayor's office, as they accepted exclusion from city hall. Despite this limitation, however, political behavior that was uniquely Polish developed in South Bend from 1905 to 1929. Polish politics in the city was destined to become more than the transitional phenomenon described by Dahl.⁵ Ethnicity had entered the political sphere in a strong and durable way.

Notes for Chapter V

1. For a detailed discussion of patterns of nativism in the U.S., see John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925. (New York: Atheneum, 1970).

2. Edward T. Kantowicz, "Voting and Parties," in Dimensions of Ethnicity, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1982), 54.

3. Helena Znaniecki Lopata, Polish Americans: Status Competition in an Ethnic Community. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 3.

4. Frank A. Renkiewicz, The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1971), 306.

5. Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961), 24.

APPENDIX A

CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, CLERK AND JUDGE IN SOUTH BEND, 1905-1929

	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>
1905		
Mayor	Edward Fogarty	Francis Lambert
Clerk	Nelson Kyser	Leo Kucharski
Judge	George Feldman	Courtland DuComb
1909		
Mayor	Charles Goetz	David Schafer
Clerk	Frank Bilinski	Casimir Woltman
Judge	G.A. Farsbaugh	Will Bergan
1913		
Mayor	Patrick Joyce	James Lougham
Clerk	Harvey Rostiser	William Nies
Judge	Patrick Houlihan	P.C. Fergus
1917		
Mayor	Rudolph Ackermann	Franklin Carson
Clerk	Frank Bilinski	Arthur Studebaker
Judge	Frank Gilmer	Andrew Hildebrand
1921		
Mayor	Frank Bilinski	Eli Seebirt
Clerk	Gladys Monroe	Phil Nicar
Judge	J. Elmer Peak	Chester DuComb

	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Republican</u>
1925		
Mayor	Chester Montgomery	Samuel Leeper
Clerk	Gladys Monroe	Arthur Carlson
Judge	Otis Romine	Chester DuComb
1929		
Mayor	William Hinkle	Chester DuComb
Clerk	Gladys Monroe	Paul Heierman
Judge	Al Hosinski	Frank Coughlin

APPENDIX B

ELECTION RETURNS FOR SOUTH BEND, 1905-1929, BY WARD

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ward</u>	Mayor		Clerk		Judge	
		<u>D</u> *	<u>R</u> **	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>
1905	1	804	1,058	1,661	918	757	1,033
	2	924	664	723	816	855	671
	3	848	526	822	529	816	528
	4	884	505	850	499	826	531
	5	493	752	517	682	465	470
	6	1,037	479	610	895	971	478
	7	657	957	721	854	641	942
	Totals	5,647	4,941	5,104	5,193	5,331	4,923
1909 [§]	1	1,158	717	560	481	1,107	749
	2	1,159	657	971	628	1,061	706
	3	802	514	639	459	775	526
	4	936	498	719	398	792	619
	5	699	515	396	372	687	514
	6	1,259	601	1,040	803	1,099	625
	7	996	913	598	610	968	899
	Totals	7,009	4,415	4,923	3,751	6,487	4,638

*. Democratic candidate

** . Republican candidate

§ . Votes for Prohibition Party candidate for clerk (by wards): 1, 348; 2, 103; 3, 120; 4, 125; 5, 216; 6, 3; 7, 328.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ward</u>	<u>Mayor</u>		<u>Clerk</u>		<u>Judge</u>	
		<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>
1913 ^{§§}	1	747	107	1,146	228	726	135
	2	655	135	608	168	565	131
	3	492	71	513	106	438	74
	4	820	101	872	186	782	119
	5	398	78	488	125	346	81
	6	768	115	752	122	765	100
	7	503	106	763	203	522	108
	Totals	4,383	713	5,142	1,138	4,144	748
1917	1	720	1,083	652	1,160	801	1,031
	2	791	492	876	389	837	389
	3	415	319	399	319	427	290
	4	725	765	667	771	775	695
	5	356	530	298	565	364	506
	6	943	471	1,153	244	1,066	268
	7	668	1,060	570	1,110	638	987
	Totals	4,618	4,720	4,615	4,558	4,908	4,148

§§. Returns for Citizen's Party candidates in 1913:

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Mayor</u>	<u>Clerk</u>	<u>Judge</u>
1	1,231	970	1,145
2	514	293	366
3	335	243	344
4	618	421	551
5	604	337	586
6	752	301	309
7	1,396	970	1,251
Totals	5,450	3,208	4,552

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ward</u>	Mayor		Clerk		Judge	
		<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>
1921	1	757	3,378	1,640	2,454	1,155	2,897
	2	1,467	607	1,469	550	1,455	554
	3	442	562	589	533	547	571
	4	764	1,706	1,222	1,303	1,068	1,452
	5	347	1,103	605	824	468	964
	6	1,955	110	1,756	223	1,920	152
	7	698	2,656	1,756	2,161	881	2,400
	Totals	5,044	10,122	8,416	8,048	7,494	8,990
1925	1	2,786	2,426	2,546	2,743	2,247	2,939
	2	1,831	743	1,714	833	1,717	834
	3	687	511	617	568	613	573
	4	2,007	1,798	1,946	1,824	1,808	1,945
	5	634	731	614	745	526	833
	6	1,707	585	1,573	609	1,659	624
	7	2,399	2,565	2,201	2,731	2,023	2,904
	Totals	12,051	9,369	11,111	10,153	10,593	10,652
1929	1	3,264	3,692	3,045	3,878	2,923	3,982
	2	2,919	1,121	2,864	1,159	2,916	1,116
	3	971	573	942	599	926	617
	4	2,247	1,808	2,172	1,884	1,993	2,058
	5	862	987	818	1,021	784	1,057
	6	3,212	448	3,093	526	3,259	395
	7	3,691	3,927	3,539	4,059	3,416	4,160
	8	1,319	2,219	1,233	2,309	1,169	2,363
	Totals	18,485	14,775	17,706	15,425	17,385	15,758

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